

June 12, 2026

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DCF Announces New Rule to Improve Quality of Care in Group Homes

Revised rule creates better licensing, regulation, and quality standards for youth receiving care and services in group home settings.

MADISON – The Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) today announced the approval of an administrative rule designed to improve licensing, regulation, and quality of care youth receive in group home settings. The revised rule aligns with [Wisconsin's Putting Families First efforts](#) that are transforming group care to be more trauma-sensitive and child centric with high-quality, community-based placement settings.

"To truly support youth in group homes, our rules must evolve. Raising the bar for care requires a system that prioritizes quality, values the voice of our young people, and centers decisions around what is best for the youth," said DCF Secretary Jeff Pertl. "These changes are helping Wisconsin create environments where youth with complex needs don't just get by – they thrive."

For all youth living in a group home setting, revisions to Wisconsin Administrative Code DCF 57 will provide higher levels of person-centered care. Some of the changes include:

- Enhanced licensee reporting requirements for increased flexibility and training
- Improved admission and discharge processes to better support youth
- Stronger care principles to maximize outcomes
- Expanded rights for residents
- Trauma-informed behavior intervention support
- Better home-like environments

In addition to improving the quality-of-care youth receive in group home settings, these changes allow for more community-based and family-based decision-making to incorporate personal considerations for how Wisconsin children and youth are cared for. These changes support stronger engagement between families and child welfare professionals and promote best outcomes for children and families across the state. The rule revision builds upon [Wisconsin's Putting Families First efforts](#) that focuses on improving the quality of care received when a group home setting is needed.

To learn more about Wisconsin's child welfare transformation to support families together and in-home, visit DCF's [Putting Families First webpage](#).

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