

Personal Care Home Requirements

The attached document (**Personal Care Home Checklist**) is provided for reference only, in order to provide guidance to citizens who may wish to open a Personal Care Home in Douglas County. The referenced code sections may be paraphrased in some sections of the attached checklist, and may be further researched through the current editions of **Life Safety Code** and **International Fire Code**.

The checklist contains **minimum** code requirements regarding fire and life safety only, and each situation will be unique. A consultation inspection may be scheduled with the **Douglas County Fire Department, Fire Prevention Bureau**, prior to undertaking any modifications to a home. This inspection can be scheduled prior to approval of other county and state offices, to ensure that the home will be suitable for conversion from single-family residential property to use as a personal care home.

Any citizen who is considering operating a personal care home in Douglas County should first consult with the Douglas County Planning & Zoning Department, to determine that all zoning requirements have been met. The Douglas County Fire Department, Fire Prevention Bureau, will require a copy of the approval letter applicants receive from the Douglas County Planning & Zoning Department prior to Fire Department final inspection and approval of the location for conversion to a personal care home. **No final inspections will be scheduled until the proposed operator of the home has provided this documentation to the Douglas County Fire Department, Fire Prevention Bureau.**

Approval by the Douglas County Fire Department, Fire Prevention Bureau, is related to the structure only. Approval of the Douglas County Fire Department does not guarantee approval and licensing by the State of Georgia.

Also be aware that any work done to modify the home in order to meet the minimum requirements will be subject to regular permit procedures through the Douglas County Building Department, including electrical work necessary to provide smoke detection and fire alarm capability throughout the home.

Questions should be directed to the Douglas County Fire Department, Fire Prevention Bureau, located in the Douglas County Courthouse, 8700 Hospital Drive, Douglasville, GA 30134, Attn: Inspector Sherri Yearta or Fire Marshal Scott Bishop. You may reach Inspector Yearta at 770-920-7349 or Fire Marshal Bishop at 770-920-7350.

Personal Care Home Checklist

Checklist for Fire Safety Compliance--Residential Board & Care Facility (Small Facility—Sleeping Accommodations for not more than 6 residents)

1. A manual fire alarm system shall be installed per Life Safety Code.
2. An automatic extinguishing system (sprinkler) shall be installed per Douglas County Fire Protection Ordinance and Life Safety Code. Sprinkler plans shall be submitted for approval by a Georgia licensed sprinkler contractor, to the Douglas County Fire Marshal's office, and no work shall begin until stamped, approved plans have been returned.
3. Required fire alarm and sprinkler systems shall be monitored by an approved supervising station in accordance with NFPA 72.

4. **Required fire alarm and sprinkler systems shall be tested and inspected annually per International Fire Code. Copies of annual inspection and certification reports shall be provided to the Douglas County Fire Department, Fire Marshal's office.**
5. **Approved smoke alarms shall be installed in all sleeping rooms and in all normally occupiable areas on all levels of the residence except unfinished attics and crawl spaces, per Life Safety Code. Smoke alarms shall also be provided in hallways outside sleeping rooms per O.C.G.A. 25-2-40(b).**
6. **Portable fire extinguishers shall be installed per Life Safety Code and the specific installation and certification requirements of International Fire Code.**
7. **A listed, self-contained residential fire suppression system (kitchen hood extinguishing system), with automatic disconnect of appliances, and with the exhaust hood vented directly to the outside, shall be installed in residential hoods over each cooking surface per Life Safety Code.**
8. **Required kitchen fire suppression systems shall be tested and inspected every 6 months per the requirements of NFPA 96.**
9. **The facility emergency plan shall be made available and be maintained on the premises per Life Safety Code.**
10. **Resident training shall be provided per Life Safety Code.**
11. **Emergency evacuation and relocation drills shall be conducted at least bi-monthly (6 times per year) per Life Safety Code.**
12. **Portable electric, liquefied petroleum gas, or liquid fuel fired space heating devices are specifically prohibited for use in residential board and care facilities per Life Safety Code.**
13. **Bathroom doors shall be designed to allow opening from outside when locked during an emergency, per Life Safety Code. Closet doors shall be readily opened from inside in the event of an emergency, per Life Safety Code. No door shall be locked against egress when the building is occupied, per Life Safety Code.**

In addition to the requirements of the Douglas County Fire Protection Ordinance and Life Safety Code, residential board and care facilities shall be licensed by the Georgia Department of Human Resources, as well as the Douglas County Board of Commissioners, Occupational Tax office, and shall meet all requirements of the Douglas County Planning and Zoning ordinance.