

NC Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Health Service Regulation

ARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

**The Basics of Mental Health
Licensing Process**

Division of Health Service Regulation
Mental Health Licensure & Certification Section

Mental Health Licensure & Certification Section <http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dhsr>

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Who We Are-The Licensure & Training Team

Stacy Silvia- Team Leader
Miguel Sabillon-Foothills and Central
Emily Jones-Eastern and Central
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Savannah Alford-Western and Central
Connie Anderson- LTC Child Residential



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Thinking of opening or adding to an existing Mental Health Facility?



OPENING A MENTAL HEALTH FACILITY IN NORTH CAROLINA

What We'll Cover:

- A brief overview of North Carolina's mental health system
- The application process for licensure
- What DHSR staff will expect from you during the application process
- Physical Plant review with our Construction Section
- Key General Statutes, rules, and regulations you'll be responsible for once licensed
- Life after licensure

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Types of Services Licensed by DHSR



Residential Services

- 24-hour care in a home-like setting (not a hospital)
- Includes room, meals, supervision, and support
- The living environment is a key part of the care

Think of it as a place where people live and receive care around the clock.



Day Programs

- Structured services provided during the day
- Offered to the same person for 3+ hours in a 24-hour period
- No overnight stay
- A safe, supportive space for treatment and activities during the day

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Mental Health Licensure and Certification Section Licensure & Training Section

The Licensure & Training Section does **NOT** license:

- Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Programs
- Community Support (CST) Teams
- Peer Support Services
- Adult Care Homes
- Family Care Homes
- Outpatient Therapy



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The Rules Statute, Rule, Policy & Procedure



General Statutes

- *General Assembly
- *Signed by Governor



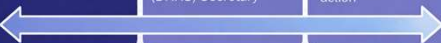
Licensure Rules

- *Mental Health Commission
- *Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) Secretary



Policy & Procedure

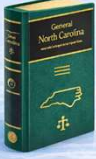
- *Policy = Clear simple statement of intent
- *Procedure = The steps to put the policy into action



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North Carolina General Statutes



- Outline the basic requirements for licensure
- Define what constitutes a mental health licensable facility
- Explain the client rights available to all people served
- Include requirement not set forth in rule such as information about penalties and sanctions

• Include requirement not set forth in rule such as information about penalties and sanctions

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Compliance with North Carolina General Statutes

Protecting Rights and Safety



- Personnel Registry § 122C-256
- Treatment Rights § 122C-61, 122C-62
- Criminal Record Checks § 122C-80
- Continuity of Care § 122C-63 § 131E-65

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North Carolina Administrative Code (NCAC) Rules



- Licensing Criteria
- Core Licensure Rules
- Program-Specific Requirements
- Client Rights Regulations
- Licensing Procedures

10A NCAC Chapter 26 & 27

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Core Licensure Rules
The Foundation of Compliance

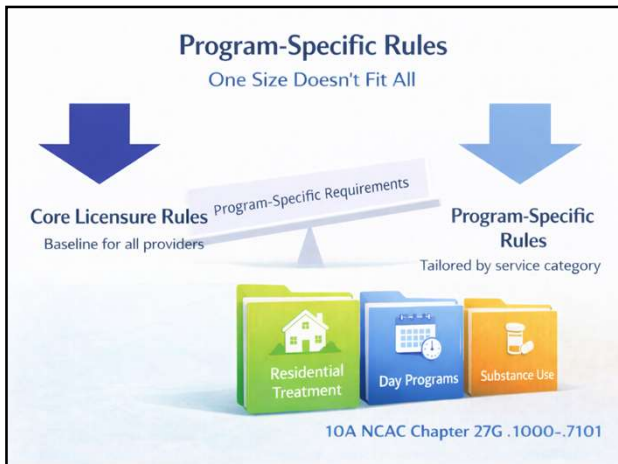


- Governance and staffing
- Service delivery standards
- Safety protocols
- Documentation and reporting
- Client protections

From small residential programs to large substance abuse facilities, these rules apply across the board.

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Client Rights Are Core Compliance



- Mental health
- Developmental disabilities
- Substance use disorders

Applicable to all facilities—public and private—and codified by:

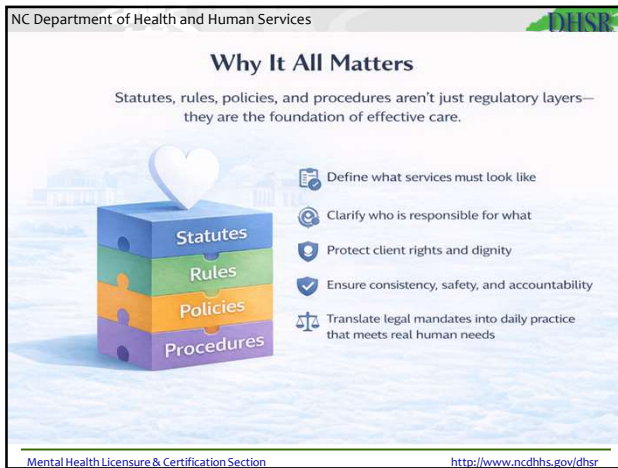
10A NCAC 27C–27F (Administrative Code)
G.S. 122C, Article 3 (State Statute)

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Choosing a Service Category. Finding your fit

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What type of Facility?

Residential Services **Day Services**

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Residential Service Categories

Service Category	Description	Minor: 0-17	Adult: 18+
.1300	Residential Treatment Facilities for Children & Adolescents	X	
.1700	Residential Treatment Staff Secure for Children or Adolescents	X	
.1800	Intensive Residential Treatment for Children or Adolescents	X	
.1900	PRTF-Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility for children and adolescents (allow service up to age 21)	X	
.2100	Specialized Community Residential Centers for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities	X	X
.3100	Social Setting Detoxification for Substance Abuse	X	X
.3400	Residential Treatment-Individuals with Substance Abuse Disorders	X	X
.4100	Residential Recovery Programs for Individuals with Substance Abuse Disorders and their Children		X
.4300	Therapeutic Community		X
.5000	Facility Based Crisis Service for Individuals of all Disability Groups	X	X
.5100	Community Respite Services for Individuals of all Disability Groups	X	X
.5200	Residential Therapeutic Camps-Children & Adolescents-all Disability Groups	X	
.5600A	Supervised Living for Adults with Mental Illness		X
.5600B	Supervised Living for Minors with Mental Illness	X	
.5600C	Supervised Living for Adults with Developmental Disabilities		X
.5600D	Supervised Living for Minors with Substance Abuse Dependency	X	
.5600E	Supervised Living for Adults with Substance Abuse Dependency		X
.5600F	Supervised Living: Alternative Family Living in a Private Residence	X	X

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Day Treatment Facilities

Service Category	Description	Minor: 0-17	Adult: 18+
.1100	Partial Hospitalization for Individuals who are acutely Mentally Ill	X	X
.1200	Psychosocial Rehabilitation facilities for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness		X
.1400	Day Treatment for children and adolescents with emotional or behavioral disturbances	X	
.2200	School Year, Before/After School and Summer Developmental Day Services for Children	X	
.2300	Adult Developmental Vocational Programs for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities		X
.3300	Outpatient Detoxification for Substance Abuse	X	X
.3600	Outpatient Opioid Treatment	X	X
.3700	Day Treatment Facilities for Individuals with Substance Abuse Disorders	X	X
.4400	Substance Abuse Intensive Outpatient Program (SAIOP)	X	X
.4500	Substance Abuse Comprehensive Outpatient Program (SACOT)		X
.5100	Community Respite Services for Individuals of all Disability Groups	X	X
.5400	Day Activity for Individuals of all Disability Groups	X	X
.5500	Sheltered Workshops for Individuals of all Disability Groups		X

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**You've Chosen a Path—
Now Define the Destination**

You've decided to pursue a Day Service or Residential Service license. That's a powerful first step. But now comes the part that shapes everything: Who are you called to serve—how?

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Step 1: Know Your Passion and Skill Set

Identifying Your Unique Strengths

- **Identifying Populations:** Understanding the specific populations you resonate with allows for a more tailored approach to mental health services, enhancing the therapeutic relationship and outcomes.
- **Recognizing Experience:** Your unique experiences shape your perspective and approach. Acknowledging where you excel can guide you in selecting the right niche within mental health services.
- **Aligning with Values:** Ensuring that your program aligns with your core values and expertise not only enhances job satisfaction but also improves the quality of care you provide.



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Step 2: Define Your Target Population

Criteria for Targeting Specific Groups



Criteria Options

Defining your target population involves considering various criteria, including demographics, specific needs, and cultural backgrounds, to ensure effective service delivery.



Age Group Considerations

Understanding the differences between working with adults and minors is crucial, as it influences treatment approaches, legal considerations, and communication styles.



Diagnosis Categories

Familiarity with various diagnosis categories, such as mental illness, intellectual disabilities, and substance use disorders, is essential for tailoring interventions and support.

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Step 3: Understand Your License Details

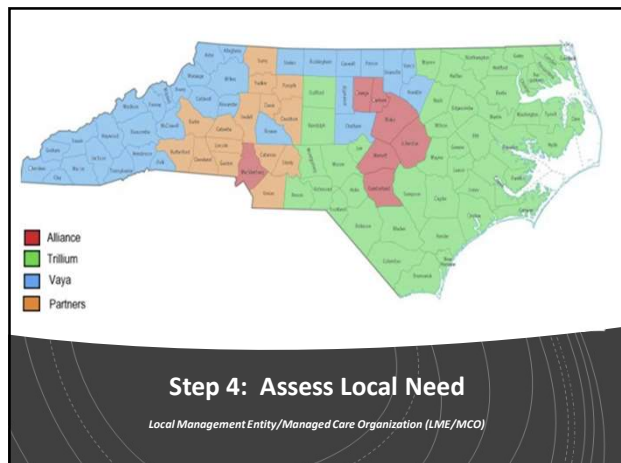
Navigating Licensing Requirements

- **Key Responsibilities:** As a licensee, it is imperative to understand your responsibilities, including client confidentiality, and adherence to regulatory standards.
- **Service Categories:** Licensing often delineates specific service categories and age groups you are permitted to work with, which is crucial for compliance and effective practice.
- **Allowed Diagnoses:** Understanding the diagnoses you are authorized to treat, including any combinations, is vital for ensuring that you provide appropriate and effective care.



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Does my facility need a Letter of Support from the LME/MCO?



Before applying for a residential license, contact your local LME/MCO to determine the need and obtain the required letter of support.

This step is mandatory.

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Does My Facility Need a Certificate of Need (CON)?



Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTF)

Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ICF/IID).

Certificate of Need (CON) required for these services only.
This is NOT typical.

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Outpatient Opioid Treatment Programs Licensure

No CON or LOS Required

- Overview of Outpatient Opioid Treatment Programs:** Outpatient Opioid Treatment Programs (OTPs) are specialized facilities that provide medication-assisted treatment (MAT) for individuals struggling with opioid use disorder. These programs integrate counseling, behavioral therapies, and medical support to facilitate recovery and improve patient outcomes.
- Importance of Licensure in Providing Services:** Licensure is crucial for OTPs as it ensures compliance with state and federal regulations, thereby safeguarding public health. It establishes a framework for quality assurance, accountability, and the provision of safe and effective treatment options for patients.
- Multi-Agency Coordination Required:** The licensure process for OTPs necessitates collaboration among various agencies, including state health departments, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). This coordination is essential to streamline the approval process and ensure comprehensive oversight.



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Step 5: Understand Funding and Payment



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APPLYING FOR A NEW MENTAL HEALTH LICENSE OR CHANGING AN EXISTING MENTAL HEALTH LICENSE



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Complete the Initial Mental Health Licensure Application Packet in full

- Clear instructions for submission
- A checklist of required documentation

Take time to carefully review each section. Following the instructions precisely helps ensure your application is complete, accurate, and ready for review.

The application instructions and the checklist are your roadmap—every item listed here **must be submitted** for your application to move forward. Please note that if the application is not completed accurately it, will be sent back to your agency.

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BUILDING OCCUPANCY FOR DAY PROGRAMS FOR ADOLESCENTS—BUILDING CODE GUIDELINES

North Carolina State Building Code (NCSBC) Requirements:

- Group E – Educational Occupancy:** [insert] for educational spaces like schools and daycare centers for children above a certain age. Must comply with fire safety, accessibility, ventilation, and emergency exit standards.
- Group I-4 – Child Day Care:** A more stringent classification requiring enhanced safety features, such as fire sprinklers and accessible exits.

R-3 Exception: Facilities accommodating eight or fewer individuals, with no more than 5 preschool-aged children, are not considered day programs. This is because day programs are licensed for a capacity of zero occupants.

Occupancy Classification Requirements:
Ensure all day program facilities under categories 1400, 3700, 4400 (children) and 5400 (children) meet one of the following:

- Group E (Educational)
- Group I-4 (Institutional)

Zoning Approval: Confirm that Group E – Educational Occupancy is permitted within the building's jurisdiction.

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MANAGEMENT COMPANIES

Should we use a Management Company for our Alternative Living Facility?

Let's take a moment to clarify if a management company is involved (mostly with 5600F's).

If the facility is operated by an entity other than the licensee—meaning someone else is handling the day-to-day operations—you must disclose that relationship in your application.

This includes providing the full legal name of the management company or entity overseeing operations.

But here's the key point: the licensee remains fully responsible. Even if a management company is running the program, the licensee is the one held accountable for compliance, service delivery, and regulatory oversight.

This distinction is critical. We often see confusion around who's responsible when a third-party manager is involved. Remember clearly, the licensee is still the one on the hook for meeting all requirements.

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Building Owner: If the above entity (partnership, corporation, etc.) does not own the building from which services are offered, please provide the following information:
Name of Building Owner: _____
Street Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____
Lease expires: _____

9. OWNERS, PRINCIPLES, AFFILIATES, SHAREHOLDERS (Confidential Information for Official Use Only)

For Profit Individuals or Companies
Complete the information below on all individuals who are owners, principles, affiliates or shareholders holding an interest of 5% or more of the licensing entity listed on page 2. Attach additional pages if necessary. If you are the only owner, complete the information below, listing the percentage interest as well.

Shareholder Name: (First, Middle, Last)
Street Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____
Percentage interest in this facility: _____ Title: _____

Shareholder Name: (First, Middle, Last)
Street Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____
Percentage interest in this facility: _____ Title: _____

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Initial Fees

Type of Facility	Number of Beds	Base Fee	Per Bed Fee
Non-ICF/ID Facilities	6 or less	\$350.00	\$0
Non-ICF/ID Facilities	7 or more	\$525.00	\$19.00
ICF/ID Facilities	6 or less	\$900.00	\$0
ICF/ID Facilities	7 or more	\$850.00	\$19.00
Non Residential Facilities	N/A	\$265.00	N/A

License Fees

Type of Facility	Number of Beds	Project Fee
Non-ICF/ID Facilities	1-3	\$125.00
Non-ICF/ID Facilities	4-6	\$225.00
Non-ICF/ID Facilities	7-9	\$275.00
ICF/ID Facilities	1-6	\$350.00
Other Residential Facilities	10 or more	\$275.00 + \$15/sq.ft. project space

Construction Fees

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Change Applications

Types of Change Applications

		
Change of Capacity	Change of Service Category	Change of Facility Name
		
Change of Licensee/Ownership	Change of Location	Change in Mailing Address

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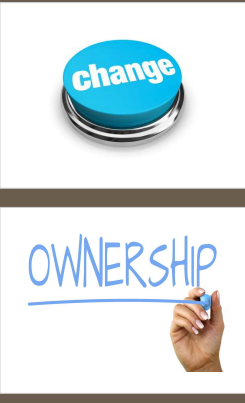
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Change of Ownership = CHOW

- The current licensee must notify DHSR in writing at least 30 days prior to the planned change of ownership
- The prospective provider must submit a Change Licensure Application
- DO NOT** begin operating until DHSR issues a license to the new owner

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Operating Before License is Granted

- Legal repercussions:** Operating without a license can lead to severe legal consequences, including lawsuits, fines, and potential criminal charges. Regulatory agencies have the authority to shut down unlicensed operations, leading to significant operational disruptions.
- Financial penalties:** Facilities found operating without the necessary licenses may face substantial financial penalties, which can include fines that escalate with repeated violations.



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Unlicensed Facilities-G.S. 122C-23

A	I	D
Definition of unlicensed facilities	Overview of the issue	G.S. 122C-23
Unlicensed facilities are mental health care providers that function without the necessary state or federal licenses, resulting in a lack of regulatory oversight and failure to adhere to established standards of care. This absence of licensing can lead to significant variations in the quality of services provided.	The existence of unlicensed facilities presents considerable risks to patient safety and the overall quality of care. These establishments often operate outside the bounds of essential health regulations, which can result in inadequate treatment and increased vulnerability for patients seeking help.	According to G.S. 122C-23, no individual or entity may establish or operate a licensable facility for mental health, intellectual/developmental disabilities, or substance use disorders without a valid license from the Secretary of DHHS.

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Construction Section Mission Statement

To ensure that the construction and operation of buildings regulated by the Division provide a safe, healthy and suitable environment for residents, and patients using those facilities.

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Overview MHL Physical Plant Presentation

The purpose of this presentation is to provide general information about the review and inspection process once your application is received in the Construction Section. In this presentation we will provide information on:

1. Construction Section fees and project assignments
2. What to submit with your application
3. Minimum physical plant requirements
4. Frequently asked questions (FAQ)

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DHSR Construction Section MHL Physical Plant Licensure Requirements

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Construction Section

Fees and project assignments

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DHSR Construction Section MHL Physical Plant Licensure Requirements

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Construction Section Fees and Project Assignments

- MHL applications must be sent to DHSR MHL Licensure and Certification. For facility licensure information, please see DHSR MHL Licensure and Certification website at <https://info.ncdhhs.gov/dhsr/mhlcs/establish.html#apply>
- DHSR MHL Licensure and Certification will forward your application and other documentation to the Construction Section for review and approval
- Once your application and documentation is received in the Construction Section, a project review fee will be assessed, and an application acknowledgement letter and invoice will be sent to the contact person listed on the application

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Construction Section Fees and Project Assignments

- It is **very important** to have accurate, complete contact information to ensure all correspondences are sent to the correct person. Be sure the application is provided with an email address and working phone number. Not having correct information could delay the review and approval of your project.
- Once the review fee has been received, your project will be assigned to an architect and/or engineer for review.
- The Construction Section **will not** review a project or make any site visits until the **construction fee is paid.**

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Construction Section Fees and Project Assignments

- Once the project has been assigned, the assigned architect and/or engineer will contact you either via review letter or phone call.
- The architect and/or engineer assigned to the project is your contact **until the completion and recommendation for licensure** to Mental Health Licensure and Certification. Once the project is assigned, all project questions should be directed to the assigned architect and/or engineer.

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WHAT TO SUBMIT WITH YOUR APPLICATION



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What To Submit With Your Application

- A floor plan that specifies the following:
 - All levels including basements and upstairs
 - Identification of the use of all rooms/spaces
 - Dimensions of all bedrooms, excluding any toilets and bathing areas. Clarify whether bedroom will be single or double or single occupancy. Also show the location of any live-in person's bedroom
 - Location of all doors and the dimensions of all exterior doors
 - Location of all windows including the dimensions of bedroom windows
 - Location of all smoke detectors noting whether they are battery operated, wired into the house current with battery backup, and if they are interconnected (one sound they all sound)
- Floor plan must be legible AND accurately reflect the floor plan of the house.**

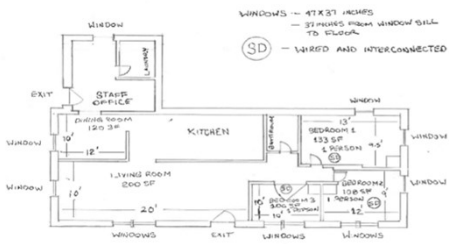
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Floor Plan Example



LEGEND:
WINDOWS -- 41 X 57 INCHES
-- 37 INCHES MEAN WINDOW SILL TO SILL
SD -- WIREED AND INTERCONNECTED

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What To Submit With Your Application

- Exterior photos of each side of the building
- Interior photos of the kitchen, living areas, bedrooms, and any other rooms
- Directions from Raleigh or a map from the nearest major highway, street or intersection clearly showing the location of the facility
- Local Zoning Department** approval for the proposed use
- Letter of Support from LME/MCO

Providing the correct, accurate information will make it easier for you project to be reviewed!

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DHSR MINIMUM PHYSICAL PLANT REQUIREMENTS

Bedrooms – Examples of Sufficient Square Footage:

Single occupancy bedrooms a minimum of 100 square feet

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DHSR MINIMUM PHYSICAL PLANT REQUIREMENTS

Bedrooms – Examples of Sufficient Square Footage:

Double occupancy bedrooms a minimum of 160 square feet

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DHSR MINIMUM PHYSICAL PLANT REQUIREMENTS

Bedrooms – Example of Insufficient Square Footage:

Double occupancy bedrooms a minimum of 160 square feet

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DHSR MINIMUM PHYSICAL PLANT REQUIREMENTS



Bathrooms [27G .0304(d)(10)]
At least one full bathroom for each five or fewer persons, including staff of the facility and their family.

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DHSR MINIMUM PHYSICAL PLANT REQUIREMENTS

Water Temperature [27G .0304(b)(4)]
Between **100** degrees (minimum) and **116** degrees (maximum)



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DHSR MINIMUM PHYSICAL PLANT REQUIREMENTS

****The following slides are additional requirements from the 2018 North Carolina State Building Codes which are applicable to all Licensed Residential Care Facilities. These slides do not contain all the requirements of the 2018 North Carolina State Building Codes. Please consult with the local authority having jurisdiction in your town or county.****

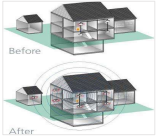
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MINIMUM PHYSICAL PLANT REQUIREMENTS

(Applicable Building Code Requirements)



Smoke Detectors

- 120 volt smoke detectors permanently connected to the house current and battery backed-up.
- Smoke detector installed in each bedroom.
- Smoke detector installed outside of any bedroom or cluster of bedrooms.
- Smoke detector installed on each story of the home including the basement (if habitable).
- All smoke detectors interconnected such that when one detector is activated, all smoke detectors activate.



Ground Fault Interrupter Protection
Along kitchen countertops, in garages, outdoor outlets, crawl spaces, within 6 feet from sinks, laundry areas, and bathrooms

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MINIMUM PHYSICAL PLANT REQUIREMENTS

(Applicable Building Code Requirements)

Kitchen Range Hood
Vented to the outdoors or if its an unvented hood with an approved charcoal filter





Bathroom Ventilation
Not required unless there is no window. If installed it must be vented to the outside of the home not into the attic

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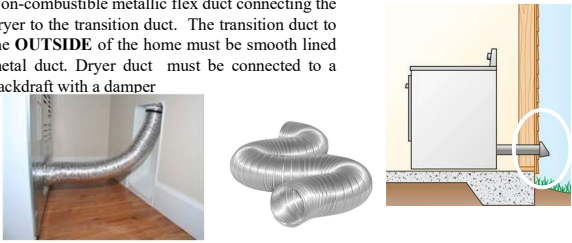


MINIMUM PHYSICAL PLANT REQUIREMENTS

(Applicable Building Code Requirements)

Clothes Dryer

Non-combustible metallic flex duct connecting the dryer to the transition duct. The transition duct to the **OUTSIDE** of the home must be smooth lined metal duct. Dryer duct must be connected to a backdraft with a damper



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DHSR MINIMUM PHYSICAL PLANT REQUIREMENTS
(Applicable Building Code Requirements)

Fire Extinguishers

Fire extinguishers shall be installed in Licensed Residential Care Facilities in accordance with the North Carolina Fire Code.

**Required for facilities with 4 to 6 clients under 2018 North Carolina State Building Code, 428.1.1*



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DHSR MINIMUM PHYSICAL PLANT REQUIREMENTS
(Applicable Building Code Requirements)

Interior Finish

Any wood paneling must be treated with an approved fire retardant paint and must meet a minimum Class 'C' or greater flame spread. If mill lumber with Varnish is present in the home it must also be treated.
(Does not include knotty pine or cabinets).

**Required for facilities with 4 to 6 clients under 2018 North Carolina State Building Codes, 428.2.3.*

***DHSR also requires this protection in any licensed facility with this type of wood paneling. Treating wood paneling is added protection for the clients in the event of a fire.*



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DHSR MINIMUM PHYSICAL PLANT REQUIREMENTS
(Applicable Building Code Requirements)

The listed paints or additives may be purchased from your local paint dealer, hardware store, or you may search online to locate a dealer who sells the product. After your purchase maintain copies of your receipts as verification of your purchase.



Flame Control - Fire Retardant Paint
Contact: **Flame Control Coatings, LLC**
Phone: 716-282-1399



FR-1 - Fire Retardant Paint Additive for Water Based Latex Paints
Contact: **Project Fire Safety, Inc.**
Phone: 800-468-2876



Flame Guard - Fire Retardant Treatment for Water Based Latex Paints
Contact: **Hy-Tech Thermal Solutions**
Phone: 321-984-9777

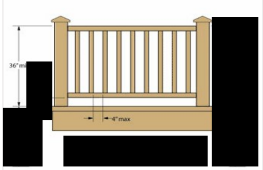
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MINIMUM PHYSICAL PLANT REQUIREMENTS

(Applicable Building Code Requirements)



Railings

Porches, balconies or raised floor surfaces that are 30" or more above grade must have guardrails not less than 36" in height.

***For the safety of clients, staff, and visitors, consideration should be to provide railings for porches, balconies, or raised floor surfaces regardless how far above grade.**

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MINIMUM PHYSICAL PLANT REQUIREMENTS

(Applicable Building Code Requirements)



Emergency Egress

Every sleeping room must have at least one operable window OR an exterior door that is approved for emergency egress. The window size and clear opening must be in accordance with the requirements at the time the facility was built.

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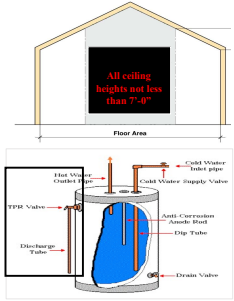
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MINIMUM PHYSICAL PLANT REQUIREMENTS

(Applicable Building Code Requirements)



Minimum Ceiling Height

Residential ceiling heights must be no less than 7 feet for every room in the house.

Discharge Relief Valve

The discharge relief valve should terminate no less than 6" above the floor and may be piped to the outside of the home or piped to a drain pan (must not terminate under the home). For example, CPVC or Copper piping or other material acceptable by Code.

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MINIMUM PHYSICAL PLANT REQUIREMENTS

(Applicable Building Code Requirements)



2-Story Homes – Remote Exit

If the home is requesting 4 to 6 clients or if the home is a two-story home, the home must meet the requirements of **2018 NC Building Code, Section 428.2.1** which requires each normally occupied story of the facility shall have two remotely located exits.

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MINIMUM PHYSICAL PLANT REQUIREMENTS

(Applicable Building Code Requirements)

Manufactured/Mobile and Modular Home Use Within the MHL Program

- **Manufactured/Mobile Homes** may serve three or fewer residents including occupants of the facility that require care by the caregivers
- **Manufactured/Mobile Homes** may be licensed under .5600 Supervised Living or .5100 Community Respite Services programs only
- **Modular Homes** may serve any program as they are classified as Single Family Residential
- **Manufactured/Mobile Homes and Modular Homes** still require the approvals from the local jurisdiction

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MINIMUM PHYSICAL PLANT REQUIREMENTS

(Applicable Building Code Requirements)

Manufactured/Mobile and Modular Home Use Within the MHL Program

How Manufactured/Mobile Homes are Identified

HUD Certification Label for Manufactured/Mobile Homes

This label is the manufacturers certification that the home was manufactured in accordance with HUD's Construction and Safety Standards that were in effect at the time the home was manufactured. **The Certification Label is usually located on the outside of the home, generally on the front, left corner or on the rear, left corner.**



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MINIMUM PHYSICAL PLANT REQUIREMENTS (Applicable Building Code Requirements) Manufactured/Mobile and Modular Home Use Within the MHL Program

How Modular Homes are Identified

**North Carolina Validation
Stamp for Modular Homes**

This label and the Building Manufacturer's Data Plate certifies the structure has been manufactured and inspected in accordance with the North Carolina's inspection requirements. The **Validation Stamp** is usually located in the cabinet above the range hood or in a utility closet.



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Construction Section

Frequently asked questions

***If the answer to questions you have are not in this presentation,
please contact the Construction Section Help Desk at (919) 855-3893**

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What are my options if my bedrooms don't have the required square footage?

The Licensure Rules are the minimum requirements that all facilities to be licensed are required to meet. It may be necessary to limit the capacity of the facility due to bedroom sizes or renovate the facility to ensure the minimum requirements are met.



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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

2. Can a client access a bedroom through another client's bedroom?

No. Access to clients' bedrooms cannot be through another room being occupied by a client as a bedroom.

3. If I don't have built-in closets can it still be used as a bedroom?

Yes, but a wardrobe, dresser, or other means to store clothing and other personal items must be provided.



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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

4. I received notice from the Construction Section that my application has been received. When will I get an inspection?

- Once your application is received, the construction invoice outlining the appropriate fee will be emailed to you.*
- The construction fee must be returned and paid before a review and/or an initial inspection can be done.*
- If an initial inspection is warranted in lieu of a review, an inspection will be scheduled 3-4 weeks after payment is received. If your application is for 4 or more ambulatory or non-ambulatory clients, a project plan review must be sent out prior to any inspections being scheduled and performed.*
- The individual listed on the application as the contact person will be notified to schedule the inspection, so accurate information must be provided.*

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

5. Can Construction inspect my facility before I submit my application?

No. You will be invoiced by Construction. Once that fee has been paid Construction will make an onsite inspection visit to your facility (if warranted).

6. Are my clients allowed to smoke in my facility?

House Bill 1294 Section 3, Article 1 of Chapter 122C of the General Statutes prohibits smoking inside licensed facilities by any person living or employed at such location.



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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

7. If I have a second story will I be required to install an exterior exit at that location?

Yes. If you have 4 or more residents, even if the upstairs will be used as office space for staff.

8. Will a handicap ramp be required?

Depends. If you provide services for a non-ambulatory client and those non-ambulatory clients have a physical impairment that requires a handicap ramp; i.e. wheelchair, walker, etc., then a ramp(s) will be required.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

9. Am I required to have a fire retardant on my interior walls?

If the walls have wood paneling, they must be treated with an approved fire retardant paint unless documentation is provided that verifies the finish is a Class C or higher. Knotty Pine, mill lumber with no varnish finish is acceptable. If mill lumber has varnish it must be treated.*

**Please see Slides #28 and #29 for more information on this.*

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Program Review Overview

- ✓ Shift focus from physical environment to programmatic elements
 - Policies
 - Staffing
 - Service Delivery
 - Compliance Readiness
- ✓ L&T Team reviews agency materials for licensure & service standards
- ✓ **Important Note:** For day facilities, no physical plant review; applications go directly to L&T Team Leader

! Agency MUST have all staff hired & in place before licensure is granted.

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Scheduling the Program Review



- ✓ L&T Team contacts agency using email from application
 - Use an email address you check frequently
- ✓ Applicant selects from available virtual review dates
- ✓ Program review period allows up to **six months**

Program Review Begins

Timeline Depends on Readiness
Speed influenced by applicant preparedness & complete, accurate submissions

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Program Review Kickoff



At the start of the program review, we ask targeted **questions** about your agency and specific service category to ensure you have a thorough understanding of the program you intend to open.

To be eligible for licensure, you must demonstrate knowledge of the service model & articulate your vision for how services will be delivered.

- 💡 Begin by discussing the agency's vision to understand their goals and readiness
- 💡 Ask targeted questions about the agency & specific service category to ensure knowledge
- 💡 Build a realistic timeline tailored to the applicant's preparedness

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Understanding IRIS

IRIS stands for Incident Response Improvement System. It's North Carolina's online platform for reporting serious incidents involving individuals receiving behavioral health, developmental disability, or substance use services.



- ✓ **Who Uses It:** Any Licensed provider.
 - Includes residential facilities and day programs
- ⚠️ **What Gets Reported:** IRIS is used for **Level II and Level III** incidents, including:
 - Abuse, neglect, or exploitation
 - Serious injuries or deaths
 - Law enforcement involvement
 - Any event that threatens consumer safety or rights
- 📄 **How to Submit:** Reports are submitted online at iris.ncdhhs.gov. You'll need:
 - Consumer details
 - Incident type and level
 - Narrative description
 - Actions taken and follow-up plan

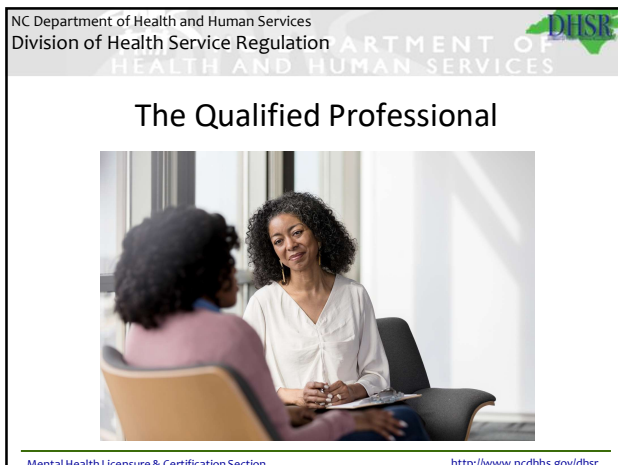
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Orientation Essentials for Facility Staff



- General Organization Orientation**
Understand how the agency operates, its structure, and mission. Sets the tone for everything that follows.
- Client Rights**
Required training for all staff on dignity, autonomy, and protection
- Confidentiality**
Understand how to handle sensitive information in compliance with HIPAA and agency policy
- Population-Specific Training**
Tailor training to your licensure category, whether it's mental health, developmental disabilities, or substance use

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First Aid Training



CPR Training



When it comes to CPR training, we want to be very clear: Online-only CPR courses are not accepted.

- Online-Only Courses**
These programs use eLearning tools like dramatizations, simulations, and animations to teach CPR concepts. But here's the issue: **they do not include any in-person, hands-on practice.** That means they **do not** meet the licensure requirement.
- Blended Courses**
Blended CPR courses also use eLearning tools - **but here's the key difference:** After completing the online portion, students must attend a structured, in-person **BLS Hands-On Session** with certified instructor.

Doctors and Nurses must also have CPR training.

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Medication Administration Training In-Person

All staff must receive it if the facility stores/administers medication.



Training Must Be Conducted

- Yes**
 - Registered Nurses (RNs)
 - Physicians (MDs)
 - Pharmacists
- No**
 - Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)
 - Pharmacy Technicians

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Policies & Procedures Manual

 Licensees must submit written P&Ps before a license can be issued

! If you need help, refer to the FAQs or the Policy Worksheet

! If your P&P manual is incomplete or incorrect, it will be returned for revision

! The worksheet is not a substitute for the regulations. It's a guide—not a replacement

THIS IS YOUR AGENCY'S MANUAL

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Policies and Procedures Manual

 **Purpose**
Aligns operations with mission and laws

 **Benefits**
Demonstrates standards and clarifies roles

 **Differences**
Policies are rules. Procedures are instructions.

 **Getting Started**
Begin with relevant regulations

 **Five-Step Process**
Create, draft, approve, implement, review

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Policy & Procedure Worksheet

Agencies must submit written Policies and Procedures (P&P) for initial or change reviews. (Exempt per agency policy); the reflect the program scope of care. Follow these steps to complete and submit the worksheet:

- Use the Worksheet Correctly**
 - Use the exact page numbers as your P&P manual where each required policy appears.
 - If you enter "N/A" or "N/A", explain why in the comment box.
- Submit as PDF**
 - P&P manual → use PDF file
 - Policy worksheet → separate PDF file
- Be Accurate**
 - Worksheet must be completed and correct. Incomplete or incorrect ones will be returned.
- Don't Use Flowcharts as Policies**
 - Flowcharts are not accepted as policy documents.
- Restrictive Interventions**
 - If your agency uses restrictive interventions, you must complete highlighted areas on pages 16-22 of the worksheet.

Policy Name	Page	Service Category
Policy Name	Page	Service Category
Comment/Notes		Date of Review

Policy Number	Policy Name	Policy Description	Policy Status	Policy Review Date	Policy Reviewer
1	Policy Name	Policy Description	Policy Status	Policy Review Date	Policy Reviewer
2	Policy Name	Policy Description	Policy Status	Policy Review Date	Policy Reviewer
3	Policy Name	Policy Description	Policy Status	Policy Review Date	Policy Reviewer
4	Policy Name	Policy Description	Policy Status	Policy Review Date	Policy Reviewer
5	Policy Name	Policy Description	Policy Status	Policy Review Date	Policy Reviewer
6	Policy Name	Policy Description	Policy Status	Policy Review Date	Policy Reviewer
7	Policy Name	Policy Description	Policy Status	Policy Review Date	Policy Reviewer
8	Policy Name	Policy Description	Policy Status	Policy Review Date	Policy Reviewer
9	Policy Name	Policy Description	Policy Status	Policy Review Date	Policy Reviewer
10	Policy Name	Policy Description	Policy Status	Policy Review Date	Policy Reviewer
11	Policy Name	Policy Description	Policy Status	Policy Review Date	Policy Reviewer
12	Policy Name	Policy Description	Policy Status	Policy Review Date	Policy Reviewer
13	Policy Name	Policy Description	Policy Status	Policy Review Date	Policy Reviewer
14	Policy Name	Policy Description	Policy Status	Policy Review Date	Policy Reviewer
15	Policy Name	Policy Description	Policy Status	Policy Review Date	Policy Reviewer
16	Policy Name	Policy Description	Policy Status	Policy Review Date	Policy Reviewer
17	Policy Name	Policy Description	Policy Status	Policy Review Date	Policy Reviewer
18	Policy Name	Policy Description	Policy Status	Policy Review Date	Policy Reviewer
19	Policy Name	Policy Description	Policy Status	Policy Review Date	Policy Reviewer
20	Policy Name	Policy Description	Policy Status	Policy Review Date	Policy Reviewer
21	Policy Name	Policy Description	Policy Status	Policy Review Date	Policy Reviewer
22	Policy Name	Policy Description	Policy Status	Policy Review Date	Policy Reviewer

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DHSR Website Bookmark this!

You can download and print Mental Health Rules and General Statutes at
<https://info.ncdhhs.gov/dhsr/mhlcs/rules.html#rules>



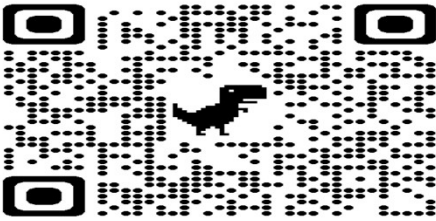
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NCAC Rules and General Statutes



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NC Incident Response Improvement System (IRIS)



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DHSR Enterprise

[Register or sign in to DHSR Enterprise](#)
[Renew Application Sign-In](#)
[DHSR Enterprise Training](#)



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Contact Information

Division of Health Service Regulation
Mental Health Licensure & Certification Section
2718 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-2718

<http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dhsr/mhlcs/mhstaff.html>
 Stacy Silvia Team Leader
stacy.silvia@dhhs.nc.gov

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Forms

[Initial Mental Health Licensure Application](#)
[Mental Health Change of Licensure Application](#)
[Facility Walk-Through Form](#)
[List of Needed Materials for Initial and Change Licensure review](#)
[Policies & Procedures Worksheets](#)

Provider Forms
[N.C. Licensed Care Facilities Disaster Plan Portal](#)

- You must have an NCID account to access the portal.
- you can register for a [free NCID account online](#).

[Emergency Relocation of Clients form](#)

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LME/MCO

DMH/DD/SAS LME/MCO Contact Information

- <http://www.ncdhhs.gov/mhddsas/lmeonbluebyname.htm>
- <http://www.ncdhhs.gov/mhddsas/lmeonblue.htm>

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Q&A

There is also a F&Q on the [DHSR Website](#)




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