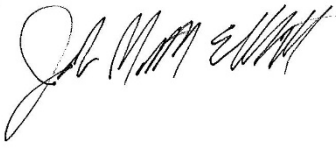




Division of Safety and Permanence Child Welfare Licensing Memo Series 2026-20L
Supersedes DCF Licensing Memo CWLS 2012 – 09L

June 1, 2026

To: DCF/DMCPS Administrator
 DCF Area Administrators
 Child Placing Agency Directors
 Child Welfare Agency Directors
 County Departments of Community Programs Directors
 County Departments of Human Services Directors
 County Departments of Social Services Directors
 Group Home Providers
 Private Child Placing Agencies
 Residential Care Center Providers
 Shelter Care Providers
 Tribal Chairpersons

From: John Elliott 
 Administrator

Re: Wis. Admin. Code DCF 57 Group Home Determination of Need Process

PURPOSE

This memo provides information related to the changes pursuant to Wis. Admin. Code s. DCF 57.46 Determination of Need Process for prospective group homes for children. The updated version pursuant to Wis. Admin. Code ch. DCF 57 effective June 1, 2026, revises requirements to determine the need for future group homes to be licensed in Wisconsin and the requirements for licensees. This memo and revisions pursuant to Wis. Admin Code ch. DCF 57 replaces directives and requirements previously outlined in CWLS 2012 – 09L.

BACKGROUND

Wisconsin Admin. Code s. DCF 57 was last revised on August 2, 2012, pursuant to 2009 WI Act 335. The current administrative rule, pursuant to Wis. Admin. Code ch. DCF 57, revises the need determination process and reflects practice shifts, occupancy rates, and data to identify specific needs or geographical service areas.





All licensed group homes and group home applicants are required to follow, Wis. Admin. Code s. DCF 57.46, when determining need prior to applying for a group home license or operating a group home in Wisconsin.

ACTION SUMMARY

Information regarding the updated Determination of Need process is located on the [Child Welfare Licensing Section website](#).

Wis. Admin. Code ch. DCF 57 related forms and publications have been revised and published on the [DCF Forms & Publication website](#). All related DCF websites have been revised to include updated information pertinent to and pursuant to Wis. Admin. Code ch. DCF 57.

For more information or questions, please contact the following:

CENTRAL OFFICE CONTACT: Licensing Section
 Bureau of Permanence and Out-of-Home Care
 Division of Safety and Permanence
 DCFCWLR@wisconsin.gov

MEMO WEB SITE: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/cwportal/policy>

Attachments [Wis. Admin. Code ch. DCF 57](#)
 [Needs Determination Process \(DCF-P-5941\)](#)