



REPUBLIC OF GHANA



Care Reform Initiative (CRI) Ghana
#FamilyBestPlaceForChildren

Standard Operating Procedures for Inspection, Licensing, and Monitoring Residential Homes for Children in Ghana



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**Standard Operating Procedures for
Inspection, Licensing, and Monitoring
Residential Homes for Children in Ghana.**

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ACRONYMS

CRI	Care Reform Initiative
COC	Code of Conduct
DSWCD	Department of Social Welfare and Community Development
DOVVSU	Domestic Violence and Victim's Support Unit
DSW	Department of Social Welfare
FBO	Faith-Based Organization
MoGCSP	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
RHC	Residential Home for Children
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SWO	Social Welfare Officer
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY

Alternative care:

Care for children who are not under the custody of their biological parents. Alternative care can be formal and informal. It includes family-based care (kinship care or foster care) and residential care.

Care Plan:

A written plan that identifies the developmental needs of the child; outlines the steps or measures to be taken in order to address those needs; sets out directions about the care and decisions about placement; and decisions about contact between the child and a parent, sibling or other relative of the child or any person who is significant in the child's life.

Family-based care:

Family-based care is the alternative care of children in a family environment. Family-based care includes:

- Kinship care (living with relatives); and
- Foster care (living in a home with a foster parent, who provides round-the-clock care – in the same capacity as a biological parent – but is not paid a salary).

Formal care:

All alternative care in which placement has been ordered by a competent administrative body or judicial authority. Residential care is always considered formal care even if the necessary orders have not been obtained. In Ghana, placements in residential care without the necessary authority are illegal.

Gatekeeping:

A recognised and systematic procedure to ensure that alternative care for children is used only when necessary and that the child receives the most suitable support to meet their individual needs.

Residential Care:

Residential Care is care provided in any non-family-based group setting, such as shelters for emergency care, transit centres in emergency situations, and all other short- and long-term residential care facilities, including group homes.¹ Residential care may be considered as a temporary alternative care solution for some children in emergency situations and with no other means of support but only as a **last resort** if no immediate placement in the community is found. The goal of residential care must be to provide temporary, short-term care and to reunify children with their parents or find a longer-term family-based care alternative within the shortest time possible

¹ UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, 2009

INTRODUCTION

National Standards for Residential Homes for Children (RHCs) in Ghana are in place to ensure the quality and consistency of care of children in residential care in line with international and domestic legal frameworks. The Standards are intended to guide all those responsible for planning and providing residential care services, and for making decisions on the licensing or closure of RHCs.

DSW is legally mandated to inspect and monitor RHCs to ensure compliance with the Standards

These Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the inspection and monitoring of RHCs in Ghana are intended to provide guidance to National, Regional and District DSW Officers on how to plan, conduct and report on RHC inspection and monitoring visits and how to enforce directives to either address gaps in compliance with the Standards and/or to close the RHC. In case of compliance of the national standards, the RHCs can be licensed.

The SOPs are structured as follows:

- Section 1 describes the legal requirements for licencing and closure of residential care services in Ghana.
- Section 2 presents the roles and responsibilities of National, Regional and District DSW Officer in inspections, monitoring, licencing and closure of RHCs.
- Section 3 provides information on inspection related activities, including first licence inspections and licence renewal inspections.
- Section 4 provides information on monitoring related activities.
- Annex A contains the checklist for conducting inspections.
- Annex B contains the template for reporting on inspections.
- Annex C contains application for new licence/licence renewal.
- Annex D contains the template for reporting on monitoring visits.

The background is a solid purple color. In the upper right corner, there is a curved, overlapping shape in a lighter shade of purple, creating a layered effect.

SECTIONS

SECTION 1:

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR LICENSING AND CLOSURE OF RESIDENTIAL HOMES IN GHANA

All organizations and individuals wanting to operate a Residential Home for Children (RHC) in Ghana must comply with the minimum legal requirements as set out in the Children's Act (Act 560), 1998 and Child Care Regulations (L.I. 1705), 2003, including Amendments, to be considered for licensing.

Compliance with the National Standards for Residential Homes for Children is one of the main legal requirements for operating a RHC. **However, compliance with the National Standards does not automatically mean that the RHC will be licenced.** Other factors will also be taken into consideration including whether the RHC's services are needed in a District and/or Region.

The Department of Social Welfare is the only body in Ghana legally mandated to determine the number and location of RHCs, authorise their operation through licensing, and close unlicensed and/or sub-standard homes.

1.1 LICENSING RESIDENTIAL HOMES

What classifies as a Residential Home in Ghana?

Residential Homes for Children include all facilities that provide alternative care in any non-family-based group setting, including:

- Shelters for emergency or temporary care.
- Places of Safety.
- Transit centres in emergency situations.
- Orphanages.
- Children's homes.
- Children's Villages.
- Homes for children with disabilities in need of alternative care and/or any other special need.

All Residential Homes for Children (RHCs) in Ghana must be licenced with the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) to operate as an **Approved Residential Home** under Section 105 of the Children's Act, 1998 and must pay the prescribed fee (see Annex A for RHC Licence Application Form). The RHC licence is signed by the National Director of DSW. Names of licenced RHCs are published by DSW in a Government Gazette.

RHC licenses must be renewed **biennially** but the licence may be withdrawn at any time if conditions at the RHC fall below the required standards.

These licencing provisions only apply to privately run homes and not to government homes. However, government homes are still required to comply with the National Standards for RHCs.

Roles and responsibilities of DSW at District, Regional and National levels in licencing RHCs

District:

- Conducts inspections with the Regional office (and National where necessary) for first license or licence renewals and participates in making the recommendations about whether or not to licence the RHC.
- If the recommendation is that the RHC can be licenced (either first licence or licence renewal), the District submits the RHC application together with supporting documents (**see Annex C**) to the Regional office.
- Where the licence is issued with conditions that must be met to address gaps identified in operating standards, the District assists the RHC to develop a plan to meet the requirements (where needed) and monitors the RHCs implementation of this plan.

Regional:

- Participates in inspections for first licence or licence renewal and participates in making the recommendation about whether or not to licence the RHC.
- Reviews the RHC application and supporting documents submitted by the District and forwards to the National Office.

National:

- Participates in inspections for first license/licence renewal (where possible and necessary) and participates in making the recommendation about whether or not to licence the RHC.
- Reviews the RHC application and supporting documents submitted by the Region from the District and makes the **final decision** as to whether or not to licence the RHC.
- The National Director of DSW signs the licence certificate and sends the original to the RHC through the Region and District who keep a copy of it.
- National DSW publishes the names of licenced RHC in the government gazette.

Additional points to note:

Registration as an NGO or with the Register General is **NOT** a licence to operate a Residential Home.

A certificate to operate as an NGO from the District Assembly is **NOT a** licence to operate a Residential Home.

The only proof that a RHC is licensed to operate is the certificate from the national Department of Social Welfare signed by the Director and approval by notice in the gazette.

1.2 CLOSURE OF RESIDENTIAL HOMES

The Department of Social Welfare is legally mandated to close unlicensed or sub-standard residential homes (Children's Act Sec. 109 (2) and Child Rights Regulations, Sec. 62).

If a home fails to maintain the required standard, its licence to operate may be cancelled or suspended by the Minister and alternative arrangements made by the Department of Social Welfare for the children in the home.

The owner or operator of a home may make representation to the Minister for review of the decision by the Department of Social Welfare to close the home (Child Care Regulations, Sec. 62 (4)).

1.3 OFFENCES AND PENALTIES

Offences

It is an offence to continue to operate a RHC after it has been ordered to close (Children's Act, Sec. 114). In some instances, a phased approach to closure is required, for example until all the children in the home have been reintegrated. In these situations, the RHC must comply with the closure plan and work closely with Department of Social Welfare to ensure that the home is closed within the prescribed time frame.

The Children's Act (Sec. 114) makes it an offence for a person operating a RHC to:

- (1) *Fail to uphold the rights of the child as specified in the Act.*
- (2) *Operate a RHC without a licence and/or continue to do so when ordered to stop.*
- (3) *Obstruct or prevent a Departmental official from conducting an inspection.*

The Department has the authority to conduct unannounced inspections or monitoring visits of all RHCs, licenced or unlicensed, at any time of the day or night.

Any owner or manager of an RHC that refuses the Department access to the facility can be sanctioned and penalties applied.

Penalties

As per the Children's Act, 1998, penalties for committing any of these offences will result in an appropriate fine or a term of imprisonment.

1.4 INSPECTION AND MONITORING OF RESIDENTIAL HOMES

The Department of Social Welfare has legislatively mandated responsibilities in relation to inspection and monitoring of RHCs:

Inspection of RHCs	Monitoring of RHCs
<p>The <i>Children's Act</i> has two provisions for the Department to conduct inspections to determine compliance with standards before licensing (Sec. 105) and inspections of a home at any time to ensure that the home is being maintained at the required standard (Sec. 108).</p> <p>The <i>Child Rights Regulations (Part VII - Approved Residential Homes)</i> provides for quarterly inspections and/or "at any time without notice" (Sec. 45).</p>	<p>The <i>Children's Act</i> (Sec. 106) includes a provision for the Department of a District Assembly to monitor homes within its district.</p>

Inspection of RHCs is required for making decisions on:

- (1) Licensing of RHCs or closure; and
- (2) Renewal of RHC licenses or closure.

Monitoring of RHCs is required for following-up on recommendations from the inspections to either address compliance issues before licencing/renewal can take place or to close the RHC within specified time frames.

Monitoring of RHCs also focuses on tracking **key indicators** to determine national, regional and district trends of RHCs and children in RHCs as well as monitoring of the case management of children in RHCs.

SECTION 2:

INSPECTION OF RESIDENTIAL HOMES

2.1 PURPOSE AND TYPES OF INSPECTIONS

As per the Children's Act, the Department of Social Welfare has the legal mandate in relation to inspection of RHCs:

- The *Child Rights Regulations (L.I. 1705) (Part VII - Approved Residential Homes)* provides for quarterly inspections and/or "at any time without notice" (Sec. 45).
- The purpose of inspections is ultimately to ensure that:
- RHCs comply with the prescribed standards of care, and are **suitable** to meet the needs of children in their care: and
- Children placed in the RHCs are only there as a last resort, that it is in their best interest to be there, and that every effort is being made to ensure they stay in the RHC for the shortest possible time.

There are three types of inspections:

- (1) Inspection for first licensing of RHC;
- (2) Renewal of RHC licence; and
- (3) Ad-hoc inspections, as needed.

The focus of these different types of inspections is explained in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Different types of RHC inspections

Type of inspection	Timing	Purpose
(1) First licensing of RHCs	One-off	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Is there a need for this RHC?■ Is this RHC suitable to provide care i.e. does the RHC comply with the National Standards?■ Is it necessary for the children in the RHC to be in care?■ Should the RHC be licensed with or without conditions? The Regulations allow for RHCs to be given time to address any shortcomings identified during inspection (Sec. 45 (5)).■ Should the RHC be closed?
(2) Renewal of RHC licenses	Biennial	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Does the RHC still comply with the National Standards?■ Is it necessary for the children in the RHC to be in care?■ Should the RHC licence be renewed with or without conditions? The Regulations allow for RHCs to be given time to address any shortcomings identified during inspection (Sec. 45 (5)).■ Should the RHC be closed?

Type of inspection	Timing	Purpose
(3) Ad-hoc inspections	As needed e.g. in response to concerns from the Region/ District or public/media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Is the RHC complying with the National Standards or conditions attached to the issuing of the first/renewal licence or directives to close? ■ Is it necessary for the children in the RHC to be in care? ■ Should the RHC be closed?

2.2 INSPECTION ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

National, Regional and District DSW officials have roles to play in the inspection for licensing and/or closure of RHCs. These roles differ slightly depending on the type of inspection, which, as mentioned above, includes:

- New/first licence inspection
- Licence renewal inspection
- Ad hoc inspection

The roles of DSW at different levels in these inspections are as follows:

Type of Inspection	District DSWCD	Regional DSW	National DSW
New/first licence inspection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Schedules and conducts joint inspection with Region. ■ With Regional DSW, makes recommendation on licensing or closure. ■ Writes inspection report and submits to National through Regional office. ■ Submits RHC application for licence – where National DSW supports the recommendations ■ Enforces directive to close RHC (where recommended) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Schedules and conducts joint inspection with District ■ With District, makes recommendation on licensing or closure. ■ Submits inspection report from District to National. ■ Enforces directive from National DSW to close RHC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Conducts joint inspection with District and Region where necessary. ■ If participated in inspection, makes recommendation on licensing or closure with Regional and District. ■ Reviews inspection report and recommendation from District. ■ Makes final decision on licensing or closure of the RHC and communicates this to the Regional and District offices. ■ National DSW Director signs RHC licence and places notice in the government gazette.

Type of Inspection	District DSWCD	Regional DSW	National DSW
Licence renewal inspection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Schedules and conducts joint inspection with Regional office. ■ With Regional office, makes recommendation on licence renewal or closure. ■ Writes inspection report and submits to National through Regional office. ■ Submits RHC application for licence renewal – where National DSW supports the recommendations ■ Enforces directive to close RHC – as per National DSW instruction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Schedules and conducts joint inspection with District ■ With District, makes recommendation on licence renewal or closure. ■ Submits inspection report from District to National. ■ Enforces directive from National DSW to close RHC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Conducts joint inspection with District and Regional offices where necessary. ■ If participated in inspection, makes recommendation on licence renewal or closure with Regional and District offices. ■ Reviews inspection report and recommendation from District. ■ Makes final decision on licence renewal or closure of the RHC and communicates this to the Regional and District offices. ■ National DSW Director signs RHC licence renewal and places notice in the government gazette
Ad hoc inspection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Participates in inspection as required. ■ Enforces directive from National DSW to close RHC where required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Participates in inspection as required. ■ Enforces directive from National DSW to close RHC where required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Conducts inspection independently or joint inspection with District and/or Region. ■ Communicates For independent inspections, communicates findings and decision to the Region and District, or for joint inspections recommendations are agreed to jointly.

2.3 INSPECTION ACTIVITIES

a. Pre-Inspection

Inspection schedule

- A joint inspection schedule for the **first licensing** of RHCs needs to be developed and agreed to by Regional and District DSW officials. National should be informed of this schedule and should participate where feasible and as needed.
- For **licence renewals**, a joint inspection schedule needs to be developed and agreed to by Regional and District DSW officials. RHCs need to renew their licences biennially. National should be informed of this schedule and can participate where feasible and as needed.
- **Ad hoc** inspections are by definition not scheduled but are conducted as the need arises.

Inspection team

- First licence inspection:
 - Regional Head, Regional Programme Head, District Head and District CRI Focal Person (or as decided by the District Head). National DSW (CRI Head, Monitoring and Evaluation [M&E] Unit Head) should participate in some of these first licence inspections.
 - Representatives from other sectors including the Ghana Health Service, Ghana Education Service, District Assembly Social Service Committee, and other technical experts can be invited to participate.
- Licence renewal inspection:
 - Regional Head, Regional Programme Head, District Head and scheduled District Officer (or CRI Focal Person if present).
 - Technical experts as needed, and where funding permits.
- Ad hoc inspection:
 - Regional Head, Regional Programme Head, District Head and scheduled District Officer (or CRI Focal Person if present). National DSW (CRI Head, M&E Unit Head) can also conduct these inspections independently of the Region and/or District.
 - Technical experts as needed.

Announced and unannounced inspections

- RHCs should be informed of the dates of inspections for first licensing and licence renewals so that they can prepare all necessary documentation as per the inspection checklist so that time is not wasted getting things organised when the inspection team is on-site. In other words, inspections for first licenses and licence renewals are usually announced, unless circumstances require otherwise.
- Ad hoc inspections can be announced or unannounced.

Pre-inspection team meeting and documentation review

- It is important for everyone in the team to be prepared, and to have as much available information as possible before the inspection including past inspection reports (in the case of licence renewals), monitoring reports, M&E reports from the National M&E Unit and any other official communication. The RHC website (if one exists) should also be reviewed.

- For first licence and licence renewal inspections, the team should aim to meet before the inspection to share available documentation and identify areas that may need special focus during the inspection.
- The roles of different team members in administering the inspection checklist (see Annex A) when on-site and collecting the necessary evidence should also be agreed on beforehand e.g. documentation review; interviewing children; inspection of premises; interview with manager; interview with caregivers..
- Team members need to familiarize themselves with the National Standards and the requirements in the inspection checklist (see Annex A) and the sources of evidence.

Logistical arrangements

- Logistical arrangements need to be made before the inspection visit including arrangements for transport and meals. In some instances, depending on the location of the RHC, accommodation arrangements will have to be made for Regional staff.

b. On-Site Inspection

Time management

- At least half a day (four hours) is needed to conduct inspections for first licenses and licence renewals. However, this depends on the size of the RHC. Larger RHCs may require a full day.
- For first licenses, sufficient time needs to be allocated to ensure that evidence for all the Standards is collected from the different sources, including review of children's files and interviews with children. Inspection for licence renewals may be less intensive depending on the RHC.
- The inspection should be conducted at a time that will allow some contact with children in the RHC, so ideally in the afternoon when older children return from school.

Administering the inspection checklist

- The roles of the inspection team in collecting the evidence as per the inspection checklist (see Annex A) should be clarified before getting on-site, with one team member designated the team leader.
- The team needs to adhere to professional ethics at all times during the inspection visit. This requires maintaining a friendly, firm but fair attitude. Professional ethics need to be upheld particularly when it comes to being offered gifts or lunch.

c. Post-Inspection

Debriefing

- Immediately after the inspection, or at least the following day, there should be a team debriefing where observations and recommendations are shared. One person should be allocated responsibility to complete the inspection checklist (see Annex A) and fill out the gaps/strengths.
- The debriefing session, and joint completion of the checklist, is an essential aspect of the inspection process and should not be overlooked. In particular, reaching agreement on recommendations to license or close should be documented. Where there is disagreement, the reasons for this should be recorded.

Inspection report

- The inspection report needs to be written using template provided (see Annex B). Ideally this should be done together with the team at the same time as the checklist is completed. However, if this is not possible, one person needs to be given responsibility for this, with inputs from others. For the first licence and licence renewal inspections the District Head should complete the inspection report as the recommendation for licensing or closure comes from the District to the Region and then to National.
- The inspection report should be completed within two weeks of the inspection and submitted to the Region, and then to National. Ideally this process should not take more than one month.

Final decision-making

- National DSW needs to review the inspection report and recommendations and decide whether they agree with the recommendations.
- A final decision should be made by National DSW within one month of receipt of the inspection report and checklist and communicated to the Region and District.

Feedback to the Residential Homes for Children

- A formal written feedback must be given to the RHC after the inspection. Ideally this should include a copy of the inspection checklist (and report). It is very important for the RHC to get written feedback so they know what they need to follow-up on and so that there is no confusion or ignorance at the next inspection.
- This feedback should be given to them after National DSW has communicated the final decision as to licensing or closure with the Region and District.
- Where the recommendation to license the RHC or renew the licence is approved, the District should then aid the RHC to prepare all the necessary documentation for licencing (see application form in Annex C).

Follow-up on actions to be taken by the RHC to comply with Standards or close

- The District and Region need to prepare a joint plan on how they will follow-up on RHC actions to address gaps and/or implement directives to close. Follow-up visits will need to be made. This can form part of the RHC monitoring schedule (see Section 4).
- The District and Region need to keep written records of follow-ups made and file on the RHC file. These written records are important reference material when the team prepares for the next inspection.

SECTION 3:

MONITORING OF RESIDENTIAL HOMES

Responsibility for monitoring Residential Homes for Children

- The *Children's Act* (Sec. 106) includes a provision for the **Department of Social Welfare in a District Assembly** to monitor homes within its District.

Purpose of monitoring Residential Homes for Children

- **Monitoring** of RHCs is required for following-up on recommendations from the inspections to either address compliance issues before licencing/renewal can take place or to close the RHC within specified time frames.
- **Monitoring** of RHCs also focuses on tracking **key indicators** to determine national, regional and district trends of RHCs and children in RHCs as well as monitoring of the case management of children in RHCs.

Frequency of monitoring Residential Homes for Children

- Districts should plan to conduct quarterly monitoring visits to Residential Homes for Children.

Monitoring team

- District Head and scheduled District Officers (or Care Reform Initiative (CRI) Focal Person if present).
- Regional Head and Regional Programme Head.
- Other technical persons as required.

Unannounced versus Announced monitoring visits

- Two announced monitoring visits per annum.
- Two unannounced monitoring visits per annum.

Monitoring tool/s

- Recent inspection checklist and inspection report (either for first/new licence or licence renewal) with follow-up actions required either to comply with Standards or to close the Residential Homes for Children.

Reporting on Monitoring visit

- District to prepare written report on the monitoring visit using the template provided (see Annex D).
- Report to be prepared within **two weeks** of the monitoring visit.
- Report to be submitted to the Region for their information/consideration and from the Region to National for their information/consideration.
- District to provide written feedback to the RHC on the outcome of the monitoring visit within **one month** of the monitoring visit.

SECTION 4:

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT FOR INSPECTIONS, MONITORING AND LICENCING

DSW and DSWCD officers are expected to conduct the inspection, monitoring and licensing of RHCs in a professional and ethical manner.²

1. **Social workers are expected to develop and maintain the required skills and competence to do their job.** DSW Officers should have a copy of the RHC National Standards and SOPs and should be familiar with how to conduct inspections (using the inspection checklist) and write inspection reports (using the prescribed template).
2. **Social workers should act with integrity. This includes not abusing the relationship of trust with the people using their services, recognising the boundaries between personal and professional life, and not abusing their position for personal benefit or gain.** DSW Officers should not accept gifts from RHCs before or after conducting inspection and monitoring visits.
3. **Social workers should act in relation to the people using their services with compassion, empathy and care.** When conducting inspections and monitoring visits, DSW Officers should be firm but fair. The decision to license or close a RHC should be guided by what is in the best interest of the children and not the RHC.
4. **Social workers should not subordinate the needs or interests of people who use their services to their own needs or interests.**
5. **Social workers should maintain confidentiality regarding information about people who use their services. Exceptions to this may only be justified based on a greater ethical requirement (such as the preservation of life).** Inspection and monitoring findings and reports must be shared within the agreed channels of communication and should not be made public, unless DSW decides that this is in the best interest of children.
6. **Social workers need to acknowledge that they are accountable for their actions to the users of their services, the people they work with, their colleagues, their employers, the professional association and to the law, and that these accountabilities may conflict.**
7. **Social workers should foster and engage in ethical debate with their colleagues and employers and take responsibility for making ethically informed decisions.**
8. Social workers should be prepared to state the reasons for their decisions based on ethical considerations and be accountable for their choices and actions.

² The professional conduct guidelines of the International Federation of Social Work (IFSW) provide a framework to guide the practice of Social Welfare Officers See: <http://ifsw.org/policies/statement-of-ethical-principles/>



ANNEX



REPUBLIC OF GHANA

ANNEX A: INSPECTION CHECKLIST ON NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL HOMES

A. IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

Name of RHC		
District		
Region		
Date of inspection		
Purpose of inspection	New Licence/Closure	Licence Renewal/Closure
Form completed by (name, position)		

B. INSPECTION CHECKLIST

Scoring:

- Tick appropriate box to indicate:

Full compliance	2
Partial compliance	1
No compliance	0
Not applicable	NA

- Criteria shaded in grey indicate **critical** criteria, and the RHC must comply fully with all these provisions before licensing/renewal can be considered.

1. CARING FOR CHILDREN IN THE RHC

Standard/Evidence	Evidence Source	Score	Remarks
Standard 1: RHC caregivers			
1) Number of children in the RHC does not exceed the DSW approved number.	RHC Children Register AND Head-count of children		
2) The ratio of caregiver to children of different age groups/abilities meets the requirements. ³	RHC Children and Staff Register Observations		

- 3 The required ratio of caregiver to children is as follows:
- One caregiver for five children from birth to three years;
 - One caregiver for eight children over three years of age;
 - One caregiver for ten children from six years to eleven years;
 - One caregiver for five children over eleven years to eighteen years;
 - One caregiver for not more than two children with severe disabilities.

Standard/Evidence	Evidence Source	Score	Remarks
Standard 2: Child Safeguarding and Protection			
1) Written Child Safeguarding Policy including the Code of Conduct and complaints procedure. Signed copies of the Code of Conduct are on staff and volunteer files.	Review of RHC documentation		
2) Children report feeling safe in the RHC with no incidents of corporal punishment or other prohibited discipline methods from caregivers, management, volunteers or any other staff.	Interviews with children		
3) —Children report bullying and any incidences are not taken seriously and not addressed by caregivers/managers.	Interviews with children		
4) —Where incidences of use of corporal punishment or other prohibited discipline methods are reported, the manager provides evidence of how these incidents were addressed in line with the RHC's Child Safeguarding Policy.	Interview with Manager and Review of RHC documents		
Standard 3: Child Participation			
1) There is a suggestion box and how the RHC manager and staff responded to these suggestions.	Review of RHC documents		
2) Children report that they participated in the development of their Care Plan and understand its content.	Interviews with children		
3) Children of all ages report that they are free to practice their own religion and traditions and that their cultural and ethnic backgrounds are acknowledged and celebrated.	Interviews with children		
Standard 4: Education			
1) Children's Care Plans show how their educational needs are being addressed. Their files have information on their current school enrolment, progress reports and certificates showing that they are attending school and extra classes where necessary.	Review of children's files		
2) Children report having the necessary resources including school uniforms, books, stationary, contributions to school outings. They also report having time in their daily schedule for homework.	Interviews with children		
3) Caregivers can report on children's progress and their areas of academic strength and whether they are receiving additional support.	Interview with managers		

Standard/Evidence	Evidence Source	Score	Remarks
4) For children who were not in school or who have dropped out, their Care Plan shows how their educational and/or vocational needs are being addressed.	Review of children's files		
Standard 5: Health and Nutrition			
1) First aid kit with basic items is available.	Observation		
2) National Health Insurance Cards can be produced for all children in the RHC.	NHIS cards for each child		
3) Children's Care Plans describe children's specific medical needs, including special dietary requirements, and how these are to be managed. Care Plans also describe how children's health and substance abuse prevention education needs will be met.	Review of children's files		
4) Children report that when they are sick they receive medical care.	Interviews with children		
5) Children report that they have received some education/information on hygiene, sexual reproductive health and substance abuse prevention	Interviews with children		
6) A weekly meal plan for the home is displayed in the kitchen. Meals adhere to the basic dietary guidelines provided by DSW/Department of Health.	Observation		
7) Clean drinking water source/s are available.	Observation		
Standard 6: Psychosocial Development			
1) Children's Care Plans describe children's psychosocial needs and how these will be met.	Review of children's files		
2) Children's life books and/or memory boxes are available. Children can talk about the content of their life books with the DSW/DSWCD Officers, their parents/family and caregivers.	Interview with children		
Standard 7: Play and Leisure			
1) The daily routine of the Home includes time to play during weekdays and weekends.	Interviews with caregivers and children		

Standard/Evidence	Evidence Source	Score	Remarks
2) Indoor and outdoor toys, games and play equipment are available, in a good (and safe) condition and include a variety of toys, games, equipment and age-appropriate print and electronic media suitable for the different ages and abilities of children in the home.	Observation		
3) Children can report on the different toys, games, play equipment, and print and electronic media that they have access to.	Interviews with children		

Total Score for Caring for Children Standards:	
Does RHC comply with all the critical provisions?	
Key strengths and good practices:	
Key gaps and action to be taken:	

2. CASE MANAGEMENT OF CHILDREN IN THE RHC

Standard/Evidence	Evidence Source	Score	Remarks
Standard 8: Admission of children to the RHC			
1) Care order on each child's file (where child has been in RHC for more than 7 days)	Review of children's files		
Standard 9: Care Plans and Reviews			
1) Every child in the RHC has a Care Plan on file. This Care Plan includes a reintegration plan and/or other permanency plan for the child and information on the involvement of the child and his/her parents/family where possible and appropriate e.g. comments from the child, signature of parent/family.	Review of children's files		
2) Children's case files have records that document the implementation of the Care Plan, providing a clear track record of the case. Records of bi-annual reviews are also on file.	Review of children's files		
Standard 10: Reunification with Parents and Family			
1) A review of the RHC register on children shows that children in the home are being reunified with their families/other permanency arrangement as far as possible within six months to maximum one year of being admitted to the RHC.	RHC admission/discharge book		
2) Children report that they have contact with their families and are aware of and involved in plans for reunification with parents/family.	Interviews with children		
3) Reunification Certificates issued by DSW are on children's files.	Review of children's files		
Standard 11: Independent Living			
1) A review of the RHC register on children shows that children in the home are being reunified with their families/other permanency arrangement as far as possible within six months to maximum one year of being admitted to the RHC.			
2) Children report that they have contact with their families and are aware of and involved in plans for reunification with parents/family.			

3) Reunification Certificates issued by DSW are on children's files.			
1) Children report that their life skills are being developed while they are in care including cooking, chores, dealing with money and other practical matters.	Interviews with children		
2) Children aged 15 years and older report that they are being prepared for leaving care, including participating in a structured programme, and are involved in the process.	Interviews with children		
3) Records of young people who have left care are available and include case notes of any support provided to the young person once s/he has left the home as well as any subsequent visits by the young person to the home.	Review of children's files		
Standard 12: Case recording			
1) Each child has a file with the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Court orders ■ Social Enquiry Report 	Review of children's files		
2) Each child has a file with the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Care Plan with reviews and updates ■ Logbook with records on significant events 	Review of children's files		
3) Each child has a file with the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Progress reports from schools ■ Medical records and important health information on the child 	Review of children's files		
4) Children's case files are stored in a weatherproof cabinet, under lock and key.	Observation/review of children's files		
Standard 13: Reporting on children in care			
1) The RHC manager can produce the monthly monitoring reports submitted to DSW. Verification of the information in the monthly report against information on the children's files shows that the data has been accurately captured.	RHC monitoring report Review of children's files		

Total Score for Case Management of Children in the RHC Standards:	
Does RHC comply with all the critical provisions?	
Key strengths and good practices:	
Key gaps and action to be taken:	

3. RHC PREMISES AND FACILITIES

Standard/Evidence	Evidence Source	Score	Remarks
Standard 14: Design of Premises and Facilities			
1) Family-like units accommodating not more than 7 children per unit with a maximum of 30 children on the same premises.	Observation		
2) The home has kitchen, laundry area, living room, dining space, bathrooms, and bedrooms sufficient for the number of children in care.	Observation		
3) The home has a domestic/homely feel as opposed to an institutional feel. Children report being able to personalise and decorate their bedrooms and there is evidence of this e.g. drawings, posters, photographs.	Observation		
4) Separate bedrooms for children of different sexes over the age of six.	Observation		
5) Not more than 4 children/beds per bedroom, less depending on the size of the room.	Observation		
6) Each child has his or her own cot or bed for sleeping, with mosquito net and/or nets on windows.	Observation		
7) Each child has his/her own closet/drawer, bags for clothes and personal belongings.	Observation		
8) RHCs that accommodate children with disabilities are able to show the specific adaptations the home has made to meet the needs of these children. These adaptations are evident throughout the premises including access to the home; the outdoor play areas; and the indoor living rooms, bedrooms, bathrooms and kitchen area.	Observation		
9) The home is close to community services and activities	Observation		

Standard/Evidence	Evidence Source	Score	Remarks
Standard 15: Safety of Premises and Facilities			
1) The RHC can produce the building permit and the annual fire service certificate to show that the home complies with the relevant local health and safety regulations.	Review of RHC documentation		
2) The RHC is situated away from public toilets, rubbish dumps, main roads and any other environmental hazards.	Observation		
3) The RHC is on separate premises from any other community activities/services	Observation		
4) The RHC is fully walled or fenced and there is a gate to the property that can be locked if needed.	Observation		
5) The manager can produce a visitor's book. Visits from family members, DSW officials and others should be evident in this book.	Review of RHC documentation		
1) No obvious hazards to children are observed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Bars on double storey bedrooms and railings on staircases ■ Drains and wells are covered. ■ Electrical fittings/wires not exposed. ■ No sharp tools/implements left in reach of children. ■ No medication left in reach of children. ■ No detergents left in reach of children. ■ Playground equipment in good condition ■ Others:..... 	Observation		
2) Children and staff can explain the emergency procedures for the RHC, including those in case of fire or other hazards.	Interview with staffs and children		
3) Fire extinguishers on the premises have up to date inspection stickers from the Fire Service.	Observation		
4) No signage on RHC buildings or on vehicles.	Observation		

Total Score for RHC Premises and Facilities:	
Does RHC comply with all the critical provisions?	
Key strengths and good practices:	
Key gaps and action to be taken:	

4. RHC GOVERNANCE, STAFFING AND MANAGEMENT

Standard/Evidence	Evidence Source	Score	Remarks
Standard 16: Statement of Purpose and Policies and Procedures			
1) A written Statement of Purpose with the RHC policy on reintegrating children in the shortest period possible with their parents/families and/or other permanency arrangements.	Review of RHC documentation		
2) A written copy of the Child Care Policy and Procedure Handbook is available.	Review of RHC documentation		
3) Written copies of Human Resource Policies in relation to recruitment, job categories and descriptions, terms and conditions of service, staff development and training, supervision arrangements and disciplinary procedures	Review of RHC documentation		
Standard 17: Legal Identity and Governance			
4) The original Registrar General and NGO certificates as well as the latest annual renewals.	Review of RHC documentation		
5) The original registration and renewals for day care centre, kindergartens and schools operated by the RHC for children in the RHC, where applicable.			
Standard 18: Transparent, accountable and sustainable operations			
6) The NGO promotional material and website, if any, do not have photographs of children or personal stories for fundraising purposes. Fundraising strategy does not include individual donations for children. Children are not used for fundraising activities.	Review of RHC website & documentation		
7) A written annual budget for the RHC, which includes all related expenses i.e. facility management and maintenance, staff salaries, childcare related costs (e.g. food, clothing, medical care, schooling), transport, staff training and development costs. The RHC can also provide evidence of written commitments and/or other evidence of sources of income, which will enable them to meet all these expenses for the period of one year at least.	Review of RHC documentation		

Standard/Evidence	Evidence Source	Score	Remarks
8) Annual Report, for previous year, is available	Review of RHC documentation		
9) Audited financial report for previous year (audited by an external auditors), which was submitted to DSW with the Annual Report.	Review of RHC documentation		
10) Donation book recording cash and in-kind donation is available	Review of RHC documentation		
Standard 19: Staffing and Human Resource Management			
11) Electronic or manual register of all staff in the RHC, their age, positions, highest educational qualification and experience, police clearance/references and health checks.	RHC staff register		
12) Personal files for all staff. These staff files should include the following key information: copy of national ID; job description; police clearance and/or references from two people; copies of qualifications; and employment contract stipulating conditions of employment.	Staff files		
13) A written record/file of all development and training opportunities provided for Staff including orientations/inductions and trainings, including in-service trainings. Staff can also confirm the details of training received and how they were able to apply the knowledge and skills acquired in their work.	Staff files		
Standard 20: Volunteers			
14) Records of volunteers including their application letter, references, criminal record check and health clearance certificate.	Review of RHC documentation		
15) Approval letter from DSW for volunteer appointments.	Review of RHC documentation		

Total Score for Governance, Staffing and Management Standards:	
Does RHC comply with all the critical provisions?	
Key strengths and good practices:	
Key gaps and action to be taken:	

C. INSPECTION CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The inspection checklist has 73 sources of evidence against which compliance is to be scored. The Table below must be used when making recommendations for the RHC licensing or closure.

If a RHC complies with all 73 criteria, the score will be 146 (73 x 2). If a RHC has 100% compliance, then no conditions need to be attached to the RHC licence/renewal. If the RHC complies with 40% - 99% of the criteria then conditions need to be attached to the licence/renewal. RHCs that comply with less than 40% of the criteria should be earmarked for closure and/or closed immediately depending on the safety and well-being of the children.

Total Score:	
Recommendation (refer to table below)	

Recommendation	Complies with All Critical Provisions	Does NOT comply with all Critical Provisions	Overall Compliance with Provisions		
			146 (100%)	145 - 58 (40% - 99%)	0 - 58 (0% - 39%)
Issue new RHC licence - no conditions attached	✓		✓		
Issue new RHC licence - with conditions attached		✓		✓	
Issue RHC licence renewal - no conditions attached	✓		✓		
Issue RHC licence renewal - with conditions attached		✓		✓	
Licensed RHC can continue to operate - no conditions attached	✓		✓		
Licensed RHC can continue to operate - with conditions attached		✓		✓	
Close RHC -phased approach, pending reintegration/placement of children (provide date of expected closure)		✓			✓
Close RHC immediately - remove children to alternative care placement (this is for situations where the children's safety and well-being is seriously compromised and where they are at risk of harm).		✓			✓



REPUBLIC OF GHANA

ANNEX B: RESIDENTIAL HOME FOR CHILDREN INSPECTION REPORT TEMPLATE

Note: The completed Inspection Checklist must be attached to this inspection report.

1. Identifying details

Name of RHC			
District			
Region			
Date of inspection			
Purpose of inspection	New Licence/Closure	Licence renewal	Other
Form completed by (name, position)			

Details of person(s) conducting the inspection:

Name	Position

Person(s) consulted for the inspection:

Name	Position

Children's participation in the inspection

Were children interviewed during the inspection?	YES	NO
If YES, how many children?		
If NO, provide reasons why		

2. Overall Recommendation

Tick next to applicable box

Issue new RHC licence - no conditions attached	
Issue new RHC licence - with conditions attached	
Issue RHC licence renewal - no conditions attached	
Issue RHC licence renewal - with conditions attached	
Licensed RHC can continue to operate - no conditions attached	
Licensed RHC can continue to operate - with conditions attached	
Close RHC - phased approach, pending reintegration/placement of children (provide date of expected closure)	
Close RHC immediately - remove children to alternative care placement	

Reason(s) for recommendation:

3. Conditions attached to issuing of licence/continued operation of the RHC (where applicable)

What conditions have been attached to the licence/continued operation of the RHC, are the time-frames for addressing these conditions, and who is responsible? These conditions should come directly from gaps and action to be taken as identified in the checklist.

Condition	Time-frame	Responsibility

4. RHC closure (where applicable)

What actions need to be taken to (1) close the RHC immediately or (2) close the RHC in a phased approach?

Date RHC to be closed:

Action	Time-frame	Responsibility

4. Where applicable, strengths of the RHC and good practices observed



REPUBLIC OF GHANA

ANNEX C: RESIDENTIAL HOMES MONITORING REPORT TEMPLATE

Note: When conducting the monitoring visit the team must review the recommendations of the previous inspection report and the recent monitoring reports as this provides the necessary information from which to conduct the monitoring visit.

1. Identifying details

Name of RHC	
District	
Region	
Date of monitoring visit	
Purpose of monitoring visit	
Form completed by (name, position)	

Details of person/s conducting the monitoring visit:

Name	Position

Person/s consulted for the monitoring visit:

Name	Position

Children's participation in the monitoring:

Were children interviewed during the inspection?	YES	NO
If YES, how many children?		
If NO, provide reasons why		

2. Overall Findings

Tick next to applicable box

RHC is implementing conditions attached to the licence as agreed	
RHC is now implementing conditions attached to the licence as agreed	
RHC is implementing the closure and reintegration plan as agreed	
RHC is not implementing the closure and reintegration plan as agreed	
Other	

Where the RHC is not complying with the conditions attached to the licence and/or the closure and reintegration plan, provide details:

3. Overall Recommendations

Tick next to applicable box

RHC can continue to operate	
RHC can continue to operate but must address compliance gaps and/or closure and reintegration plan as agreed	
Conditions at the RHC have deteriorated to an extent that the RHC's licence should be revoked	
Close RHC immediately – remove all children immediately to alternative care placement	
Other	

Reason/s for recommendation:

4. RHC closure (where applicable)

What actions need to be taken to (1) close the RHC immediately or (2) close the RHC in a phased approach?

Date RHC to be closed:

Action	Time-frame	Responsibility

5. Where applicable, strengths of the RHC and good practices observed



REPUBLIC OF GHANA

ANNEX D: APPLICATION FOR NEW LICENCE/LICENCE RENEWAL

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE

APPLICATION FOR LICENCE/APPROVAL TO OPERATE A RESIDENTIAL HOME FOR CHILDREN (RHC)

(Children's Act 1998 (Act560),

FOR COMPLETION BY THE RHC:

1. APPLICATION FOR

FIRST LICENCE

RENEWAL

(Tick applicable box)

2. NAME OF RHC: _____

3. ADDRESS:

REGION: _____

DISTRICT: _____

VILLAGE: _____

STREET: _____

LANDMARKS: _____

4. DATE ESTABLISHED _____

5. PARTICULARS OF PROPRIETOR/OWNER

Name _____

Age _____

Sex _____

Nationality: _____

Occupation _____

Qualification _____

Address (P. O. BOX) _____

Residential _____

Email _____

Tel. (Office) _____ Mobile _____ Fax _____

6. NGO REGISTRATION NUMBER AND DATE OF ISSUE: _____

7. REG. GENERALS DEPT. REGISTRATION NO: _____

8. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

NAME	OFFICE	OCCUPATION	QUALIFICATION
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			

9. FINANCE

Sources of Funding: _____

☐

International Donors

☐

Volunteers

☐

School Fees

☐

Local Donors

☐

Income Generation

10. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FROM THE RHC:

Note: The application will not be reviewed without this documentation.

Document:	Submitted with Application?		Remarks
	YES	NO	
1) RHC Statement of Purpose			
2) Copy of NGO Certificate and latest renewal			
3) Copy of Certificate to Commence Business or Certificate of Incorporation and latest renewal			
4) Copy of latest RHC Annual Report (for renewals)			
5) Copy of Annual Audited Financial Statements (for renewals)			
6) Staff Register			
7) Children Register			

11. NAME OF APPLICANT AND POSITION

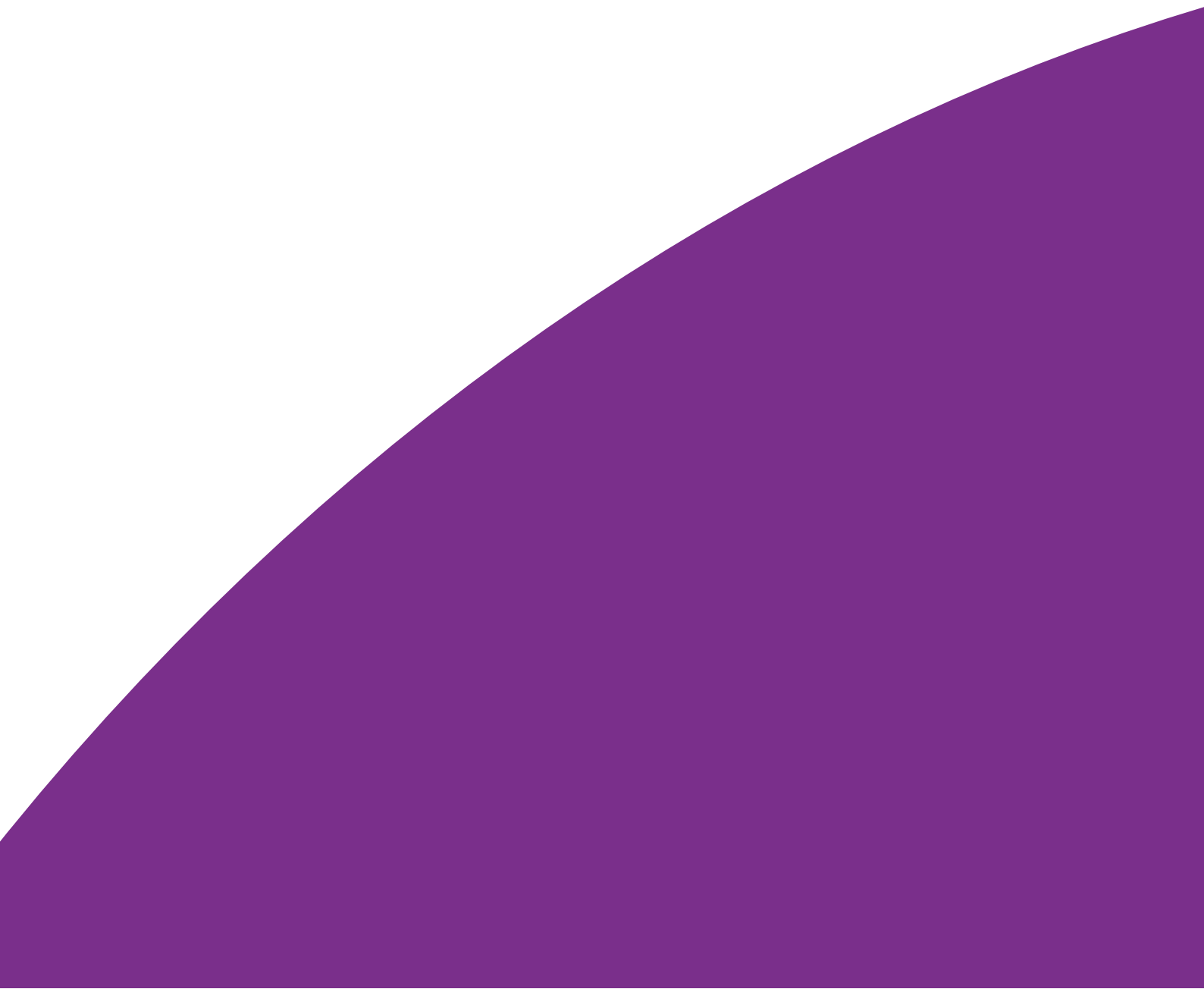
SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

FOR OFFICIAL USE:

RHC application to be submitted to the National DSW with the following supporting documentation:

Document:	Submitted with Application?	
	YES	NO
1) Checklist of new/renewal licence inspection		
2) Report on new/renewal licence inspection with recommendation		
3) Monitoring reports (where applicable)		



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