

FREE RESOURCE

PPEC Startup Checklist

The complete step-by-step guide to opening a Prescribed Pediatric Extended Care center in Florida. 47 action items across 8 phases — from business formation to opening day.

47

ACTION ITEMS

8

PHASES

12-18

MONTH TIMELINE

\$281.68

FULL DAY MEDICAID RATE

STARTUP COST CATEGORY	ESTIMATED RANGE
Business Formation & Legal	\$3,000 – \$8,000
AHCA License Application & Fees	\$2,000 – \$5,000
Facility Lease & Buildout	\$80,000 – \$200,000
Medical Equipment & Supplies	\$25,000 – \$60,000
Initial Staffing (3-month runway)	\$75,000 – \$150,000
Insurance (GL, Professional, Workers Comp)	\$8,000 – \$20,000
Technology, EMR & Billing Systems	\$5,000 – \$15,000
Marketing & Community Outreach	\$3,000 – \$10,000
Total Estimated Investment	\$201,000 – \$468,000

Why Most DIY PPEC Startups Fail

The AHCA licensing process has a **zero-tolerance policy** for incomplete applications. One missing document, one zoning error, one staffing ratio miscalculation — and you start over. The average DIY applicant spends 6+ extra months (and \$50K+ in carrying costs) fixing preventable mistakes.

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WHAT'S INSIDE

- Phase 1: Business Formation & Planning
- Phase 2: Site Selection & Facility
- Phase 3: AHCA Licensure
- Phase 4: Medicaid Enrollment & Contracting
- Phase 5: Staffing & Training
- Phase 6: Equipment & Operations
- Phase 7: Insurance & Compliance
- Phase 8: Launch & Growth

KEY FLORIDA AGENCIES

- AHCA** — Agency for Health Care Administration
- ACHA Form 3100-0009** — PPEC License Application
- Rule 59A-36** — PPEC Center Standards
- DCF** — Dept. of Children & Families
- DOEA** — Dept. of Elder Affairs (referrals)
- CMS** — Centers for Medicare & Medicaid
- MCOs** — Managed Care Organizations
- NPI** — National Provider Identifier

YOUR PPEC TIMELINE AT A GLANCE

Mo 1-2

Business Formation

Mo 2-5

Site & Facility

Mo 3-8

AHCA Licensure

Mo 4-10

Medicaid Enrollment

Mo 5-10

Staffing & Training

Mo 8-11

Equipment & Ops

Mo 6-11

Insurance & Compliance

Mo 10-14

Launch & Growth

1 Business Formation & Planning

MONTH 1-2

- Form LLC or Corporation in Florida (sunbiz.org)
- Obtain EIN from IRS (irs.gov/ein)
- Open dedicated business bank account (separate from personal)
- Develop comprehensive business plan with 3-year financial projections Complex
- Complete market feasibility study — identify target census, competitors within 30-mile radius, referral sources
- Secure startup financing (SBA loan, investors, or personal capital — \$200K–\$468K needed)
- Engage healthcare attorney for entity structuring and operating agreement

DDI INSIGHT

Your financial projections must account for a 90–120 day lag between opening and first Medicaid payment. Most failed PPECs underestimate this cash flow gap. We build 6-month runway models for every client.

2 Site Selection & Facility

MONTH 2-5

- Identify location zoned for medical/childcare use — **verify with local zoning office BEFORE signing lease** Complex
- Confirm minimum 35 sq ft per child (AHCA requirement) — plan for 15–20 child capacity
- Ensure ADA accessibility compliance (ramps, doorways, restrooms, parking)
- Obtain Certificate of Occupancy for healthcare/childcare use
- Complete facility buildout — clinical areas, nursing station, isolation room, kitchen, outdoor play area
- Install fire alarm, sprinkler system, emergency lighting per NFPA Life Safety Code
- Pass local fire marshal inspection

COMMON MISTAKE

Signing a lease before confirming zoning is the #1 most expensive mistake we see. One client lost \$40K in deposits and 5 months because their “medical office” zone didn’t permit pediatric daycare. We verify zoning on every project before any money changes hands.

3 AHCA Licensure

MONTH 3-8

- Submit AHCA PPEC license application (Form 3100-0009) with \$2,000+ fee Complex
- Develop complete Policies & Procedures manual (50+ policies required) Complex
- Create Emergency Preparedness Plan (CEMP) compliant with Rule 59A-36
- Establish Quality Assurance & Performance Improvement (QAPI) program
- Prepare Infection Control plan with designated infection preventionist
- Complete Level 2 background screening for ALL staff (AHCA clearinghouse)
- Prepare for and pass AHCA initial licensure survey Complex

DDI INSIGHT

The AHCA survey is pass/fail with no second chances on critical deficiencies. Our clients do 3 mock surveys before the real one. We have maintained a 100% first-attempt pass rate because we know exactly what surveyors look for.

4 Medicaid Enrollment & Contracting

MONTH 4-10

- Apply for National Provider Identifier (NPI) — both Type 1 and Type 2
- Complete Florida Medicaid provider enrollment application Medium
- Contract with Florida MCOs: Sunshine Health, Molina, Aetna Better Health, Humana, etc. Complex
- Verify reimbursement rates with each MCO (Medicaid base rate: \$281.68/full day, \$44.73/hr partial day)
- Set up billing system and clearinghouse for electronic claims submission
- Establish authorization workflow for prior-auth requirements per MCO

DDI INSIGHT

MCO contracting takes 60–120 days PER plan, and each has different credentialing requirements. Start this in parallel with licensure, not after. We manage 4–6 MCO contracts simultaneously for each client.

5 Staffing & Training

MONTH 5-10

- Hire Medical Director (licensed physician, required for PPEC)
- Hire Director of Nursing (RN with pediatric experience)
- Recruit RNs, LPNs — minimum 1:3 nurse-to-child ratio for technology-dependent children
- Hire CNAs, child care workers — minimum 1:4 ratio
- Arrange therapy services: PT, OT, Speech (contract or staff)
- Complete all Level 2 background screenings (AHCA clearinghouse)
- CPR/First Aid certification for all clinical staff
- Complete orientation: infection control, emergency procedures, child abuse reporting, HIPAA

REALITY CHECK

Pediatric nurse recruitment is competitive in Florida. Budget 6–8 weeks for hiring. Your staffing plan must match your projected census AND satisfy AHCA ratios on Day 1 of your survey — even before you have children enrolled.

6 Equipment & Operations Setup

MONTH 8-11

- Procure medical equipment: pulse oximeters, suction machines, nebulizers, feeding pumps
- Set up medication management system with locked storage
- Install EMR/EHR system configured for PPEC-specific documentation
- Establish food service program (meals/snacks per child dietary requirements)
- Set up transportation coordination system
- Create daily schedule: nursing assessments, therapies, activities, meals, rest periods

7 Insurance & Compliance

MONTH 6-11

- Obtain General Liability insurance (\$1M/\$3M minimum)
- Obtain Professional Liability (malpractice) insurance
- Obtain Workers' Compensation insurance (required in FL with 4+ employees)
- Register with DEA if controlled substances will be administered
- Register with Florida Board of Pharmacy if applicable

8 Launch & Growth

MONTH 10-14

- Build referral network: pediatricians, hospitals, NICUs, early intervention programs, case managers
- Launch community outreach: health fairs, parent support groups, medical conferences
- Create website optimized for “PPEC near me” and local SEO
- Establish intake process: physician orders, plan of care, enrollment paperwork
- Conduct soft opening with 3–5 children to validate operations before full launch
- Grand opening event — invite referral partners, community leaders, media
- Implement ongoing QAPI reviews (monthly for first year)
- Prepare for AHCA renewal survey (due within first year of licensure)

REVENUE PROJECTION

Year 1 target: 12–15 children daily at \$281.68 Medicaid rate = \$875K–\$1.1M annual revenue (260 business days). With proper staffing and efficiency, mature PPECs achieve 20–30% profit margins. Use our free calculator at ddiresources.com/ppec-calculator.html

Ready to Start?

You have seen the 47 steps. Here is the reality: each one has dozens of sub-tasks, regulatory nuances, and potential pitfalls that are not on any checklist.

End-to-End PPEC Consulting

From this checklist to opening day. We manage every phase so you focus on care, not paperwork.

AHCA Application & Survey Prep

100% first-attempt pass rate. We know what surveyors look for because we have been through it.

Medicaid & MCO Contracting

We manage 4–6 MCO contracts simultaneously so you are revenue-ready at launch.

Staffing & Training Programs

Recruitment, credential verification, and comprehensive orientation — AHCA-ready from Day 1.

CHOW (Change of Ownership)

Buying an existing PPEC? AHCA license transfer, Medicaid re-enrollment, due diligence. 3–6 months vs 12–18.

Free 30-Minute PPEC Consultation

Tell us where you are in your PPEC journey. We will assess your situation, identify your biggest risks, and give you a clear roadmap forward.

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100%

AHCA PASS RATE

12–18mo

AVG. TIME TO OPEN

Statewide

FLORIDA COVERAGE

This checklist is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal, financial, or medical advice. Regulations may change. Consult qualified professionals before making business decisions. Cost estimates based on 2026 Florida market conditions.