

Department of Human Services Licensing Division: Support to Counties

Program Evaluation
February 16, 2024

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Key Findings

- DHS has generally done a good job supporting counties
- DHS has provided less support tailored to Community Residential Settings (CRS) licensors
- Licensing responsibilities will soon be split among two departments

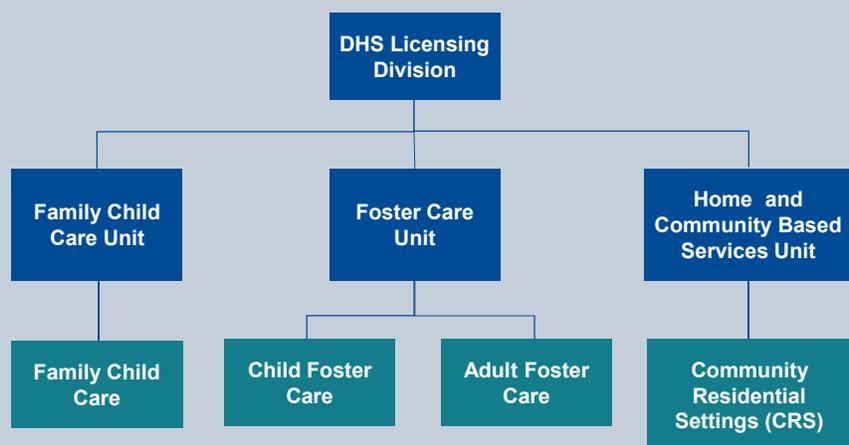
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State of Minnesota
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Human Services Licensing

- DHS oversees the licensing of human services providers
 - Direct licensing
 - County-delegated licensing

Programs with Delegated Licensing

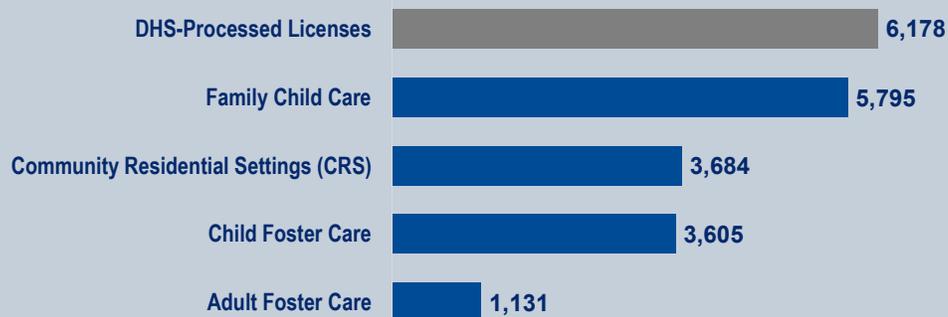


County Licensing Agencies

- 77 county licensing agencies
- Nearly 400 county licensors
- Varying workloads (pp. 6-7)

Licenses

Active Licenses, June 2023 (p. 4)



Licensing Responsibilities

County Licensing Agencies

- Accept applications
- Conduct inspections
- Recommend licensure or denial
- Monitor providers
- Recommend sanctions

DHS

- Issue or deny licenses
- Conduct investigations
- Sanction providers

DHS Support to County Licensors

- Trainings
- Optional meetings
- Newsletters
- Triage

DHS Support to County Licensors

- County licensors surveyed generally agreed that:
 - DHS provides useful support (pp. 15-16)
 - DHS provides clear guidance on licensing requirements (p. 17)



...I find it helpful to have a strong partnership with DHS. I don't hesitate to reach out if there is a need to consult on a certain situation. I look to DHS for consultation and advice in unique and difficult situations.

— County Licensor

DHS Support to CRS Licensors

- DHS has provided less targeted support to Community Residential Settings (CRS) licensors
 - Trainings not CRS-specific
 - No monthly meetings (prior to January 2024)
 - No regular newsletter
 - Reportedly slower response to triage inquiries

Recommendation: Improve support to CRS licensors

Written Communication

- DHS has not put certain guidance in writing
 - Some units do not share slides from optional meetings
 - No recaps of optional meetings
 - No newsletter archive



If changes are implemented and discussed at these meetings, minimally, something should go out in writing from DHS. This is not currently done which leads to inconsistency in licensing across the state.

— County Licensor

Recommendation: DHS should provide written guidance that is easily accessible to all county licensors

DHS-County Partnership

- County licensors surveyed (pp. 26-27):



Licensing Actions (Sanctions)

- Fines, conditional licenses, suspensions, revocations
- County licensing agencies recommend actions
- DHS takes final action
- DHS units have different timelines:
 - Family Child Care Unit: within **45 business days**
 - Foster Care Unit: within **120 calendar days**

Timeliness of Licensing Actions

- DHS has sometimes been slow to address county recommendations for licensing actions (pp. 29-30)
- In fiscal years 2019-2023:
 - Family Child Care Unit: processed 75% within recommended timeframe
 - Foster Care Unit: processed 58% within recommended timeframe
 - 13% of recommendations took more than 6 months

Recommendations: DHS should:

- Establish uniform timeframes
- Address all recommendations within those timeframes

Transitions

- Large-scale changes to delegated licensing (pp. 33-36)
 - Electronic checklist for licensing inspections
 - Project to recommend revised standards to Legislature
 - Project to update IT systems
 - Dozens of legislative changes to licensing standards
- DHS has made consistent efforts to engage county licensors

Establishment of New Department

- Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF)
 - Will assume DHS responsibilities for Family Child Care and Child Foster Care
 - Some licensors will be supported by both departments

Recommendation: DHS and DCYF should provide clear and consistent guidance on licensing roles

Recommendation: DCYF should adopt recommendations relevant to its activities