



**Harris County Fire Marshal's Office**  
**Inspection Checklist – Foster Group Homes**

FmP23, update 9/11

In accordance with the "Minimum Standards & Guidelines for Texas Administrative Code: Title 40 (Jan 2007, TDFPS):

- The agency home must meet all applicable fire, health and safety laws, ordinances and regulations.
- The agency home or child-placing agency must request the necessary inspections and comply with any resulting recommendations.
- Fire inspections must be conducted **annually** and must meet or exceed regulations set by the Harris County Fire Marshal.
- A fire inspection report must be submitted to the child-placing agency at the time of verification and annually thereafter.

**In accordance with Local Government Code, Chapter 352.016, all fire and life safety inspections in unincorporated Harris County must be performed by a HCFMO Certified Fire Inspector. The Fire & Life Safety Inspection Standard is "NFPA 101®, Life Safety Code, 2009 Edition".**

This checklist is provided as a service to help the foster group home parent or operator to maintain a fire safe environment. The information is based on the Harris County Fire & Life Safety Inspection Standard for foster group homes. This standard may be different from building codes and fire codes in cities or other jurisdictions.

No.	Item	Code Ref.	OK	Not OK	N/A
1	A foster group home with 7 to 12 children living in the home.	TAC, Title 40-EG1			
2	1- or 2-family dwelling. If a multi-family dwelling, contact HCFMO. More stringent guidelines will apply.	4.6.1.2-EG2			
3	Address is clearly visible from the roadway.	4.6.1.2-EG3			
4	A written evacuation plan and procedures for meeting potential disasters and emergencies, such as fire and severe weather is in place.	TAC, Title 40-EG4			
5	Evacuation capability verified with HCFMO monthly fire drill form. The home is required to install an automatic fire sprinkler system if serving 9 or more children or evacuation response is more than 3 minutes.	TAC Title 40-F4 33.2.1.2-EG5			
6	No high-hazard contents stored in the building. Flammable liquids: Not more than 10 gallons; stored in approved containers with tight-fitting lids, kept away from children, and away from heat sources (including water heater)	4.6.1.2-EG6			
7	Two primary exits per story remotely located from each other. (No travel distances greater than 75 ft.)	33.2.2-EG7			
8	Secondary escape from each sleeping areas, dining area, and living areas other than the "front" or "back" door of the home. Requires no tools, keys, or special knowledge or effort. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Door leading directly to the outside, <b>or</b></li> <li>• Approved outside window with a minimum opening of 5.7 sq. ft, <b>and</b> at least 20 in. wide, 24 in. high, <b>and</b> no higher than 44 in. above the floor, <b>or</b></li> <li>• A non-locking door into an adjoining room that has an exit described above.</li> </ul>	33.2.2.3-EG8			
9	Security bars are operable without the use of key, tools, or special knowledge.	4.6.1.2-EG9			
10	Doors are at least 28 inches in width and 80 inches in height. Bathroom doors may not be less than 24 inches in width, and must be able to be opened from the outside when locked. Closet doors can be opened by a child from the inside. No double-keyed dead bolts on exterior doors	33.2.2.5-EG10			
11	All bedrooms / living areas above the first floor are accessible by an approved set of stairs and a ½-hr fire rated barrier.	33.2.2.6-EG12			
12	Hallways must be at least 36 inches wide, existing family homes minimum of 28 inches wide.	4.6.1.2-EG13			
13	Interior wall and ceiling finish are Class A, B, or C. Vision panels are approved, fixed fire window assemblies or wired glass not greater than 1,296 sq. in.	33.2.3.3-EG14			
14	Proper smoke detection/fire warning system provided and meets the requirements of the Foster Group Alarm Codeword. Smoke detection/fire warning system is required to be inspected annually.	4.6.1.2-EG15 4.6.1.2-F15			
15	Sleeping area doors in a foster group home with 7 to 12 children are self-closing or automatic closing, suitable latching mechanism installed and 20 minute fire rated. Exception: Automatic closure not required if a fire sprinkler system is installed.	33.2.3.6.4-EG16			
16	Stoves, ovens, heaters, and fireplaces must be equipped with metal tubing, connectors, and properly vented. Heaters and fireplaces equipped with screens to prevent contact with open flames or hot surfaces. Approved gas cock valve in supply line for gas kitchen stove or oven. Dryers are equipped with metal vent piping.	9.2.2-EG17			
17	Water heater equipped with a pressure relief device, and drain pipe. Gas water heaters mounted at least 18 in. above floor in garage area and properly vented to the exterior.	9.2.2-EG18			
18	Gas piping inspected annually by a Texas Licensed Plumbing Contractor prior to fire inspection.	9.1.1-EG19			
19	A/C, heating systems inspected by a Texas Licensed Air-Conditioning Contractor prior to fire inspection.	9.2.1-EG20			
20	Combustibles are stored away from stoves, heaters, or fireplaces. Good housekeeping habits are in place.	4.6.1.2-EG21			
21	Fire extinguishers (min. 2A-10B:C or 5-lb.) in kitchen area to protect the first 2000 sq. ft., and one for each floor above the first floor. New or annual inspection and tag by a Licensed Fire Extinguisher Contractor.	4.6.1.2-EG22			
22	Matches and lighters are out of the reach of children.	4.6.1.2-EG24			
23	Electrical system / appliances in good condition, child-proof outlet covers and safe use of extension cords.	9.1.2-EG25			