

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2025**

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**SENATE BILL 1052**

Short Title: Amend Child Care Definitions/FFN Providers. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Chaudhuri and Burgin (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

May 4, 2026

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO ADD A DEFINITION FOR LICENSE-EXEMPT FAMILY, FRIEND, AND NEIGHBOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS UNDER THE LAWS REGULATING CHILD CARE.

Whereas, family, friend, and neighbor (FFN) child care providers represent a broad and diverse category of caregivers who provide informal child care arrangements outside the licensed child care system, including relatives, neighbors, and close family friends; and

Whereas, the existing statutory framework under Article 7 of Chapter 110 of the General Statutes does not define or formally recognize license-exempt FFN providers as a distinct category of caregivers, creating ambiguity regarding their legal status, eligibility for support programs, and relationships with the State; and

Whereas, formally defining license-exempt FFN providers in statute will clarify their status, enable data collection, facilitate access to relevant support services and food programs, and provide a legal foundation for future policies designed to support this population; and

Whereas, this definition does not impose new regulatory requirements on FFN providers and shall not be construed to subject license-exempt FFN providers to licensing obligations under that Article; Now, therefore,

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** G.S. 110-86 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

"(6a) License-exempt family, friend, and neighbor (FFN) child care provider. – An individual who satisfies each of the following:

- a. Provides child care to one or more children who are not the individual's own biological, adopted, or step-children, or children for whom the individual is a legal guardian.
- b. Operates in a setting, including the caregiver's home or the home of the child, that is not required to be licensed as a child care facility under this Article by virtue of the number of children served, the nature of the arrangement, or an applicable exemption under G.S. 110-86(2).
- c. Has a pre-existing familial, social, or community relationship with the child or the child's family, including but not limited to a grandparent, aunt, uncle, sibling over the age of 18, family friend, or neighbor.
- d. Is in compliance with all applicable requirements for legally operating a child care arrangement under State law, including, but not limited to, any notification, disclosure, or registration requirements adopted by the Department pursuant to this Article.



1                   The term does not include individuals who are required to obtain a license  
2                   under this Article. Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to require  
3                   license-exempt FFN providers to obtain a license, to register with the State, or  
4                   to comply with any requirement not otherwise applicable to unlicensed child  
5                   care arrangements under this Article, unless otherwise required by law."

6                   **SECTION 2.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of  
7 Health and Human Services, Division of Child Development and Early Education (Division), the  
8 sum of thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000) in nonrecurring funds for the 2025-2026 fiscal year to  
9 implement the following:

- 10                   (1)    Update public-facing materials, including the Division's website, printed  
11                   guides, and licensing portal, to incorporate the definition of "license-exempt  
12                   family, friend, and neighbor (FFN) child care provider" established under  
13                   G.S. 110-86(6a), as enacted by Section 1 of this act, and to clearly  
14                   communicate to the public the legal status of FFN providers and the  
15                   distinction between license-exempt FFN arrangements and licensed child care  
16                   facilities.
- 17                   (2)    Revise internal legal guidance documents, policy manuals, and staff training  
18                   materials within the Division to reflect the new statutory definition and its  
19                   application to eligibility determinations, program access, and enforcement  
20                   decisions.
- 21                   (3)    Update the Division's data collection and reporting systems to enable tracking  
22                   of license-exempt FFN providers as a distinct provider category, including the  
23                   number of such providers accessing State or federally administered programs,  
24                   the number of children served, and any relevant demographic or geographic  
25                   data, to the extent such information is voluntarily reported or otherwise  
26                   available to the Division.

27                   **SECTION 3.** Existing exemptions from child care facility licensing requirements  
28 under G.S. 110-86(2), including care provided by relatives and cooperative parent arrangements,  
29 are retained without modification. G.S. 110-86(6a), as enacted by Section 1 of this act shall be  
30 construed consistently with those exemptions.

31                   **SECTION 4.** This act is effective when it becomes law.