# Helping Family Child Care Providers Navigate Child Care Licensing Systems





This brief highlights strategies that licensing agency staff—as well as external entities who support family child care (FCC) providers, such as subsidy agencies, quality rating and improvement system coaches, staffed networks, child care resource and referral agencies, and others—can use to address provider-reported challenges. This resource is organized into two sections: 1) obtaining an FCC license and 2) maintaining an FCC license. Each section offers ways for licensing agencies and their partners to transform licensing infrastructure to respond more effectively to FCC providers' experiences and realities. This brief also presents examples of how states have implemented some of these strategies. Implementing responsive licensing strategies can help to rebuild and sustain the supply of licensed FCC.

# Introduction

Millions of children and families across the United States use home-based child care—care provided by licensed family child care (FCC) providers and family, friend, and neighbor (FFN) providers who are legally-exempt from licensing. Yet, recent national surveys show that the number of FCC providers who are licensed by their state has significantly declined in the past decade (2005-2017). Research suggests that home-based child care may differ from child care in centers in several ways. These distinct features include family-like settings, mixed-age groups of children, cultural congruence and the culturally and linguistically sustaining practices that may accompany it, flexible scheduling, and opportunities for informal learning. These features may contribute to quality and positive outcomes for children.

The Multi-State Study of Family Child Care Decline and Supply<sup>2</sup> found that providers leave licensed FCC for many reasons. The findings indicated that challenges related to participation in early care and education systems, in particular the licensing system, were most commonly reported among former FCC providers. This brief uses data from the Multi-State Study of Family Child Care Decline and Supply to describe the challenges FCC providers face in becoming and staying licensed and offers strategies to sustain and build FCC supply.

### Who Is This Brief For, and How Can They Use It?

This brief is for the following audiences:

- · Licensing agencies and their staff
- Entities outside of licensing, including the following:
  - Early childhood policy systems that intersect with licensing, such as the Child and Adult Care Food Program
  - Local community organizations that support FCC providers, with or without government funding, such as child care resource and referral agencies, FCC networks, and local provider-run associations
  - Advocates working to address changes to licensing processes

They can use this brief to do the following:

- · Develop strategies to help FCC providers obtain a license
- Develop strategies to help FCC providers maintain their license
- · Understand the challenges FCC providers face as they interact with the licensing system
- Learn about states' strategies to help FCC providers navigate licensing

They can also use this brief to do the following:

- Transform licensing infrastructure to be more responsive to the experiences and realities of FCC providers
- Create more equitable licensing experiences for FCC providers
- · Rebuild and sustain the supply of licensed FCC

The Multi-State Study of Family Child Care Decline and Supply was an exploratory study in four states (California, Florida, Massachusetts, and Wisconsin) conducted by the Erikson Institute team. The study included a nonrepresentative sample of 25 focus groups with 149 current FCC educators and 30 interviews with former FCC providers. It intentionally oversampled providers of color and providers whose preferred language was Spanish to understand their experiences. Both published and unpublished data from the study are cited throughout this brief.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In this brief we use the term licensed to refer to state regulations that determine thresholds for numbers of children in care as well as health and safety requirements. Some states use terms such as certification or registration to describe regulatory processes for operating an FCC program.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Bromer, J., Porter, T., Melvin, S., & Ragonese-Barnes, M. (2021). Family child care educators' perspectives on leaving, staying, and entering the field: Findings from the Multi-State Study of Family Child Care Decline and Supply. Herr Research Center, Erikson Institute. <a href="https://www.erikson.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/FCD\_DeclineStudy\_2021.pdf">https://www.erikson.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/FCD\_DeclineStudy\_2021.pdf</a>.

# **Navigating the Road to Licensure**

Figure 1. Strategies for Easing the Licensure Process

# **Navigating the Road To Licensure** FCC Providers' Road to Licensure **Licensing System Strategies** Learn about the licensing process **Entry to Licensure** · Offer clear information Complete background check process Create a timely licensing process Complete required trainings · Help providers afford start-up costs Prepare space to meet requirements Make inspection visits more Submit applications welcoming Receive external visits and approvals · Increase access to information and professional development Receive licensing inspection and approvals Complete ongoing training and professional Increase trust between providers development and licensors during inspections Continue complying with requirements and receiving ongoing monitoring Support and retain staff Submit license-renewal application and receive · Create consistent inspection inspection practices across staff

Figure 1 summarizes the typical and common steps FCC providers take to become licensed and maintain their license. These steps may vary by locality. It also highlights broad strategies that licensing systems and their partners—such as subsidy, quality rating and improvement systems, and FCC networks—can take to ease the process for providers. The next section describes how these strategies can help providers navigate licensing and offers specific examples of how licensing systems and their partners can implement these strategies.

# Obtaining an FCC License: Roadblocks and Strategies

FCC providers decide to become licensed for many reasons. Providers in the Multi-State Study of Family Child Care Decline and Supply reported that being licensed may signal to families that FCC programs are safe. It may also offer providers increased access to higher and more stable incomes through the possibility of increased capacity. FCC providers in the Multi-State Study of Family Child Care Decline and Supply reported facing numerous challenges, that often intersect with each other, in their efforts to become licensed. This section outlines strategies that licensing agencies and others may take to help eliminate some of these challenges.

#### **Communication and Access to Information**

Clear and transparent information about licensing regulations and the licensing start-up process can facilitate entry into licensure for FCC providers. FCC providers reported a lack of clear and consistent information about licensing requirements and other expectations. FCC providers who primarily speak languages other than English especially need access to accurate information.

"It took years for me, really, to get into it enough to know everything that I had to do [to get licensed] ... I couldn't even tell you right now if I had to sit down and tell somebody how to go from point A to point B ... It's a lot. It was really a lot more than I thought it would be." -FCC provider

# Strategies to Offer Clear Information about Obtaining an FCC License

Develop resources in plain language, iv such as the following:

- · Clear and easy-to-use websites
- Frequently asked questions documents
- · Toolkits that include detailed checklists
- Interpretive guidelines for rules and regulations
- Short how-to videos

Consider creating positions for licensing staff who are dedicated to helping providers navigate pre- and initial licensure.

Offer an orientation with a well-trained, qualified person to go over regulations and requirements.

Create live help lines or chat features with dedicated staff to troubleshoot licensing-process questions.

Make resources available in languages spoken by providers:

- Translate written and web resources, including forms.
- · Make trainings available in languages other than English.
- Staff live help lines or chat features with staff who speak languages other than English

### **Processing Time**

FCC providers reported lengthy processing times for getting their license. Although these delays may not all be within a licensing agency's purview, a review of possible barriers to efficient processing may identify strategies for timely licensing processes. Issues may include the following:

- 1. Long periods between submission and approval of criminal background checks, fingerprinting, and other required documentation, such as local business licenses
- 2. Required training workshops that were limited in number or scheduled at difficult times, or both
- 3. Long waits to schedule inspection visits, especially for providers in rural areas

"[Getting fingerprinted] was time consuming ... I had to wait because they made a mistake ... It's just a lot of mistakes here, and there are things that they don't inform you [of] that [take] a long time." -FCC provider

#### **Strategies for Timely Licensing Processes**

- · Complete a workload analysis—including a review of external processes—to understand how and where delays are happening and to inform more efficient processes.
- Communicate with providers about the approximate time to allow for each step in the process.
- Ensure that applicants know about external approvals that are needed to minimize additional delays.
- Consider web-based—in addition to paper-based—applications and documentation to offer options for providers.
- Create a centralized tracking system for all applications and use text alerts to inform providers of issues or next steps.
- Streamline the relicensing process for providers who move homes or close and reopen, such as through the use of a consistent licensing ID number and expedited process.

### Start-Up Costs

Licensing systems can coordinate with other state systems, such as subsidy or quality rating and improvement systems (for example, by using Child Care and Development Fund pandemic recovery dollars'), as well as community organizations, such as FCC networks, to offset the costs of becoming licensed. It may be particularly important to target these supports to providers who rent their homes especially those from predominantly Black communities who face housing inequities—since these providers may have less access to the capital to make required changes to their care spaces. Assistance with these start-up costs might incentivize more providers to get a license.

Providers reported many costs associated with starting a licensed FCC business. These costs may include the following:

- Expenses for home renovations, required materials, and equipment to comply with regulations related to the child care environment
- Fees or tuition for required training and education
- · Fees for comprehensive background checks and fingerprint records for household members

"When you start out, you have to invest a lot of money because it's a family day care. It has to have a setup with a playground, their beds, the space [for] learning; there is a lot to invest in, hundreds of dollars." —FCC provider

# **Strategies for Helping Providers Afford Start-Up Costs**

Licensing agencies and external entities (for example, FCC networks) can provide grants or incentives to cover the following:

- Licensing application—and reapplication—fees
- Business license fees
- · Background check fees
- Home renovation costs
- Materials and equipment costs, including health and safety materials costs

#### **Initial Licensing Inspections**

Making the inspection process more welcoming and supportive might encourage more providers to make it through that final step of the licensing process. FCC providers reported anxiety or fear related to inspection visits. Some providers were intimidated by the idea of having someone from the government come into their home or had heard negative stories from their peers.

"I think that's the thing that people didn't like; they felt intimidated by the state staff coming in versus supported." —FCC provider

### **Strategies for Making Inspection Visits More Welcoming**

- Create a video or pamphlet that demonstrates (or clarifies) the process.
- Offer supportive prelicensing or mock inspection visits.
- Promote peer mentoring that can take the fear out of the inspection and provides formal leadership opportunities for experienced providers.
- Train inspectors in relationship-based, strengths-based, and culturally and linguistically responsive practices<sup>vi</sup> that will help providers feel supported.
- · Move toward a quality improvement approach to licensing rather than an approach based solely on compliance.

# Maintaining an FCC License: Roadblocks and Strategies

FCC providers in the Multi-State Study of Family Child Care Decline and Supply reported facing further challenges in maintaining their licenses. This section outlines strategies that licensing agencies and their partners may take to ease some of these challenges.

#### **New Requirements and Costs**

•-(S)-• Building in additional financial and administrative supports can help providers meet new requirements and keep them licensed. FCC providers reported that new licensing requirements could often cost them time and money. Some examples include retrofitting existing fencing, replacing cribs, or closing the program to attend trainings. While the cost of any one requirement may seem minimal, multiple new requirements at the same time can add up. FCC providers reported low incomes and working alone for long hours, making it challenging to implement new requirements.

"Because the state was coming up with statutes or rules that were very hard for me as an in-home day care provider to meet, and [because] they just don't pay enough, everything I received went straight back into the day care." -FCC provider

### Strategies for Helping Providers Meet New Licensing Requirements

Communicate changes to licensing requirements in a timely manner using a variety of communication strategies, such as the following:

- Social media and infographics
- Text message alerts with links to more information
- Webinars with question and answer sessions

Connect providers to resources that can offer financial supports:

- Offer grants and other financial or material supports to offset the costs of new requirements and new materials
- Offer required trainings at low or no cost

Connect providers with resources to help them complete requirements:

- Substitute pools
- Administrative support

### **Access to Information and Professional Development**

Ensuring that information and professional development are consistently offered in the languages providers speak and that opportunities are offered at convenient times and locations might allow providers to enhance their program practices. FCC providers who speak languages other than English reported being unable to access available trainings or coursework. Lack of transportation to attend required trainings for licensing was reported in other studies.vii

"Trainings [should be] in both languages [English and Spanish]. Regulations are only in English. Many people haven't been able to read through them because they don't understand them." -FCC provider

# Strategies to Increase Access to Information and Professional Development

- Provide licensing regulations and materials in multiple languages simultaneously.
- Offer supports and trainings in languages that match those spoken in the community and ensure that the number and frequency of these supports match the proportion of providers who speak each language.
- Offer required trainings in multiple locations at convenient times that are easy for providers to access.
- Offer required trainings synchronously and asynchronously in a virtual platform that is accessible through smart phone, tablet, or desktop.

#### **Understanding and Trust during Licensing Inspections**

Within the regulatory guidelines designed to keep children safe, ensuring that licensors acknowledge the power dynamics during inspection visits and understand the FCC setting may help providers comply with regulations and remain in the profession. Some FCC providers reported that licensors often did not acknowledge the differences between a center and licensed FCC in a home. Providers talked about challenges with licensors who took a "one size fits all" approach and were overly critical of or did not understand child care in a home setting. For example, providers reported that licensors did not recognize that FCC programs did not need to look like a classroom to meet licensing requirements. Some providers reported that licensors inspected rooms in their home that were not used for the FCC program. In addition, some providers, especially Black and Latinx providers, felt that licensors were inconsiderate during visits and came into their homes with a deficit mindset.

"Never let a licensor walk into a house and treat the owner/operator ... as if they've done something wrong and you're going to prove it. What I'm saying is, I want to be seen as if I'm professional, not because you're sitting at my kitchen table." -FCC provider

# Strategies for Increasing Trust between Providers and Licensors during Inspections

Clarify the role of the licensor and what providers can expect from inspections.

Offer training for licensing staff that focuses on the following:

- Supporting FCC providers
- Understanding the structural characteristics and working conditions of FCC homes
- Relationship-based approaches that recognize the strengths of FCC and that encourage licensors to understand FCC provider perspectives
- Reflective practice<sup>viii</sup>
- · Balance of enforcement and technical assistance
- Anti-bias training
- Cultural and linguistic responsiveness

Recruit, hire, and retain licensing staff who speak the languages and are grounded in the cultures of providers in their caseloads.

Create an FCC advisory board to routinely meet with and inform the licensing agency.

Create processes to allow providers to change licensing violations without penalty.

- Reduce or eliminate fines
- Allow a waiting period before inspection reports are made public
- · Create a system for external review of violations

#### **Interpretation of Regulations Across Staff**

Improving consistency in enforcement implementation across licensing staff could reduce stress for providers. Shifting caseloads of licensors may make it difficult for FCC providers to know whom to call when they have a question or problem. Inconsistencies in how licensing staff interpret regulations and violations and the information they share with providers may stem from a lack of reliable procedures in the implementation of licensing regulations. Providers reported experiencing stress when inconsistent information was shared by different licensors, as this could make providers vulnerable to violations that could affect their licensing status.

"Every time you switch licensors, they can come in and re-evaluate everything because rules and things that were okay with the first licensor aren't necessarily okay with the next licensor. She deems it unsafe. She deems it this or that. It's written in black and white, but there is a whole grey ocean, and it's completely up to them and how they decide." -FCC provider

# Strategies to Support and Retain Staff and to Create Consistent Inspection **Practices across Staff**

Employ licensing staff retention strategies, such as the following:

- Create manageable caseloads
- Provide fair compensation
- Use reflective supervision
- Offer stress reduction supports

Implement oversight procedures, such as the following:

- Provide initial training (such as the National Association for Regulatory Administration's National Regulatory Professional Credential) and ongoing training and supervision for licensing staff to help with consistent monitoring and interpretation of rules (including training on communicating the difference between a recommendation and a regulation)
- · Ensure that licensors are trained across caseloads to provide familiarity between providers and the licensing team
- · Implement preliminary meetings between providers and new licensing staff to get to know one another and ask questions before the first monitoring visits
- Analyze violation and enforcement data across licensors and regions to identify potential inconsistencies or inequities and track progress toward consistency and equity
- Create and maintain interpretive guidelines for licensing rules

# **Additional Supports for FCC Providers**

In addition to the strategies for licensing agencies described above, you can leverage other early care and education systems (for example, subsidy, quality rating and improvement systems, Child and Adult Care Food Program) and community programs (for example, FCC networks and child care resource and referral agencies) to help support providers through this process.

FCC providers reported that subsidy agency coaches, network staff, and peer mentors all supported them in obtaining and maintaining their licenses. These supports were often offered informally, such as through text, phone, and in-person conversations. Leveraging these existing positive relationships may help providers navigate the licensing process from initial application through renewals and policy changes.

#### **FCC Network Support**

"The thing that I like about having a [network] is, in a couple seconds, I can reach someone. We have their phone numbers ... Most of them are comfortable with texting, so you can get a response within a couple seconds ... And a lot of times in day care, if you have a quick question or, you know, an issue ... it's kind of immediate. So yeah, I think they're extremely helpful."

#### **Peer Mentoring and Local Association Support**

"If the state really wants to keep these young providers in the business, they will try to get some of the older ones to go in from time to time because we've been there and we're not going to intimidate them. You feel more comfortable with us than the state."

#### **Subsidy Agency Support**

"Well, I know for me ... [I've been] facing relicensing challenges over the last long time, super long time. The director of our system [FCC subsidy agency] has actually gone to bat for me, and tried to have [a] conversation with licensing and the regional director, and followed up with emails, and kept in contact with me weekly to make sure that it's ongoing, and that if there's anything that she can do to support me that she's there."

#### Strategies to Build Community Supports for FCC

- · Invest in the development of FCC networks, which can (among other functions) support providers through the licensing process through visits to provider homes, individual consultation, training, and peer support.
- Invest in local FCC associations, which can play a role in reaching providers who are seeking to become licensed or maintain their license.
- Build on existing infrastructure, such as child care resource and referral agencies or quality rating and improvement system coaches, or both, who can help providers access resources and connect with other providers.

# **State and Community Examples**

#### **Ombudsman Office, Minnesota**

In 2021, the Minnesota legislature passed a law establishing an Ombudsman Office to help FCC providers navigate the licensing system. The Ombudsman Office was recommended by the Family Child Care Task Force, a 25-member group created by the legislature in 2019 consisting of FCC providers, parents, and other key constituents. The Ombudsman Office advocates for FCC providers to address the full range of the licensing process, including application, monitoring, and compliance. The legislation stipulates that the Ombudsman Office must operate a warmline to answer questions and provide support. Other recommendations from the Task Force include making application forms available in languages that providers speak, developing plain language training to help providers understand rules, and adding a search function to the Minnesota Department of Human Services' frequently asked questions page with links to relevant information, including rules or statutes.

Minn. Stat. § 245.975 Minnesota Family Child Care Task Force: Legislative Report

#### The Institute for Racial Equity and Excellence, Colorado

The Institute for Racial Equity and Excellence (IREE) provides licensing services in three central Colorado counties (Arapahoe, El Paso, and Pueblo). These services are part of IREE's broader mission to "create inclusive environments and to ensure equity and social justice at all levels of society." IREE uses the Culturally Responsive Community Based Licensing model, developed by Dr. Rosemarie Allen. This model focuses on meeting the needs of providers, families, and children while ensuring compliance with licensing standards. This relationship-based approach to licensing focuses on creating authentic, reciprocal connections with providers that acknowledge power dynamics in the licensing process. The IREE licensing team also provides a variety of services, including facilitating town hall meetings, appointments, and webinars between community members and leadership, as well as individualized technical assistance.

Institute for Racial Equity and Excellence

#### Family Child Care Home Navigator Program and Licensing Incentives, Colorado

In response to a documented decline in FCC supply and the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, Colorado used federal stimulus funds to increase access to licensed, high-quality child care across the state, including in FCC. Colorado invested more than \$3 million of its Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act funds to create a new Family Child Care Home Navigator Program. This program funds part- or full-time staff at each of the state's early childhood councils to support FFN and licensed FCC providers in getting their license; participating in other policy systems; and connecting with supports and resources related to professional development, business practices, and quality improvement. Colorado also used American Rescue Plan Act funds to create one-time \$5,000 incentive payments to become a licensed child care provider.

State and Federal Stimulus Strategies: Ensure All Families Have Equitable and Easy Access

#### **Community Care Licensing Division, California**

In California, the Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD) has invested in a variety of non-enforcement technical assistance supports around the licensing process in addition to prelicensing visits offered by enforcement staff. The Child Care Advocate Program, created in 1984, provides information about licensing to providers, parents, and communities. The recently created Technical Support Program funds four regional staff members to offer intensive onsite support to providers who need additional support meeting licensing requirements and getting their licenses. Providers must be referred to this program, and participants are often FCC homes in remote desert areas with access to fewer local supports. This program also develops resource guides to communicate best practices and changes to regulations and statutes. Regional CCLD offices are also connected with child care resource and referral agencies in their areas that hold stakeholder meetings, offer prelicensing trainings and visits to providers, provide ongoing professional development trainings, and sometimes offer grants to cover licensing costs.

Resource Guides for Licensees Child Care Advocate Program

#### The Child Care Initiative Project, California

The Child Care Initiative Project (CCIP) aims to expand the supply of licensed FCC through recruitment. training, and support for license-exempt caregivers (FFN) and provide support for existing FCC providers. Established in 1985 with funds from the California Department of Education (now through the California Department of Social Services), CCIP is offered through child care resource and referral agencies in all of California's 58 counties.

Services for caregivers who seek to become licensed include technical assistance on applications, prelicensing visits, and compliance with health and safety requirements. Services also include training and home visits, which are offered in multiple languages, including Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, Russian, Hmong, and Farsi. In addition, the initiative offers Play and Learn playgroups for FFN caregivers.

The CCIP curriculum—developed by the California Resource and Referral Network—has three parts: 1) health and safety, which aligns with Child Care and Development Fund topic areas; 2) Growing, Learning, and Caring, a play group curriculum; and 3) modules based on California's early childhood education competencies and business practices. The initiative has been replicated in whole or in part in Massachusetts, Michigan, Oregon, and Washington.

In its 2020–2021 budget, California approved a one-time, 2-year CCIP expansion, funded through American Rescue Plan Act funds, to increase recruitment and provide technical assistance to new providers trying to become licensed, especially in areas identified as lacking regulated child care programs. In addition to support for core training and educational supports, the funding includes stipends up to \$1,000 to cover fees and costs associated with licensing, such as materials and equipment.

California Child Care Initiative Project

Training Resources for Informal Caregivers: In Support of Family, Friend, and Neighbor Learning **Quality Funding Announcements** 

#### **Staffed Family Child Care Networks, Connecticut**

The Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, in partnership with private philanthropy, funds a network of 12 staffed family child care networks to improve FCC quality. The staffed family child care networks, which include family child care resource centers, social service agencies, and free-standing organizations that exclusively operate FCC networks, provide a range of services. Network services include: 1) individual coaching and consultation including access to nurse consultants; 2) professional development; 3) financial supports such as bulk purchasing, tuition support, and tax preparation; and 4) access to funds for start-up. expansion, and quality improvement through a partnership with the Women's Business Development Council. To expand the supply of licensed FCC, the networks use a licensing toolkit developed by All Our Kin, an established free-standing network. The All Our Kin Toolkit includes application materials, health and safety supplies, vouchers to pay for first aid training, and curriculum materials such as educational toys and high-quality children's books.

Staffed Family Child Care Networks Connecticut Uses Strategic Investments to Boost Family Child Care Tool Kit Licensing Program

#### Infant Toddler Family Day Care, Virginia

Infant Toddler Family Day Care is a free-standing FCC network in Fairfax, Virginia. As a local licensing agency, it uses a structured peer-to-peer mentorship approach to help individuals through the licensing approval process from initial paperwork and background checks through the licensing inspection visit. The process begins with an initial home inspection by the network's workforce development director. This is followed by a classroom training in CPR and first aid and medication administration training for mentees. In addition, mentees spend 40 hours over several weeks in a mentor FCC provider's home. During their time in a mentor's home, new providers learn health and safety routines such as handwashing and proper sleep safety, and they participate in activities with the children, with at least one visit to observe drop-off and pick-up routines with families. At the end of the process, the mentor conducts a home visit of the new provider's FCC program before the formal licensing inspection. Mentors must be enrolled in the network for at least 2 years and have a Child Development Associate, a community college certificate, or a degree in early childhood or a related field. Mentors are recommended by specialists in the network. Mentor preparation includes a training, practice conducting a home inspection, and an observation of the mentor's interaction in her home with a mentee. The mentor-mentee relationship often continues after the mentee successfully achieves licensing.

Infant/Toddler Family Day Care

#### Growing Opportunities in Family Child Care, Montgomery County, Maryland

In 2020, the Early Childhood Services Division of the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services initiated the Growing Opportunities in Family Child Care initiative as part of an effort to recruit and sustain FCC and increase the number of FCC providers participating in the state's quality improvement system. Growing Opportunities in Family Child Care has four parts offered within a 4-6 month period: 1) orientation and initial licensing application and training; (2) preinspections, development of a business plan, and submission of the licensing packet; (3) assignment of a peer mentor, resources on environment arrangement and materials, curriculum selection, and policy and procedures development; and (4) final inspection and licensing approval. The division contracts with the Maryland Women's Business Center for 3 hours of core business courses and 10 hours of individual consultation. It also contracts with local associations for peer mentors. Between fiscal years 2020 and 2021, the initiative established 100 new FCC homes.

In the 2021 legislative session, the Maryland Assembly passed House Bill 944/Senate Bill 711. The bill, later signed into law, established the Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program in the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). On or before September 1, 2022, at least three grants, each of which does not exceed \$150,000, are to be awarded to establish and support family child care providers in the State. Jurisdictions or jurisdictions jointly with the Child Care Resource Center are eligible to apply for the grants and administer the local program. These would be pilot programs to test effective strategies to be evaluated for possible future expansion to additional jurisdictions.

Montgomery County Early Care & Education Initiative Action Plan 2020 Meeting the Need for Family Child Care in Metropolitan Atlanta: A Blueprint for Action Bill establishing the Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program

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