

Step-by-step registration

A clear, one-step-at-a-time path to a fully registered, fundable and trusted centre.

01 Why registration matters

Registration is more than paperwork. It is proof that your centre is safe, legal, and trusted.

A registered centre can:

- ◆ Apply for government subsidies (a major source of income for many centres).
- ◆ Open a business bank account.
- ◆ Apply for grants and donor funding.
- ◆ Employ staff legally (UIF, PAYE).
- ◆ Build trust with parents and the wider community.

If your centre is not registered yet, do not panic. Every registered centre was once where you are now. Start with one document.

02 The certificates you need

◆ 1. Health certificate

Where: Department of Health (through your local municipality).

What they check: Kitchen hygiene, food storage, toilets, hand-washing, waste disposal, ventilation.

Tip: Walk through your centre with the inspector's eyes. Clean kitchen, separate food prep area, working taps, soap at every basin, covered bins.

◆ 2. Fire certificate

Where: Local Fire Department.

What they check: Fire extinguishers (serviced yearly), clear emergency exits, smoke alarms, fire evacuation plan, exit signs.

Tip: Practise your evacuation drill with children at least once a term. It also keeps everyone safe in a real emergency.

◆ 3. Zoning / land use approval

Where: Local municipality.

What they check: That the land or building is approved for use as an ECD centre. If you run from a home, you may need written consent for the change of land use.

Tip: This is often the slowest step. Start it early.

◆ 4. ECD partial care registration

Where: Department of Basic Education (DBE) — applications often go through the provincial education department or your local DBE district office.

What you need: All of the above certificates, plus your centre's full documentation (see below).

This is your full registration — the one that unlocks subsidies.

◆ 5. NPO registration (optional but valuable)

Where: Department of Social Development.

Why: Legitimises your centre as community-serving, opens doors to donor funding, often required for government subsidies.

How: Apply at www.npo.gov.za or your local DSD office. Processing can take up to two months.

03

Your Registration File

Start a file (a simple lever-arch file with plastic sleeves works well). Add documents as you collect them. Tick them off the list.

- ◆ Copy of principal's ID
- ◆ Lease or title deed for the property
- ◆ Health certificate
- ◆ Fire certificate
- ◆ Zoning / land use certificate
- ◆ Emergency and evacuation plan
- ◆ Floor plan of the centre
- ◆ Daily routine / programme
- ◆ Staff list with ID copies and qualifications
- ◆ Copies of children's birth certificates and immunisation cards
- ◆ Parent consent forms
- ◆ First aid certificates
- ◆ Proof of bank account
- ◆ Centre registration form (from DBE or DSD)
- ◆ NPO registration certificate (if applicable)

04

Where to start if it feels overwhelming

You do not have to do everything at once. Choose one action this month:

- ◆ Phone your local municipality and ask about the zoning process.
- ◆ Book a fire inspection.
- ◆ Visit your DBE district office and ask for a registration information pack.
- ◆ Start your Registration File — even if it is empty.

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You are not behind. You are beginning.

05

Useful contacts

- ◆ **CIPC (business registration):** www.cipc.co.za | 086 100 2472
 - ◆ **SARS (PAYE / UIF):** www.sars.gov.za
 - ◆ **NPO registration:** www.npo.gov.za
 - ◆ **Department of Basic Education:** Contact your provincial office or local district.
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Part of the **Centre Management** guides for ECD principals and centre owners. For coaching, mentorship and more support, contact your PAL.

KNYSNA ECD
GUIDE 2 OF 6