

# Planning and Design Guidelines *for* **Licensed** **Child Care Centres**



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Une publication équivalente est disponible en français sous le titre suivant : *Rapport annuel de 2021 sur le système de la petite enfance et des services de garde d'enfants.*

This publication is available on the Ministry of Education's website, at [www.ontario.ca/edu](http://www.ontario.ca/edu).

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## **A NOTE TO USERS**

This publication is not intended as a substitute for any legislation or local by-law. Reference should be made directly to the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA), and its regulations, as well as all other applicable legislation (e.g., the Building Code Act, 1992). These can be found at [\*\*www.ontario.ca/laws\*\*](http://www.ontario.ca/laws).

These guidelines provide general provincial information for design professionals, prospective child care centre applicants, existing licensed child care centres, school boards, service system managers, and First Nations that administer and operate child care and early years programs and services. They do not take into account particular or local facts and circumstances.

Accordingly, these guidelines should not be relied upon as a substitute for legal or professional advice, and the user is responsible for how they are used and applied in their own licensed child care centre.

# Acknowledgements

The creation of the *Planning and Design Guidelines for Licensed Child Care Centres* would not have been possible without the support and advice of many different partners.

The Ministry of Education sincerely thanks the staff and licensees from child care centres across Ontario who took time to answer our questions, discuss their own building and design processes, and explain their experiences on their journey to opening a child care centre.

This document would also not have been possible without the advice and guidance of the ministry's Expert Panel on Early Years Capital Standards in Schools. In March 2017, the Expert Panel on Early Years Capital Standards in Schools was established to engage and solicit input from key child care and EarlyON child and family program education capital stakeholders in order to provide advice to the ministry.

The ministry acknowledges and thanks our partners for their work towards supporting early years and child care programs and services in Ontario.

# Introduction

## Purpose and Organization

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This document, *Planning and Design Guidelines for Licensed Child Care Centres* (the “design guidelines”), provides provincially focused information on the planning, design, construction, renovation and maintenance of licensed child care centres.

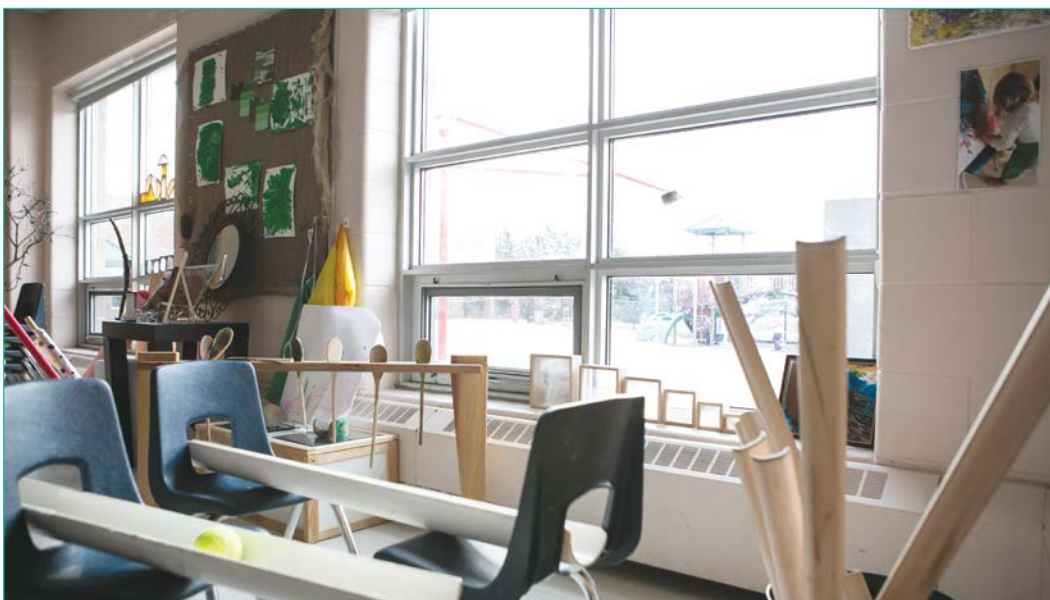
These guidelines are intended to support the creation of high-quality, affordable and inclusive child care centres that are:

- child and family-centred;
- environmentally safe and secure;
- culturally relevant;
- supportive of children’s learning, development and well-being;
- aesthetically pleasing;
- functional in their design; and
- cost-effective to operate.

Designing a licensed child care centre is a complex task. The physical environment, or physical space, of a licensed child care centre is the context in which learning takes place. It should mirror the ideas, values, attitudes and cultures of those who share the space. The physical environment has the potential to stimulate children’s growth, development and creativity; however, if it is not thoughtfully designed, it may also limit their opportunities for learning and development.

Children thrive in indoor and outdoor spaces that invite them to investigate, imagine, think, create and make meaning. Well-designed spaces are welcoming, engaging and flexible. They foster meaningful exploration, play and inquiry and provide safe,





supported opportunities for risk taking and problem solving. From the aesthetics of the space, to the type of furnishings and materials available to the organization of time, the physical space communicates a powerful message and contributes to shaping the actions that can be taken within it.

Learning and development happen within the context of relationships among children, families, educators and their environments. Inclusive environments are designed and built with the physical, emotional and cultural needs of children and families in mind. These environments support children's well-being, learning and development, including their growing autonomy and independence, leading to less challenging behaviours and more engaged exploration. In well-designed environments, staff are able to focus more fully on observing and interacting with children, and on extending children's learning and development in meaningful ways.

The design guidelines are helpful in facilitating the development of supportive learning environments at all stages, from site selection and the creation of architectural drawings, to active construction and the development of aesthetically pleasing spaces – and even during ongoing operation and renovation.

This guide may be particularly useful for the following individuals and groups:

- child care centre owners and operators (applicants and licensees)
- Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs)
- District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs)
- First Nation councils
- architects, engineers and other design professionals
- school boards
- educators/child care centre staff
- parents

## Legend

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This symbol indicates a requirement for licensed child care centres.



This requirement does not apply to licensed child care centres operating for less than six hours in a day.



This requirement does not apply to licensed child care centres located in publicly funded schools that only serve children who are Kindergarten age and older.



Alternative approval for this requirement may be granted by a Ministry of Education director.

## Child Care in Ontario – An Overview

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The CCEYA came into effect on August 31, 2015. This legislation replaced the Day Nurseries Act and established new rules governing child care in Ontario.

Under the CCEYA, licensed child care can occur in a variety of environments.

**Licensed child care centres**, which are inspected by ministry staff, are located in a range of places, including publicly funded schools, private schools, public buildings and private businesses. Some centres are stand-alone buildings, while others are co-located in workplaces and community centres. Care may be offered for the full day, part of the day or during the before- and/or after-school periods.

**Licensed home child care** is offered by individual child care providers who have an agreement with an agency that provides oversight of the provider.

Home child care agencies establish agreements with:

- individual providers who care for up to six children in a home child care premises and;
- in-home services providers, where child care is provided for a child at his or her home, or at another place where residential care is provided for the child.

These guidelines focus on the licensing process and requirements for licensed child care centres only. For more information about licensed home child care, please see the *Home Child Care Licensing Manual* and other resources available on the **Ontario.ca** website.

The CCEYA requires any premise in Ontario that receives more than five children younger than 13 years of age for *temporary* care and supervision to be licensed by the ministry, except in exempt circumstances, as defined in section 4 of the CCEYA.

An applicant may operate as an **unlicensed child care provider** before a licence is issued. An unlicensed child care provider can care for a maximum of five children under the age of 13 years, including their own children under the age of four years. For the rules that apply to unlicensed providers, please refer to the CCEYA and Ontario Regulation 137/15.

Once a licence is issued, the applicant, now called a licensee, may operate a licensed child care program according to the terms set out in their licence and the rules set out in the CCEYA and its regulations.

The CCEYA gives the ministry a number of tools to enforce the CCEYA requirements, including procedures for compliance orders, protection orders, administrative penalties and the prosecution of offences committed under the act.

Information on all licensed child care programs in Ontario can be found on the **Ontario.ca** website.

## How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years

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In June 2015, under the authority of the CCEYA, the Minister of Education issued a policy statement on programming and pedagogy that names *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years, 2014* (HDLH) as the document to be used for the purpose of guiding licensed child care programs.

HDLH is the provincial framework that guides programming and pedagogy in licensed child care settings. It is a professional learning resource that is shaped by views about children, the role of educators and families and the relationships among them. It builds on foundational knowledge about children and is grounded in new research and leading-edge practice from around the world.

HDLH is a resource guide for early childhood educators in planning and providing environments and experiences that support children's learning, development, health and well-being. It is informed by research, knowledge and educator practices from across Ontario and around the world.

# Roles and Responsibilities

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## Prospective Licensed Child Care Programs (Applicants)

Prospective licensees, or applicants, are responsible for initiating the process to become a licensed child care centre by submitting a complete application, including a non-refundable fee deposit, through the **Child Care Licensing System (CCLS)**.

After an initial application has been submitted, applicants are then responsible for ensuring that all required municipal approvals are obtained and all licensing requirements are met. The Ministry of Education supports applicants through the licensing process, but the responsibility for achieving compliance with all licensing requirements rests with the applicant.

In order to move through the licensing process as efficiently as possible, applicants are encouraged to consult with local authorities, research the child care needs in their community and make an effort to understand the licensing process and requirements.

Please refer to the section “**The Licensing Process**” for more information on the steps to follow to become a licensed child care centre.

## Licensed Child Care Programs

Child care licences are issued to individuals, corporations or First Nations.

Licensees are responsible for managing the day-to-day operation of licensed child care programs, including achieving and maintaining compliance with the requirements set out under the CCEYA at all times.

Please refer to the ***Child Care Centre Licensing Manual*** for more details on licensing requirements.

## The Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education sets the legislative, regulatory, policy and funding framework for early years and child care. This framework includes the issuing and renewal of child care licences under the CCEYA as well as the provision of capital and operating funding to service system managers, Indigenous communities and school boards to support their respective roles in the early years, child care and education systems.

Ministry of Education staff regularly inspect licensed child care programs to protect the health, safety and well-being of children and follow up on complaints from the public about licensed and unlicensed child care for the purposes of enforcing the CCEYA.

## Consolidated Municipal Service Managers and District Social Services Administration Boards and First Nations

Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs) and District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs) are designated service system managers for early years programs under the CCEYA. Service system managers receive child care funding from the Ministry of Education to support fee subsidies, general operating expenses, special needs resourcing and EarlyON programs. The 47 CMSMs and DSSABs across Ontario are responsible for the planning and managing of early years services at the local level. Child care services are managed by CMSMs and DSSABs through a local service planning process that reflects current child care legislation, regulations and policies. This process includes flexibility to determine how to allocate early years funding to best meet the needs of children, families and early years service providers within their community.

The Minister and a First Nation or group of First Nations may enter into an agreement for the purposes of establishing, administering, operating and funding child care and early years programs and services.

Please refer to **Appendix A: Directory**, for contact information for CMSMs/DSSABs and First Nations in Ontario.

## Local/Municipal Authorities

Local authorities like municipal building, zoning and fire departments, as well as the local medical office of health, enforce a broad range of legislation, regulations and by-laws, and therefore play a significant role in the oversight of licensed child care in Ontario. Every community can differ in the way it governs itself and in which respective bodies are responsible for verifying compliance with applicable legislation. Each municipality or council of a First Nation may have a different approval process for licensed child care centres.

When completing the child care licensing process, applicants are required under the CCEYA to provide the Ministry of Education with evidence of compliance with certain local rules (e.g., proper zoning to operate as a licensed child care centre). This evidence is generally provided by the above authorities in the form of a letter or email, but it may also be provided by a professional familiar with the applicable legislation, regulation or by-laws (e.g., an architect or professional engineer can confirm if a building is compliant with the Ontario Building Code). Please refer to **Appendix A: Directory**, for contact information for local/municipal authorities.

## School Boards

School boards are responsible under the **Education Act** for the provision of Kindergarten to Grade 12 education and have a role to play in working with partners to enhance student achievement and well-being.

School boards identify appropriate staff (e.g., school board “Early Years Lead,” “Principal,” “Community Outreach Coordinator”) to support early years programs.

As outlined under the Education Act, school boards are required to ensure the provision of before- and after-school programs for children from Kindergarten to Grade 6 in each elementary school in Ontario where there is sufficient demand. School boards are also responsible for facility management of their properties, including sites where licensed child care centres are co-located with schools.

School boards play a key role in identifying local needs and priorities. In consultation with local service system managers, school boards may identify sites and spaces for early years capital investment in some schools. Minimizing transitions for young children and providing a single point of access to early childhood services benefits the whole family. The schools-first approach for government capital investment should guide the education and child care sectors in planning for and repurposing school space to serve children under the age of 4.

## Legislative Requirements for Licensed Child Care Centres

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Licensed child care centres must be aware of, and abide by, a number of different standards and rules found in legislation, regulations and local-by-laws, including the following:

- **Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, and Ontario Regulation (O. Reg.) 137/15<sup>1</sup>**
- **Education Act**
- **Building Code Act, 1992, and O. Reg. 332/12 (Building Code)**
- **Planning Act**
- **Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997, and O. Reg. 213/07 (Fire Code)**
- **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, and O. Reg. 191/11**
- **Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002**
- **Health Protection and Promotion Act**
- **Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017**
- **Smoke Free Ontario Act, 2017**
- **Highway Traffic Act**

1. The abbreviation “O. Reg.” for “Ontario Regulation” is used throughout this document.

- **Cannabis Control Act, 2017**
- **Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Standard for Children's Playspaces and Equipment**
- local fire, health and zoning by-laws and standards

As stated previously, the design guidelines focus on child care licensing requirements set out under the CCEYA and its regulations. The recommendations contained in these design guidelines include complementary practices for consideration beyond what is required under the CCEYA. While framed as recommended practices in this document, these recommendations may be requirements under other legislation and standards.

It is the responsibility of the applicant/licensee to consult with other authorities and legal counsel to ensure that all applicable requirements are met when planning, designing, constructing and renovating licensed child care centres.

Detailed information on local by-laws, requirements and processes has not been included, as there are significant differences across the province. To support applicants and licensees, a directory of links to relevant local resources has been included in **Appendix A: Directory**.

Please refer to the ***Child Care Centre Licensing Manual*** for information on licensing requirements applicable to COVID-19 that may impact the planning and design of a child care centre.

# Glossary of Terms and Definitions

**adjacent:** A term used in O. Reg. 137/15 in reference to areas that are near, next to or neighbouring one another. These areas have a common endpoint or border, immediately preceding or following. This could include a change table that is near a sink but not attached to it.

**applicant:** An individual, corporation or First Nations representative, including an existing licensee of child care programs, who is applying for a new licence to operate a child care program. Where the applicant is a corporation, the term applies to all directors of the corporation and all individuals with a controlling interest in the corporation.

**architect:** A design professional who is a member in good standing of the **Ontario Association of Architects**.

**building project:** A project composed of one or more of the following elements:

1. the purchase or other acquisition of all or any part of an existing building or buildings including the land contiguous to the building;
2. any renovations or alterations to an existing building or buildings;
3. additions to an existing building or buildings;
4. the purchase or other acquisition of vacant land for the purpose of constructing a building or buildings on it;
5. the erection of a new building or any part of a building;
6. the demolition of a building;
7. the installation of public utilities, sewers and items or services necessary for access to the land or building or buildings.



**child:** For the purposes of the **Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014**, a person who is younger than 13 years old.

**child with medical needs:** A child who has one or more chronic or acute medical conditions such that the child requires additional supports, accommodation or assistance.

**child with special needs:** A child whose cognitive, physical, social, emotional or communicative needs, or whose needs relating to overall development, are of such a nature that additional supports are required for the child.

**designated spaces:** Spaces within a child care centre that are designated for each item listed in subsections 15 (1) and (3) under O. Reg. 137/15 (e.g., a space designated for washing, dressing and toileting, a space designated for eating and a space designated for resting).

**director:** An employee of the ministry who is appointed a director by the Minister under subsection 66(1) of the CCEYA.

**director approval:** An approval granted by a director under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, that grants authority for an arrangement that is different from the regulatory requirement (e.g., mixed age grouping, smaller playground with rotation plan).

**fixed play structure:** An outdoor play structure that is anchored to the ground.

**floor plan:** A plan (usually a computer-generated drawing) that includes details of the interior of the child care centre, including designated spaces.

**individualized plan:** A written plan, developed in consultation with parents and other professionals, that sets out how the licensee will support a child with an anaphylactic allergy, a child with special needs or a child with medical needs.

**infant child:** For the purposes of the age groupings under Schedule 1 of O. Reg. 137/15, a child who is younger than 18 months of age.

**inspector:** An employee of the Ministry of Education appointed by the Minister under subsection 28(1) of the CCEYA. An inspector's powers and duties include the ability to enter and inspect a child care centre, premises where home child care is provided and premises where a home child care agency is located and to examine their records. Program advisors and enforcement staff have been appointed as inspectors.

**junior school age child:** For the purposes of the age groupings under Schedule 1 of O. Reg. 137/15, a child who is 9 years or older, but younger than 13 years of age.

**Kindergarten child:** For the purposes of the age groupings under Schedule 1 of O. Reg. 137/15, a child who is 44 months of age or older, but younger than 7 years of age.

**licence:** A document issued to a licensee by a director under the CCEYA providing the authority to operate a specific child care program. A licence can be regular or provisional and may have conditions.

**Licence Appeal Tribunal:** An adjudicative tribunal that receives appeals, conducts hearings, resolves disputes and makes decisions on matters related to licensing activities under the CCEYA as well as under a wide variety of other legislation in Ontario.

**licensed age group:** A group of children whose ages all fall within one of the age categories set out in Schedules 1 and 3 in O. Reg. 137/15. Each licensed age group has a maximum size/capacity (e.g., the number of children allowed in one group), and licensees are granted permission from the Ministry of Education to provide child care for specific licensed age groups.

**licensed capacity:** The maximum number of children, including the number in each age category, allowed to be receiving child care in the child care centre at one time as set out in the licence of the child care centre.

**licensed child care program:** A term used to refer to both home child care agencies and child care centres.

**licensed family age group (i.e., Schedule 4):** A group of children, whether or not from the same family, for which a licensee is licensed to provide child care at a child care centre in accordance with section 8.1 of O. Reg. 137/15.

**licensee:** An individual, corporation or First Nation that holds a licence issued under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014.

**mixed age grouping:** A licensed age grouping that includes children who are younger than the minimum age specified in Schedule 1 for that age category (e.g., a toddler group that includes some children who are younger than 18 months). Licensees must have director approval to use mixed age grouping.

**outdoor play space:** A designated outdoor space, or playground, that meets regulatory requirements set out in O. Reg. 137/15.

**parent:** A person having lawful custody of a child or a person who has demonstrated a settled intention to treat a child as a child of his or her family (all references to “parent” include legal guardians but will only be referred to as “parent” in this document).

**play activity room or area:** A designated space used by a specific age group. Every licensed age group must have an assigned separate play activity room, or area, that meets the regulatory requirements set out in O. Reg. 137/15.

**preschool child:** For the purposes of the age groupings under Schedule 1 of O. Reg. 137/15, a child who is 30 months or older, but younger than 6 years of age.

**primary/junior school age child:** For the purposes of the age groupings under Schedule 1 of O. Reg. 137/15, a child who is 68 months of age or older, but younger than 13 years of age.

**program advisor:** An employee of the Ministry of Education who is authorized under the CCEYA to inspect licensed child care programs. Program advisors regularly inspect child care programs to protect the health, safety and well-being of children. They also follow up on complaints from the public about licensed and unlicensed child care for the purposes of enforcing the CCEYA.

**public health unit:** An official health agency established by a group of urban and/or rural municipalities to provide a community health program, carried out by full-time, specially qualified staff.

**publicly funded school:** A school as defined in the Education Act (e.g., a public school or Catholic school, not a private school).

**qualified employee:** An employee who meets the qualification requirements set out in section 54 of O. Reg. 137/15.

*For any licensed age group – An employee who is a member in good standing of the College of Early Childhood Educators (CECE), or who is otherwise approved by a director.*

*For a licensed junior school age group or a licensed primary/junior school age group that includes only children who are junior school age – An employee who has a diploma or degree in child and youth care or in recreation and leisure services, or a member in good standing with the Ontario College of Teachers.*

**resource consultant:** A person who meets the qualification requirements set out in section 55 of O. Reg. 137/15 and supports program staff/providers and parents in working with children with special needs who attend licensed child care.

**separate sleeping area:** An area used for sleep, separated from any play activity area (e.g., separated by a structure, divider or wall that is fixed to the ground).

**service system manager:** A Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM) or District Social Services Administration Board (DSSAB) designated as a service system manager under the CCEYA. Each service system manager has responsibility for planning and managing a broad range of child care services, including fee subsidy, wage subsidy and special needs resourcing at the local level.

**shared space attestation form:** A Ministry of Education form, used by licensees who operate before- and/or after-school programs in publicly funded schools, that sets out the classrooms and other common spaces used by the program during its hours of operation.

**site plan:** A plan (i.e., a computer-generated drawing) of the entire site of the child care centre showing details such as location, entrance(s), access to the outdoor play space (playground) and details about the outdoor play space (e.g., location of gates, fence height).

**supervisor:** A person who plans and directs the program of a child care centre, is in charge of the children, oversees staff and is responsible to the licensee. This person must meet qualifications set out in section 53 of O. Reg. 137/15 and must be approved by a Ministry of Education director.

**toddler child:** For the purposes of the age groupings under Schedule 1 of O. Reg. 137/15, a child who is 18 months or older, but younger than 30 months of age.

# Before Applying for a Licence

## Planning a Licensed Child Care Centre

In the early stages of planning a licensed child care centre, it is important to gather information about child care requirements, as well as information about the community the child care centre will serve.

Consider the following guiding questions:

**1) Is there a general need for child care in the community? Is there a need for a specific type of child care? What types of child care are located near the intended location?**

Local service system managers can provide valuable information on the demand for child care in the community, as well as their local vision and plan for early years services. It is important to connect with your CMSM/DSSAB early in the process to ensure that the type of child care you are proposing meets a need in the community and is supported by the service system manager.

A service system manager may provide advice to a Ministry of Education director regarding the issuance of a child care licence if, in its opinion, the licence would authorize the provision of child care that is inconsistent with the service system manager's plan for child care and early years programs and services.

First Nations should determine demand for child care based on their community needs and priorities, as well as their vision and plan for early years programs and services. First Nations who are considering establishing child care in their community are encouraged to contact a Ministry of Education **Early Years Advisor** to discuss next steps and resources to support their planning.

## **2) Where will the child care centre be located? Will there be new construction? Will renovations to an existing building be required?**

Determining the intended location is an important first step for many reasons. The Ministry of Education requires an actual site, or civic address, before the application process can begin (e.g., street name and number, city, province and postal code). Applicants will be unable to move forward with their application if they do not have a location.

Knowing the intended location of the child care centre also helps determine important early contacts, including the local service system manager and local authorities. The CCEYA requires that licensed child care centres be located in areas that are zoned for use as child care; therefore, it is important for applicants to engage the local planning/zoning department early in the process, preferably before submitting an application to the Ministry of Education. If child care is not a permitted use at the intended location, you may need to apply for a change to the zoning, and this could take a significant amount of time.

If renovations to existing facilities are required, it is important to understand the condition of the facility before committing to renovate, as renovations may be more costly in certain facilities than in others.

## **3) Whom do you need to contact and when do you need to contact them?**

The application process for a licence to operate a child care centre requires written verification from many different authorities, and each municipality or council of a First Nation may have a different approval process.

For more information on requirements you must meet, and local processes and timelines for approval, applicants are encouraged to contact the authorities listed below (if applicable for your location) early in the planning process:

- CMSM/DSSAB Children's Services
- council of a First Nation
- school board
- planning/zoning department
- building department
- public health unit
- Health Canada
- fire department

(While some of these authorities may not actually inspect or interact with your licensed child care centre until construction is complete, having this information early can help with realistic project planning and a more efficient application and approval process.)

**4) What are the characteristics of the families who will be accessing the licensed child care centre?**

Learning about the families who will be accessing the licensed child care centre will help you make important decisions about such things as the age groups to be served, the hours of care to be provided and the type of program to be offered. Knowing whether parents will be arriving by car or on foot with strollers will help you determine whether you need a large parking lot, temporary “drop-off” parking spots or a stroller storage area.

**5) What type of program will you offer? Will your licensed child care centre follow a specific approach to programming?**

While many program decisions can be made throughout the process, certain design decisions may need to be made early in the process. Consider whether you will want large group gathering areas, or ateliers, as well as whether some of your programming could be offered out of shared space (e.g., a nursery school program in the morning, after-school care in the afternoon).

Applicants must consider the number of hours they will be providing care early in the process, as the CCEYA has different physical requirements for programs that operate for more than six hours a day. If you are unsure what your hours of operation will be, you are encouraged to design and build as if you will be operating for longer than six hours a day. This approach to planning provides the greatest flexibility and ensures that you will not be struggling to meet those additional requirements at the end of the application process.





## **6) Who will be responsible for different costs associated with opening a child care centre?**

There may be a shared responsibility for the various costs associated with opening a child care centre. Financial decisions should be considered early in the planning, through business plans, budgets and agreements.

For example, school boards, CMSMs/DSSABs and applicants/licensees share responsibility for covering the cost of furniture and equipment when initially setting up a school-based child care centre. It is important to have a mutual agreement early on as to the sharing of responsibility for costs associated with the repair and maintenance of furniture and equipment, plumbing, electrical, gas service, and so on.

## **7) Will you require financial support?**

Licensing decisions (e.g., decisions regarding the issuance of a licence to operate a child care centre) are separate from decisions about funding and financial support. The issuance of a licence to operate a child care centre does not guarantee access to financial support.

In Ontario, funding for child care is provided to CMSMs and DSSABs, who are the service system managers responsible for planning, managing and coordinating child care for their geographical area, within the parameters of provincial legislation, regulations, policies and guidelines. CMSMs and DSSABs may enter into funding agreements with licensed child care centres.

Applicants can contact the CMSM or DSSAB responsible for the area where the licensed child care centre will be located for more information on potential operational funding support.

For more information about how to apply for capital funding for a building project, please contact the Early Years Capital Unit at [eycu@ontario.ca](mailto:eycu@ontario.ca).

Funding for child care is also provided directly to First Nations, who are responsible for the local management and delivery of child care in their communities. The CCEYA authorizes a First Nation or group of First Nations to establish, administer, operate and fund child care services. First Nations can contact a Ministry of Education **Early Years Advisor** for more information on financial supports.

## **8) When would you like to open? What is the contingency plan if you are unable to open on your planned date?**

There are many interconnected pieces involved in opening a licensed child care centre. Effective project and financial management is required to ensure that deadlines are met and delays are avoided whenever possible. Gathering all relevant



information early will help in determining how much time is needed to successfully move through the application process. Well-designed project plans are flexible enough to allow for unexpected and unavoidable delays, and thorough business plans and budgets will account for the expected financial costs, should a delay occur.

## Choosing a Design Consultant

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The type of design consultant required for a specific licensed child care centre construction or renovation will depend on the nature and scope of the project. For many types of facilities, the **Ontario Building Code** requires that an architect prepare plans and specifications for construction or renovations.

Normally, a standard form of agreement provided by the design consultant is used to set out the responsibilities and fees. For an architectural consultant, the Ontario Association of Architects' Fee Schedule normally determines fees.

Professional design consultants must have the appropriate professional designation. For example, an architect should be licensed to practice in Ontario by the **Ontario Association of Architects** (a self-regulating organization governed by the **Architects Act**).

## Site Selection

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When submitting an application to the Ministry of Education for a child care centre licence, the applicant is required to provide a civic address for the proposed child care centre. If, during the application process, the applicant wishes to move the proposed child care centre (e.g., change the civic address), a new licence application is required. Additionally, all floor, site and playground plans must be approved by the Ministry of Education *before* construction or renovation begins. These factors make site selection an important first step in the planning and design process.

At the time an application is submitted, the site for a proposed child care centre could be:

- undeveloped land with plans to build a child care centre;
- an existing building currently used for something other than child care (e.g., a church, a school), requiring renovations that may be minor or extensive; or
- an existing building currently used as a child care centre, potentially requiring minor renovations.

By considering the following factors when making decisions about proposed sites, applicants will be better prepared to select a site that will meet all requirements for a licensed child care centre. This will help avoid delays and barriers in the process of acquiring a licence.

### **1) Zoning requirements and local by-laws, including historic/heritage designation.**

There are local by-laws governing the type of building that can be built on a site and the use of occupancy for that building. The ministry also requires proof of compliance with local by-laws before a licence can be issued; therefore, it is important to be aware of the zoning designation for the proposed site.

Taking time to investigate the planning approval process and expected time lines will help with appropriate project planning. Each municipality or council of a First Nation may have a different approval process for licensed child care centres; therefore, it is important to consult with the body responsible for making the by-laws.

### **2) Suitability for construction/renovation.**

Any undeveloped land should be suitable for the actual construction of a licensed child care centre (e.g., soil conditions, access and drainage, environmental conditions, proximity to electrical and other municipal services).

When looking into renovating an existing building, ensure that the building is structurally sound with no hazardous substances, or that the removal of hazardous substances is feasible within the planned/allotted time frame for construction/renovation.

Remember also to consider whether there is adequate and suitable space for outdoor components, such as the outdoor play space, outdoor storage, a drop-off zone and parking for parents and staff.

### **3) Appropriateness of the location for a child care centre.**

In addition to the physical considerations of the site itself, it is also important to consider whether the location identified is appropriate for a licensed child care centre.

The following factors can help in determining whether the location is appropriate:

- the demand for child care in the community;
- proximity to other services used by families;
- proximity to any needed services, such as libraries or parks;
- proximity to local schools, or location within a local school;
- the adequacy of existing public transportation;

- environmental factors (e.g., solar exposure for most rooms and playground, wind);
- the placement of the building in relation to the existing landscaping; and
- neighbourhood characteristics in the area, such as setbacks, scale, massing, and materials.

#### **4) Economic feasibility**

It is critical to consider, for example, the cost of comparable properties as well as the affordability of renovations to meet program, local, municipal and provincial requirements.

#### **5) Availability and/or adequacy of services/infrastructure**

Assess the availability and adequacy of basic services such as hydro, water, sewers, gas, telephones, snow removal, fire service and garbage collection, as well as the adequacy of septic systems or wells, where present.

Please see the section “**Floor, Site and Playground Plan Approval in Principle**” for more information on approvals in principle when applying for a child care licence.

# Licensing Process

## How to Apply for a Child Care Licence

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### Step 1: Do Some Research about Licensed Child Care in Ontario

Visit the Ministry of Education's website to access information and tools that will help you learn more about applying for a licence to operate a child care centre and the requirements that need to be met to become licensed.

It is important to understand and learn about child care licensing requirements before deciding whether to apply for a licence to operate a child care centre. Doing thorough research ahead of time will contribute to a seamless and efficient licensing process.

### Step 2: Access the Child Care Licensing System

**The Child Care Licensing System (CCLS)** is a secure and interactive web-based system that is used by the Ministry of Education and child care licence applicants and licence holders (licensees) to complete licensing transactions. The CCLS is where prospective licensees submit their application to operate a licensed child care centre, and where the licensing process is completed with the Ministry of Education. Those who will be applying for a new licence need to register for and access the CCLS.

Those who do not currently operate a licensed child care centre and want to apply for a new child care licence (prospective licensees or applicants) will need to register for the CCLS by creating a new account. Instructions on how to register can be found in the **CCLS Registration Guide for New Applicants**.

Child care licensees already operating one or more licensed child care centres may already have a CCLS account that can be used to apply for a new child care licence.

Instructions on how to apply for a new licence using an existing CCLS account can be found in the **CCLS Reference Guide for Applicants/Licensees**. Existing licensees who do not yet have a CCLS account can register for the CCLS by following the instructions in the **CCLS Registration Guide for New Applicants**

A person who has registered for and accessed the CCLS may allow others to work on a licence application (e.g., other directors or officers of a corporation, administrative staff) by delegating CCLS access. Steps for delegating access can be found in the **CCLS Reference Guide for Applicants/Licensees**.

### Step 3: View the Orientation Module in the Child Care Licensing System

Prospective child care licensees (applicants) applying for a licence for the first time are required to view the Orientation Module in the CCLS in its entirety before submitting a new licence application. The purpose of completing the Orientation Module is to improve applicants' understanding of the child care licensing process and help them know what to expect.

The module will answer commonly asked questions about applying for a new licence, such as:

- When is a licence required?
- What happens during the licensing process?
- What requirements need to be met to be issued a licence?
- What supporting documents are required for an application?

Existing licensees who already operate licensed child care centres or home child care agencies and have access to the CCLS are not required to review the Orientation Module, but they are strongly encouraged to do so. The Orientation Module is updated regularly with new information about the licensing process, so a refresher on the process can be beneficial even for those who are already licensed.

### Step 4: Complete a New Licence Application in the Child Care Licensing System

Child care licence applications must be submitted to the CCLS. The application involves filling out a detailed form about the proposed program and submitting an initial non-refundable processing fee of \$200. To find out more about how to submit an application, refer to the **CCLS Reference Guide for Applicants/Licensees**.

The initial processing fee can be paid online by credit card or debit through the CCLS using its secure online payment platform. **The initial fee, once paid, is non-refundable under any circumstances.**

Attention to detail and accuracy are especially important when filling out a child care licence application. The email address and telephone number for the applicant must be accurate so that ministry staff can communicate with them about the licensing process. Once the application has been submitted, there are sections of it that cannot be changed later. For example, the licensee type (individual, corporation or First Nation) and the proposed child care centre site address are fields that are not editable after the application has been submitted. **Should errors to these parts of the application be identified after submitting the application, another application and initial fee will need to be submitted to correct the errors.**

Once the Ministry of Education has received a child care licence application, the application is reviewed and assigned to a ministry program advisor who will work with the applicant toward obtaining a licence. The program advisor will contact the applicant to discuss the details of the application and review the steps that the applicant needs to complete in the licensing process.

Where the program advisor has reviewed the application and determined that changes need to be made to editable sections of the application (e.g., the dates and hours of operation, contact information), the applicant must ensure that the changes are made and saved and that the updated application is resubmitted to the CCLS; otherwise, the program advisor will be unable to see the changes and continue processing the application. For detailed steps on how to make changes to a new licence application, refer to the **CCLS Reference Guide for Applicants/Licensees**.

Note: Only in situations where a final confirmed site address has not yet been assigned for a new build by the municipality or council of a First Nation can the address be updated without cost *after* the initial submission of a new licence application. Initially, applicants must enter what they believe to be the correct civic address. If the physical location of the child care centre remains the same but the assigned civic or site address changes, the applicant can then work with their program advisor to have the information in their new licence application accurately reflected in the CCLS.

It is also important to note that one of the necessary first steps in applying for a child care licence is obtaining written approval from the local zoning authority that confirms that the proposed location is zoned appropriately for use as a licensed child care centre. Where possible, it is recommended that this approval is obtained at the outset.

## Step 5: Upload Required Municipal Approvals

An automatic email notification is sent to the applicant from the CCLS as soon as the application has been assigned to a program advisor. The email will advise the applicant that they can start uploading the documents required to support the new licence application, including:

1. approvals from the municipality or the council of the First Nation;
2. valid police record check documentation;
3. complete floor, site and playground plans; and
4. policies and procedures and other supporting documents.

Although the CCLS does not require that documents be uploaded in any particular order, there are certain requirements that must be met before others so that the licensing process is streamlined. In the lists that follow, **documents marked with an asterisk (\*) are a priority**, and these requirements should be met as early in the licensing process as possible.

Once documents have been uploaded to the CCLS, they will be reviewed by the program advisor based on priority. After each document is reviewed, the program advisor will set the status of the document to one of the following:

- *“document satisfactory”*: the document has met the minimum requirements and is satisfactory for the purposes of licensing; or
- *“request revision”*: the document is incomplete or missing some information for compliance. The applicant will be required to log in to the CCLS and review the comments that the program advisor has made to provide the applicant with information about what action needs to be taken.

The status of a document may be set to *“not applicable”* when the document is not required for the purpose of licensing the proposed centre (e.g., a playground safety policy is not required for a program that operates for less than six hours in a day where there is no outdoor play space).

When the program advisor sets the status of any document, the applicant will be notified by email. Applicants should keep a close eye on their application to track the status of their supporting documents and the ministry review process so that if any revisions are required, the applicant can address them as quickly as possible and keep the licensing process moving forward.

## **Approvals from the Municipality or the Council of a First Nation**

It is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure that by-law requirements have been met and that written confirmations of compliance are provided in the CCLS to support the application.

Communities may differ in the way they govern themselves. *Each municipality or council of a First Nation may have a different approval process for licensed child care centres*, so it is important to consult both with the appropriate body responsible for regulating the by-laws and with the program advisor about the correct steps to follow.

The applicant is responsible for arranging any inspections that may be required with building, fire and public health inspectors, as well as for assuming any related costs.

- **Zoning Approval:**\* An important first step in applying for a child care licence is obtaining written approval from the local zoning authority confirming that the proposed location is zoned appropriately for use as a licensed child care centre. Without this approval, the site cannot be licensed for child care. This is why it's a priority to obtain this approval at the outset. The written approval needs to be uploaded to the CCLS.

Any First Nations programs located on reserve and any programs that will be located in publicly funded schools and that will serve only children of Kindergarten age and older are exempt from the requirement to provide zoning approval.

- **Building Department Approval:**\* Where there will be construction or renovations at the proposed location such that a building permit is required, a floor, site and playground plan approval letter issued by the Ministry of Education needs to be submitted to the local building department, along with the floor site, and playground plans that the ministry has approved in principle. This is so that a building permit can be issued before any construction or renovation work is started.

Once the construction or renovation is complete, confirmation in writing from the building department that the building permit has been closed (i.e., there are no open building permits), and that the building meets the requirements of the **Ontario Building Code** as it applies to licensed child care centres must be uploaded to the CCLS by the applicant. This may involve arranging an inspection with a building inspector who will assess compliance with Building Code requirements.

Where there will be no construction or renovations at the proposed location, confirmation in writing from an architect or a professional engineer that the building meets the requirements of the **Ontario Building Code** as it applies to licensed child care centres must be uploaded to the CCLS by the applicant.

- **Fire Department Approval:** Before a site can be licensed, confirmation in writing from the fire inspector that the proposed site meets **Fire Code** requirements must be uploaded to the CCLS by the applicant as part of the supporting documents for the licence application. This will involve contacting the local fire department and requesting an inspection.

A Fire Safety Plan must also be developed in collaboration with the local fire department and approved by the local fire chief. This plan will need to outline the responsibilities of the licensee and specify the duties of the licensed child care centre staff in case of a fire. It should also identify an emergency evacuation site in case of evacuation. The Fire Safety Plan approved by the fire department needs to be uploaded to the CCLS by the applicant under approved fire evacuation procedures.

- **Health Approval:** Requirements of the local medical officer of health and/or Health Canada, as applicable, need to be met at the proposed child care centre site. This may involve requesting and arranging an inspection from a health inspector from the



applicable health department so that they can assess and provide written approval of food preparation and storage practices, sanitary practices, communicable diseases reporting procedures and so on. Written approval from the appropriate health department needs to be obtained and uploaded to the CCLS by the applicant.

Please see **Appendix A** for a detailed directory including information for the above contacts.

## Step 6: Upload Required Documentation

### Floor, Site and Playground Plans\*

**Before a child care centre can be licensed, the proposed premises where child care will be provided must be approved by the Ministry of Education.** As part of the licence application, detailed floor, site and playground plans that include all the information necessary for the ministry to review and approve them in principle must be submitted to the CCLS. **Approval in principle needs to be obtained before any construction or renovation of a premises can begin for the purpose of building a licensed child care centre.**

In most cases, floor, site and playground plan approval letters are obtained after an application for a new child care licence has been submitted in the CCLS. In these cases, the applicant who will be operating the licensed child care centre will upload detailed floor, site and playground plans to the CCLS for the ministry to review and approve in principle.

If you are responsible only for the construction of the child care centre and not for applying for a licence or for the daily operations of the child care program, you will apply for approval of floor, site and playground plans outside of the CCLS. Please contact **childcare\_ontario@ontario.ca** or 1-877-510-5333 (toll-free) to obtain the contact information for the local Ministry of Education Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing office that will assist you with the floor, site and playground plan approval process.

For more information about floor, site and playground plan approval requirements, see the section **“Floor, Site and Playground Plan Approval in Principle”** and the CCLS Orientation Module.

### Valid Police Record Check Documentation\*

The **Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014** (CCEYA) gives Ministry of Education directors and inspectors the authority to require an applicant or licensee to provide a *current* police record check (PRC). Under the CCEYA this means that the PRC must be performed by a police force and prepared no earlier than six (6) months before the date it is provided to the ministry.

Requiring current PRCs supports the health, safety and well-being of children who may receive licensed child care at the proposed child care centre by allowing the ministry to determine that applicants are not prohibited by section 9 of the CCEYA from operating a licensed child care centre and do not have a criminal history that may put children in care at risk.

Applying for and obtaining a current PRC can take a few days to several months, depending on the circumstances, so applicants are encouraged to treat this as another crucial first step in the licensing process. Where applicants are unable to obtain a PRC for reasons beyond their control, they may upload the following to the designated PRC documents table in the profile module in CCLS: (1) proof of their PRC application, (2) a signed written confirmation of non-interaction (confirming that they will not interact with any children until a current PRC is provided to the ministry), and (3) an **offence declaration**.

Once a PRC is obtained, the applicant must upload an original or true copy of the PRC to the designated PRC documents table in the profile module in CCLS. This must be done as soon as possible (i.e., within six months from the date it was performed); otherwise, it will become outdated and will not be compliant with CCEYA requirements.

Note: Existing licensees applying for another licence are not required to submit a new PRC every time they apply for another new licence (for example, a new PRC will be required if there are new directors and officers of a corporation for whom a PRC has not been provided to the ministry). Where a PRC on file with the ministry is more than six months old but less than five years old, the licensee will be required to submit an offence declaration that addresses the period between the date the PRC was performed and the date of the declaration. A **sample offence declaration form** is provided that applicants may use.

- **Who needs to provide a PRC for a new licence application?**

**Applicants who are individuals** must provide a current PRC for themselves.

**Applicants who are First Nations** must provide a current PRC or a PRC document approved by a Ministry of Education director for their designated child care manager(s). PRCs are not required for the Chief and other council members of the First Nation.

**Applicants who are corporations** must provide a current PRC for each current director and officer of the corporation who is or may be responsible for the delivery and oversight of licensed child care centres.

Corporations may be responsible for delivering and overseeing licensed child care as well as other programs and services in the community (e.g., health and fitness, education and training, career development, youth engagement programs, parenting programs, employment services, camps). In such cases, a PRC may not be required for the entire board of directors.

**Applicants who are school boards, municipalities or district social services administration boards** are exempt from the requirement to provide a PRC to support a new licence application.

- **What kind of PRC is required?**

Individuals who will be interacting with children at the proposed child care program will need to provide a current Vulnerable Sector Check. Individuals who interact with children are those who become involved in communication, social activity or work with children. Examples of interactions with children include conversing, playing, directing, intervening, supervising or assisting in fulfilling their needs (e.g., for food/drink consumption, toilet use).

Individuals who will not be interacting with children at the proposed child care program are required to provide either a Criminal Record Check or a Criminal Record and Judicial Matters Check along with a signed written confirmation of non-interaction.

## **Policies, Procedures and Other Supporting Documents**

O. Reg. 137/15 requires that licensees of child care centres develop and implement a number of policies and procedures, where applicable for their program (e.g. playground safety, fire safety and evacuation). In addition, other supporting documentation may be required (e.g. program statement, shared space attestation/agreement).

Before a child care licence can be issued, applicants are required to submit their policies, procedures and other supporting documents to the CCLS on the Supporting Documents page, where the full list of required policies, procedures and other documents is available. Depending on the nature of the proposed program, the program advisor may request additional documents that are not on the list (e.g., a playground rotation schedule, where a playground will be shared between different age groups).

Developing policies and procedures can be challenging, especially when prospective licensees are applying for a licence for the first time and are beginning to learn about licensing requirements. To help applicants and licensees develop their policies and procedures, the Ministry of Education has developed a **Licensing Kit** that contains sample policies, procedures, templates and forms that are fillable and that applicants can customize to suit their proposed program. It also contains tip sheets to provide guidelines and best practices for developing high-quality and comprehensive policies and procedures that will reflect the unique program and meet its needs. When using the Licensing Kit documents (e.g., sample policies and procedures), applicants must read through them and complete the fillable sections before submitting them to the ministry.

Sample policies, templates and tip sheets are available on the **Child Care Licensing System**.

The assigned ministry program advisor will complete a compliance review of each document to assess whether it meets all regulatory requirements. This review will typically begin after the ministry has issued approval in principle of the floor, site and playground plans. The program advisor will either deem each document satisfactory or request revisions with feedback so that the applicant can make any required edits and resubmit the documents if necessary.

Since there is a possibility that documents may not meet requirements the first time they are submitted, applicants are encouraged to submit supporting documents to the CCLS as they become available, rather than wait until all documents are developed or in place. This will help prevent delays in the licensing process.

Although using the **Licensing Kit** is not mandatory, it typically helps expedite the licensing process because the documents already meet legislative and regulatory licensing requirements.

New applicants and existing licensees are strongly encouraged to consult and use the documents where appropriate.

## Step 7: Submit Required Staff Director Approval Requests

O. Reg. 137/15 requires that licensees of child care centres employ a qualified supervisor who will be responsible for planning and directing the program, being in charge of the children and overseeing the staff, and who will be responsible to the licensee. In order to be qualified, the supervisor must be:

- a member in good standing of the College of Early Childhood Educators with at least two years of experience in providing licensed child care; or
- capable of planning and directing the program of a licensed child care centre, being in charge of children and overseeing staff; and
- approved by a Ministry of Education director.

There must be a Ministry of Education director-approved supervisor in place before a licence may be issued. Those applying for a new licence need to submit a request for staff director approval to the CCLS for the person whom they have selected to be their potential supervisor.

Once the director approval request is received, the assigned program advisor will review the request and assess the individual's experience and qualifications to determine if they are fit for the role. The assigned program advisor will make an approval recommendation to the Ministry of Education director, who will then review the application and the program advisor's recommendation to make a decision about whether or not to grant approval.

The director will either grant approval for the person to work as the supervisor or deny the request for approval if the director believes that the person is not qualified based on the information provided. Where approval is denied, the CCLS will immediately notify the applicant. In such cases, the applicant will be able to submit another request for director approval for a different individual.

Where approval is granted, the CCLS will inform the applicant that the approval has been granted pending licence issuance. A letter of director approval will be available from the CCLS when the licence is issued.

For instructions on how to submit a staff director approval request for a supervisor, consult the **CCLS Reference Guide for Applicants/Licensees**.

## Step 8: Submit a Fee Balance (Where Applicable)

Once all the above steps are completed, and the program advisor has determined that any applicable requirements have been met, the applicant may receive an email notification asking for a fee balance to be submitted. Once the fee balance is submitted (where applicable), the program advisor is ready to conduct the final site inspection.

The fee balance is as follows:

- Where the final licensed capacity of the proposed child care centre is 25 or more children, a fee balance costing between \$50 and \$250 will be required (the higher the capacity, the higher the fee balance will be).
- Where the proposed licensed capacity is 24 children or fewer, an additional fee balance is not required, as the initial fee of \$200 that was paid at the beginning of the licensing process will cover the full administrative cost of the licence.

Since the final site inspection cannot be conducted and a licence cannot be issued without the submission of the fee balance, applicants are encouraged to submit their fee balance as soon as possible to prevent any delay in licence issuance.

The fee balance can be paid online by credit card or debit through the CCLS using its secure online payment platform. **The fee balance, once paid, is non-refundable under any circumstances.**

## Step 9: Arrange a Site Inspection

Near the end of the licensing process, an in-person site inspection will be arranged.

The site inspection will take place only once all supporting documents and approvals have been submitted and the documents deemed satisfactory and once the proposed child care centre is set up and ready to receive children (i.e., when all construction or renovations are complete and associated building permits are closed, all rooms and spaces can be safely accessed and equipment and furnishings are in place). Having

everything in place before the inspection helps the program advisor determine whether the site is compliant with licensing requirements. If the space is not completely ready to receive children at the time of inspection, it is possible that non-compliances will be cited that would need to be rectified before the licence is issued, and a second site inspection may be required.

During the inspection, the program advisor will complete a checklist and verify whether the layout of the proposed child care centre is consistent with the floor, site and playground plans that were approved in principle. For example, the program advisor will check whether play activity rooms/areas, required storage spaces, an office, a staff rest area, a food preparation area and washrooms are in place in accordance with the floor, site and playground plans. As part of this process, the program advisor will also measure the indoor play areas to determine the final licensed capacity (number of children), and will indicate that capacity on the licence. Finally, the program advisor will measure the outdoor play areas to ensure they meet minimum area size and fence height requirements.

Applicants may also wish to have required templates for documentation available during the inspection so that the program advisor has an opportunity to provide feedback on them before they are used in the program (e.g., templates for individualized plans, attendance records, playground inspection checklists).

At the end of the inspection, the program advisor will review the findings of the inspection with the applicant and provide them with a copy of the inspection report. Where findings of non-compliance are documented in the report, the applicant will be required to address the issues and provide the ministry with written or photographic evidence of compliance, as applicable. The program advisor may also visit the site a second time to verify compliance in person.

## Step 10: Download the Licence and Licensing Letter and Post the Licence

After the fee balance has been paid, a Ministry of Education director will review the licence application and make a decision about licence issuance as well as any conditions that may be placed on the licence. (Conditions are requirements set by the Ministry of Education that are additional to the requirements under the CCEYA and its regulations.)

The licence issued may have one of two statuses:

- *Regular* (with or without conditions): A regular licence is issued if the child care program, when last inspected, met the licensing requirements of the CCEYA.
- *Provisional* (with or without conditions): A provisional licence may be issued if a child care program did not meet all the licensing requirements of the CCEYA

when last inspected. A provisional licence may be issued when an applicant or licensee requires additional time to meet licensing requirements. This type of licence gives the child care centre a period of time to come into compliance with outstanding licensing requirements that do not pose a risk to the health, safety or well-being of children receiving child care. When a provisional licence is issued, the licence is printed on yellow paper and parents are given a letter summarizing the outstanding non-compliances.

Where a licence has been issued, the applicant will receive an email notification to advise them that their licence has been issued and that they may log in to the CCLS to download their licence and licensing letter.

The licence must be printed and posted in a conspicuous place at the licensed child care centre before the licensee can begin providing licensed child care (e.g., near the main entrance/exit used by parents, on the parent information board, on the wall outside the supervisor's office).

The licensing letter provides details about the licence that has been issued, including information about the individuals who have received staff director approval (e.g., the supervisor). Licensees are encouraged to read this letter in detail.

The licensee will also be mailed a decal that must be posted in a conspicuous place. The decal is signage issued by the Ministry of Education that indicates to the public and anyone accessing the licensed child care centre that the program is licensed.

All licences have a standard condition requiring the licensee to post the Licensing Inspection Summary and to have the Licensing Checklist and Summary of Licensing Requirements and Recommendations sheets available for parents. These documents are available on the same page in the CCLS where the licence and licensing letter are housed.

## Regulatory References

### Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014

#### Application

**20** (1) A person may apply for a licence or the renewal of a licence to operate a child care centre or as a home child care agency by submitting to a director,

- (a) an application in a form approved by the Minister;
- (b) an attestation, that is to be completed by the applicant in a form approved by the Minister, confirming that the applicant is not prohibited from operating a child care centre or a home child care agency under section 9;
- (c) any other information or documentation that may be specified by the Minister; and
- (d) payment of the fee prescribed by the regulations.

#### Same, additional requirements

(2) A person who applied for a licence or renewal of a licence shall comply with any other requirements prescribed by the regulations that relate to the application process, unless the person withdraws the application.

### Ontario Regulation 137/15

#### Fee for licence

**81.** (1) The fees payable in respect of an application for a licence to operate a child care centre shall be determined by reference to the maximum number of children for whom child care may be provided at the child care centre, as set out in Column 1 of the Table to this subsection, and are as follows:

1. For an application for a new licence, the fee is the amount set out in Column 2 of the Table.

Item	Column 1: Maximum number of children	Column 2: Fee for a new licence, in dollars
1	0–24	200
2	25–49	250
3	50–74	300
4	75–99	350
5	100–124	400
6	125 or more	450

(continued)



**Compliance with health and safety standards, Building Code, Fire Code, etc.**

**13.** (1) Every person who applies for a licence to operate a child care centre under section 20 of the Act shall at the time of application file with a director evidence that the premises to be used as a child care centre complies with,

- (a) the laws affecting the health of inhabitants of the municipality or of the reserve of a First Nation, as the case may be;
- (b) any rule, regulation, direction or order of the local board of health and any direction or order of the local medical officer of health that may affect the provision of child care;
- (c) any by-law of the municipality or any by-law of the council of the First Nation on the reserve, as the case may be, and any other law for the protection of persons from fire hazards;
- (d) any building by-law passed by the municipality pursuant to the *Planning Act* or any predecessor of that Act and any by-law of the council of the First Nation on the reserve to regulate the construction, repair or use of buildings;
- (e) the requirements of Ontario Regulation 332/12 (Building Code) made under the *Building Code Act, 1992*, where applicable;
- (f) the requirements of Ontario Regulation 213/07 (Fire Code) made under the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997*, where applicable; and
- (g) the requirements of the *Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002*, where applicable.

(2) Every licensee who applies for the renewal or revision of a licence to operate a child care centre shall file any evidence that the director may require that the premises used as a child care centre complies with the matters listed in subsection (1).

(3) A licensee shall ensure that a premises complies with the matters listed in subsection (1) at all times during which it is used as a child care centre.

**Fire safety procedures and drills**

**68.** (1) Every licensee shall ensure that in respect of each child care centre it operates,

- (a) a written procedure approved by the local fire chief is established with respect to the duties of each member of the staff of the child care centre in the event of a fire;

(continued)

## **Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014**

### **Police reference checks**

**35** (1) A director or an inspector may require any of the following persons to provide him or her with a criminal reference check concerning the person:

1. A licensee or person who has applied for a licence, or an employee of the licensee or applicant.
2. If the person described in paragraph 1 is a corporation, an officer, director or employee of the corporation or any other person with a controlling interest in the corporation.
3. A person who provides home child care or in-home services.
4. Any other person prescribed by the regulations.

## **Ontario Regulation 137/15**

### **Licensee responsible**

**6.** (4) Every licensee of a child care centre shall employ a supervisor, who shall be a person described in section 53, who shall plan and direct the program of the child care centre, be in charge of the children, oversee the staff and who shall be responsible to the licensee.

### **Supervisor**

**53.** A supervisor shall be a person who,

- (a) is a member in good standing of the College of Early Childhood Educators, has at least two years of experience providing licensed child care and is approved by a director; or
- (b) in the opinion of a director, is capable of planning and directing the program of a child care centre, being in charge of children and overseeing staff.

## **Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014**

### **Posting, returning and copying licences**

**14** (1) A licensee shall post a copy of a licence in a conspicuous place at the child care centre or the premises where the home child care agency is located, as the case may be, together with any other information or signage prescribed by the regulations.

## **Ontario Regulation 137/15**

### **Signage**

**84.** (1) For the purposes of subsections 14 (1) and (2) of the Act, the signage that shall be posted is signage provided by the Minister that identifies that the premises is licensed.

# Design Process

## Floor, Site and Playground Plan Approval in Principle

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### Requirements

Before a site can be used, constructed or renovated, and ultimately licensed as a child care centre, the plans for the proposed premises where licensed child care will be provided need to be approved in principle by the Ministry of Education. The applicant needs to submit their complete floor, site and playground plans in the CCLS so that the ministry can review them and assess whether the plans meet the requirements for approval in principle.



Obtaining approval in principle of floor, site and playground plans from the ministry means that the submitted plans for the proposed site meet the requirements set out under the CCEYA and O. Reg. 137/15, and that the proposed site may become licensed as long as:

- written approvals from the municipality or the council of the First Nation are obtained and provided to the ministry (related to: zoning, building, fire and public health, as applicable);
- all designated spaces that are required in licensed child care centres are reflected in the floor, site and playground plans; and
- the physical premises accurately mirrors the floor, site and playground plans (or will accurately mirror them once construction/renovations are completed).

Applicants are encouraged to have floor, site and playground plans professionally drawn up (e.g., by an architect or professional engineer), ensuring that they are legible, and that all regulatory space requirements are clearly labelled on the plans before they are submitted to the ministry for approval in principle.

See **Appendix B: Floor, Site and Playground Plan Checklist**, which outlines the information that must be included in plans submitted for director approval under the CCEYA and O. Reg. 137/15.

## Designated Spaces

- All licensed child care centres are required to have a designated space for each of the following:
  - washing, dressing and toileting
  - storage for toys, indoor play materials and equipment
  - storage for food
  - storage of hard copies of records, if necessary
  - storage for medical supplies, cleaning materials and equipment and other items that could cause harm to a child, such as poisonous and hazardous substances (inaccessible to children)
  - heating and electrical equipment (inaccessible to children)
- Licensed child care centres with programs that operate for more than six hours per day are required to have additional designated spaces for each of the following:
  - eating and resting
  - the preparation of food, if meals are prepared on the premises
  - storage for beds and linen
  - a staff rest area
  - storage for outdoor play equipment
  - office area
  - outdoor play
-  Licensed child care centres that have programs that operate for less than six hours per day are not required to have the additional designated spaces listed above.
-  Licensed child care centres located in publicly funded schools that only provide care to children Kindergarten age and older are exempt from designated space requirements.

**Detailed floor, site and playground plans** must be submitted in the CCLS for the ministry to review and approve the plans in principle. Plans must include information such as name, address and location of the child care centre, as well as designated spaces and other information.

See **Appendix B: Floor, Site and Playground Plan Checklist**, which outlines all information that must be included in plans submitted for director approval under the CCEYA and O. Reg. 137/15.

For more detailed information about requirements and recommendations for indoor and outdoor spaces, refer to the sections “**Interior Design**” and “**Exterior Design**”.

## **Submitting Floor, Site and Playground Plans for Approval in Principle**

Floor, site and playground plans must be submitted in the CCLS. They can be submitted either separately as two documents (floor plan and site/playground plan) or together as a single document. For details about where and how to submit floor, site and playground plans in the CCLS, consult the **CCLS Reference Guide for Applicants/Licensees**.

Once the floor, site and playground plans have been submitted, the ministry program advisor assigned to the application will review the plans to verify that they are complete and that they meet the regulatory requirements for a licensed child care centre.

If the plans are missing information or do not meet licensing requirements, the program advisor will request the applicant to revise the document. Where revision is requested on floor, site or playground plans, the applicant will be notified by email. The applicant will then be required to log in to the CCLS website and review the comments that the program advisor has made that provide the applicant with information about what action needs to be taken.

If the program advisor believes that the floor, site and playground plans meet all the licensing requirements, the program advisor will recommend that the plans be approved in principle by the Ministry of Education director. The ministry director will review the plans and make a decision about whether they are compliant and whether to approve them in principle.

If the ministry director believes that there is information missing on the floor, site and playground plans or that the plans do not meet licensing requirements, the plans may require further review by the program advisor and subsequent revisions by the applicant. This may mean that the floor, site and playground plans need to be revised and resubmitted by the applicant.

If the ministry director approves the plans in principle, the applicant will be notified by email and a floor, site and playground plan approval letter will be made available from the CCLS that provides details about what has been approved in principle. The letter can be downloaded and provided to relevant local authorities, where required (e.g., where a building permit must be obtained from the local building department to start construction or renovations).

School boards, CMSMs and DSSABs and/ or child care licensees should contact the regional manager and/ or program advisor as soon as possible as all child care centre capital projects require a floor plan approval letter issued by the Ministry of Education's Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch prior to receiving an approval to proceed or starting construction. In order to streamline the floor plan approval process, school boards, CMSMs and DSSABs and/ or child care licensees should note to their regional manager and/ or program advisor if the child care floor plan has been used in the past (i.e., a repeat child care floor plan design).

## **Regulatory References**

### **Ontario Regulation 137/15**

#### **Child care centres in schools**

**12.** Clauses 13 (1) (d), (e) and (f), subsection 14 (2) and sections 15, 20, 21, 22 and 24 do not apply to a child care centre, or part of a child care centre, if the centre or part is located in a school and is licensed to provide child care only for children in licensed kindergarten, primary/junior school age or junior school age groups.

#### **Approval by director of plans re child care centre**

**14.** (1) Where a person proposes that a new building be erected or an existing building be used, altered or renovated for use as a child care centre or that alterations or renovations be made to premises used as a child care centre, the person shall not commence the erection, use, alteration or renovation until plans are approved by a director, except where the plans are approved by the Minister under section 22 of Ontario Regulation 138/15 (Funding, Cost Sharing and Financial Assistance) made under the Act.

(2) The plans referred to in subsection (1) shall include space designated for each item listed in subsections 15 (1) and (3).

#### **Designated spaces**

**15.** (1) Every licensee shall ensure that each child care centre it operates includes space designated for each of the following:

1. Washing, dressing and toileting.
2. Storage for toys, indoor play materials and equipment.
3. Storage for food.
4. Storage of hard copies of records, if necessary.
5. Storage for medical supplies, cleaning materials and equipment and other items that could cause harm to a child, such as poisonous and hazardous substances.

*(continued)*

6. Heating and electrical equipment.

(2) Every licensee shall ensure that the spaces in each child care centre it operates that are referred to in paragraphs 5 and 6 of subsection (1), and the items kept in those spaces, are inaccessible to children.

(3) A licensee that operates a child care centre that has a program that runs for six hours or more in a day shall ensure that in addition to the spaces referred to in subsection (1) the child care centre has space designated for each of the following:

1. Eating and resting.
2. The preparation of food, if meals are prepared on the premises.
3. Storage for beds and linen.
4. A staff rest area.
5. Storage for outdoor play equipment.
6. Office area.
7. Outdoor play.

## Quick Reference: Major Requirements for the Premises

Requirements			Child Care Centres (infant/toddler/preschool + Kindergarten or school age)		Before- and After-School Programs (Kindergarten and school age, operate for less than 6 hours)	
		0. Reg. 137/15	Operate for 6 hours or more	Operate for less than 6 hours	Located in Publicly Funded School	Not Located in Publicly Funded School
Local Approvals	Health	13(1) (a) & (b)	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Fire	13(1) (c) & (f)	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Zoning	13(1)(d)	✓	✓		✓
	Building	13(1)(e)	✓	✓		✓
	Floor/Site Plan Approval	14(1)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Designated Space	Washing, dressing, toileting	15(1)1	✓	✓		✓
	Storage for toys, play materials	15(1)2	✓	✓		✓
	Storage for food	15(1)3	✓	✓		✓
	Storage of hard copy records, if necessary	15(1)4	✓	✓		✓
	Storage for medical supplies, etc., inaccessible to children	15(1)5	✓	✓		✓
	Heating and electrical, inaccessible to children	15(1)6	✓	✓		✓
	Eating and resting	15(2)1	✓			
	Preparation of food	15(2)2	✓			
	Storage for beds and linen	15(2)3	✓			
	Staff rest area	15(2)4	✓			
	Storage for outdoor play equipment	15(2)5	✓			
	Office area	15(2)6	✓			
	Outdoor play	15(2)7	✓			
Play Activity Space	Unobstructed floor space per child	16(1)	2.8 m <sup>2</sup> or 2.58m <sup>2</sup> for Kindergarten and school age	2.8 m <sup>2</sup> or 2.58m <sup>2</sup> for Kindergarten and school age	2.58 m <sup>2</sup> (DA)*	2.58 m <sup>2</sup>
	On or below the second storey (DA)	20	✓	✓		
	Windows at least 10% of floor area	21	✓			
Outdoor Play Space	Unobstructed outdoor space per child (DA)	24(1)	5.6m <sup>2</sup>			
	Adjacent to Premises (DA)	24(3)	✓			
	At Ground Level (DA)	24(3)	✓			
	Fenced to 1.2 metres	24(3)	Req'd for infant, toddler, preschool, Kindergarten (DA) and family age groups			

\* (DA) indicates areas that director approval for an alternative arrangement is permitted by the regulation. Some director approvals have limitations on them – refer to each specific section for more information.



# Interior Design: Play Activity Rooms/Areas

## Quick Reference: Interior Design/Space Requirements

Requirement	Reference Ontario Regulation 137/15	Schedule 1 Infant	Schedule 1 Toddler	Schedule 1 Preschool	Schedule 1 Kindergarten	Schedule 1 Primary /Junior School Age	Schedule 1 Junior School Age	Schedule 4 Family Age Group	Kindergarten and School Age in Publicly Funded Schools
Maximum group size	Paragraphs 8(1)(c)(ii) and 8.1(1)1	10	15	24	26	30	20	15	Same as other programs. See relevant column.
Staff-to-child ratio	Paragraph 8(1)(c)(i) and subsection 8.1(2)	3:10	1:5	1:8	1:13	1:15	1:20	See 8.1(2) for staffing formula/ additional requirements	Same as other programs. See relevant column.
Play activity space	Subsection 16(1)	2.8 m <sup>2</sup> un-obstructed floor space per child	2.8 m <sup>2</sup> un-obstructed floor space per child	2.8 m <sup>2</sup> un-obstructed floor space per child	2.58 m <sup>2</sup> un-obstructed floor space per child	2.58 m <sup>2</sup> un-obstructed floor space per child	2.58 m <sup>2</sup> un-obstructed floor space per child	2.8 m <sup>2</sup> un-obstructed floor space per child	2.58 m <sup>2</sup> unobstructed floor space unless granted director approval for smaller space
Separate sleeping area	Clause 17(1)(a)	✓						✓  (if children require cribs)	

Requirement	Reference Ontario Regulation 137/15	Schedule 1	Schedule 1	Schedule 1	Schedule 1	Schedule 1	Schedule 1	Schedule 4	Kindergarten and School Age in Publicly Funded Schools
		Infant	Toddler	Preschool	Kindergarten	Primary /Junior School Age	Junior School Age	Family Age Group	
Table/ counter space adjacent to a sink and suitable for dressing or changing a diaper	Clause 19(2)1	✓	✓					✓	
Space must be on or below the second storey (or otherwise approved by a director)	Section 20	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	
Window area: equivalent to 10% of floor area (for programs operating six hours or more)	Section 21 (Assessed/ required under Ontario Building Code)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Minimum lighting level: 55 Dekalux	Section 22	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Temperature: maintained at a level of at least 20° C	Section 23	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



Note: It is expected that all new or renovated school based child care centre play activity rooms funded by the Ministry of Education will be built to accommodate a maximum group size (at 2.8m<sup>2</sup> per child, as per the CCEYA) for each age grouping for children 0 to 3.8 years (e.g., 10 infant spaces, 15 toddler spaces, 24 preschool spaces, and 15 family age grouping spaces), and that play activity rooms will be for exclusive use during the core school day.

The following sections, on various aspects of interior design, are structured so that **requirements under the CCEYA** are clearly identified at the outset. They are followed by **recommended design considerations**. While the recommendations are important to consider when planning a quality child care environment, they are not mandatory requirements under the CCEYA. Please note, however, that some of these recommendations may be requirements under other legislation and standards. This publication is not intended as a substitute for any legislation or local by-laws. Reference should be made directly to the CCEYA and its regulations as well as all other applicable legislation (e.g., the Building Code Act, 1992). These can be found at [www.ontario.ca/laws](http://www.ontario.ca/laws).

## Location of Rooms

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### Requirements

- Each room used for infant, toddler, preschool, Kindergarten, or family age groups must be on or below the second storey, unless approved by a Ministry of Education director.
-  This requirement does not apply to licensed child care centres located in publicly funded schools that only serve children who are Kindergarten age and older.
-  When requesting ministry approval to place groups on the third storey or higher, applicants and licensees should note that local zoning by-laws may prohibit placing groups on the third storey or higher, and that other relevant authorities (e.g., fire) must also approve the location of rooms, where applicable. Additional documentation may be required.

### Recommendations

A well-designed licensed child care centre carefully considers the location of each play activity room/area in order to support the safety of the children and staff in the event of an emergency requiring evacuation. Careful consideration should be given to the location of stairs and entries/exits when planning the location of play activity rooms/areas for different licensed age groups. Where possible, infant and toddler rooms should be located on the main floor to support daily entry and exit into/from the building, and for safe evacuation in the event of an emergency.

In addition, a well-designed licensed child care centre has a separate entrance for each room. For example, to eliminate disruptions and safety concerns, it is not recommended

that play activity rooms be connected (e.g., access to one room through another room). The location of play activity rooms in relation to the outdoor play space (where applicable) should also be considered. For example, an exit directly from the play activity room/area to the playground would support safe transitions and extensions of the learning environment.

## **Regulatory Reference**

### **Ontario Regulation 137/15**

#### **First- or second-storey**

**20.** Every licensee shall ensure that each room in each child care centre it operates that is for the use of licensed infant, toddler, preschool, kindergarten or family age groups or for the use of children with special needs is on or below the second storey, unless otherwise approved by a director.

# Play Activity Space

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## Requirements

### Play Activity Space

- Minimum play activity space requirements (unobstructed floor space) apply to each group based on the licensed capacity, as follows:
  - 2.8 m<sup>2</sup> (30.1 sq. ft.)<sup>2</sup> of unobstructed floor space are required for each child in a licensed infant, toddler, preschool or family age group.
  - 2.58 m<sup>2</sup> (27.8 sq. ft.) of unobstructed floor space are required for each child in a licensed Kindergarten, primary/junior school age or junior school age group.

Play activity space requirements ensure that children have adequate space to engage in indoor activity free of obstacles that may impede play. Before a licence is issued, a Ministry of Education program advisor will measure the actual play activity space to compare it against the measurements in the submitted floor plans.

For the purposes of floor space measurement, *obstructed space* includes fixed items within the play activity room, such as:

- counters
- sinks
- built-in storage shelves
- children's cubbies
- space designated for the permanent storage of stacked cots/resting mats


Space for items that cannot be moved and/or areas that cannot be used for children's play are excluded from the calculation of total floor space.

Movable equipment and furnishings and/or areas that are used for children's play are not considered obstructions when determining the total floor space, including items/areas such as:

- easels
- tables and chairs
- sensory bins
- loft space
- door space (swinging area)

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2. All measurements are given in metric in O. Reg. 137/15 (see the excerpts from the Regulation – for example, on page 48). Equivalent Imperial measures are provided throughout this document for users' convenience.

-  A Ministry of Education director may approve a smaller play activity space for Kindergarten and school age groups located in publicly funded schools, provided that the room or area is used by the school for children who are the same age as the age category of the licensed age group (see subsection 16(2) in O. Reg. 137/15).

This approval is subject to compliance with the following:

- A shared space attestation must be kept on file and made available to ministry staff when requested.
- The shared space attestation must include information on all rooms available for use by the child care centre, regardless of whether the centre is currently using the rooms or not. It must also include the primary use of each room during the school day and be signed by the licensee or designate.

## Recommendations

### Play Activity Space

Rooms constructed to accommodate the maximum number of children permitted in a group enable the most cost-effective staffing model, using required adult-to-child ratios.

Environments with sufficient space that allow children to engage in active, creative and meaningful exploration, play and inquiry support children's learning and development. It is also important to consider space for rest and quiet time when designing the physical environment. It is recommended that rooms with sharp or acute angles (e.g., "L"-shaped rooms) be avoided, because these spaces can be difficult to supervise.



Where an applicant is designing a program that runs primarily outdoors, it is important to consider, when determining the layout, how the indoor space will be used, what kinds of materials and furnishings to include, and how furnishings are positioned within the space. For example, if the primary purpose of the indoor space will be for rest, consideration should be given to designing a calming space that promotes quiet restful activities and sleep.

When planning the construction of play activity spaces, it is also important to consider other relevant requirements simultaneously (e.g., window glass requirements, if applicable).

The following tips may be used for measuring play activity space to ensure that minimum space requirements are met:

- measure rooms/areas in square metres, as this is the measurement type set out in O. Reg. 137/15;
- measure the length and width of the room and calculate the total room area (*length x width = area*);
- if the room is an irregular shape, it may be easier to calculate the areas of sections of the room and then add these together to get the total room area;
- calculate the area of “obstructions” in the room; and
- subtract the space for “obstructions” from the total room area.

*Example: Total area of the room – total area of obstructions = unobstructed space*  
( $73\text{ m}^2 - 5\text{ m}^2 = 68\text{ m}^2$ ).

The following tips may be used to determine licensed capacity for a play activity room/area (where applicable):

- when measuring an infant, toddler, preschool or family age grouping room using square metres, measure/calculate the total square metres of the room and divide by 2.8 m<sup>2</sup> (which is the required unobstructed space per child in the Regulation); and
- when measuring a Kindergarten, primary/junior school age or junior school age group space using square metres, measure/calculate the total square metres of the space and divide by 2.58 m<sup>2</sup> (which is the required unobstructed space per child in the Regulation).

## Regulatory Reference

### Ontario Regulation 137/15

#### Play activity space

**16.** (1) Subject to subsections (2) [and] (3) ... every licensee of a child care centre shall ensure that each child care centre it operates has play activity space of at least,

(a) 2.8 square metres of unobstructed floor space for each child in a licensed infant, toddler, preschool or family age group, based on the licensed capacity; and

(b) 2.58 square metres of unobstructed floor space for each child in a licensed kindergarten, primary/junior school age or junior school age group, based on the licensed capacity.

(2) A director may approve a smaller amount of space than required under clause

(1) (b) for a child care centre located in a school, provided that the room or area to be used by a licensed age group is used by the school for children who are the same age as the age category of the licensed age group.



# Play Activity Rooms/Areas by Age Group


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## Requirements

### Play Activity Rooms/Areas

- Each age grouping of children in a licensed child care centre must have a separate play activity room/area.

This requirement supports supervision and the delivery of responsive programming and also prevents the negative effects of crowding when too many children and adults are in one play environment.

-  A Ministry of Education director has the authority to approve an arrangement other than a single play activity room for Kindergarten and school age groups (see clause 17(1)(d) in O. Reg. 137/15). Alternative arrangements could involve the use of two adjacent classrooms, instead of one large room, or the use of one space on, for instance, Monday/Wednesday/Friday and a different space on Tuesday/Thursday.

### Separate Sleeping Area

- A separate sleeping area (an area that is separated from any play activity area) is required for infants and family age groups (if the group requires cribs or cradles).

Younger children sleep more often and for a greater length of time than older children, so separate sleeping areas allow for a safe and peaceful sleeping environment for these groups.

### Equipment and Furnishings

- A table or counter space that is adjacent to a sink and suitable for dressing a child or changing a child's diaper is required for infant, toddler and family age groups.

The intent of this provision is to ensure that the furniture for dressing and diaper changing is sufficient and suitable for the number of children in care.

## Recommendations

### Play Activity Rooms/Areas

The environment within each play activity room/area is the context in which learning takes place. A well-designed licensed child care centre includes play activity rooms/areas that are intentionally designed for safety and ease of supervision. Thoughtful planning and design are important to ensure that play activity rooms are welcoming,

culturally relevant and inclusive for all children and families enrolled in the program. It is important for children and families to see themselves and their community reflected in the program (e.g., through representation of languages, geographic location). It is also important that the environment reflect a view of children as competent, capable, curious and rich in potential.

The environment within each play activity room plays a key role in the quality of children's exploration and play. Materials, furnishings (including how they are positioned) and accommodations to ensure equitable learning opportunities and participation for children with special needs – as well as the general design of the space – all have a significant influence on children's level of engagement and the possibilities for in-depth exploration and learning. A well-designed play activity room/ area allows for flexibility within the space so children are able to explore ideas in increasingly complex and diverse ways.

It is important for licensed child care centres to develop environments and practices that respect and support inclusion and a sense of belonging for all children. Different learning environments and experiences can support children's varied learning and development needs (e.g., an area within the play activity room/ area may be designed to support the development of self-regulation skills among children who are best able to recover from stress in a quiet, calming space). A well-designed licensed child care centre includes opportunities for the meaningful participation of all children in the play activity rooms/areas. Resource consultants and other professionals may provide specialized and/ or individualized support for children with special needs within the play activity room/ area.

Applicants designing a program that runs primarily outdoors should consider the uses of the indoor play activity room/area when deciding on materials and furnishings and how they will be used or positioned within the space.

## **Play Activity Rooms/Areas by Age Group**

Children thrive in spaces that invite them to investigate, imagine, think, create, solve problems and make meaning from their experiences. It is important that each space be designed with consideration for the number and ages of the children who will be using it, to ensure that the environment supports the children's growing autonomy and independence. In such an environment, challenging behaviours are reduced and educators can focus more fully on observing and interacting with the children, and extending their learning and development in meaningful ways.

Please see below for recommendations by age group:

### **Infant (children younger than 18 months)**

A well-designed play activity room for licensed infant groups allows for different developmental levels and individual infant schedules. For example, rooms may be

designed to include areas with soft surfaces for infants learning to walk. To support independent exploration and play, it is important to design shelving and space for play materials so that they are accessible to infants. Furthermore, infant rooms may include small refrigerators, bottle warmers and a separate food service area to allow staff to easily implement the independent feeding schedules required by infants. Space for infant supplies and equipment should also be considered when designing infant play activity rooms (e.g., storage for diapers, space for movable high chairs). Additionally, consideration should be given to including furnishings and equipment that are developmentally appropriate. Large open tables are encouraged, to provide opportunity for collaboration among children and educators. Adjustable high chairs can be included so that young children can participate in group meals (the high chairs can be adjusted so that the children are at the same height as other children eating at a table). It is also recommended that double sinks be installed to support sanitary practices, so that one sink may be used for handwashing while the other may be used for disinfecting toys. Consult your local public health unit if considering the use of mobile sinks as an alternative option to support flexibility and reduce obstructions.

### Toddler (children aged 18 months or older but younger than 30 months)

Well-designed play activity rooms for licensed toddler groups encourage and support growing independence. Children in these groups benefit from open spaces to move, interact with one another and explore a variety of play materials. It is important to consider the furnishings and equipment that are included to ensure they are developmentally appropriate for children in licensed toddler groups. For example, child-height counters and handwashing sinks that are located close to the play area allow for supervision while supporting children's growing independence.



The appropriate counter height for toddlers is approximately 45.7 cm (18 in.).

It is also recommended that tables and chairs be child-sized and portable/stackable to allow for flexibility in using space within the play activity room. Consider asking the following questions:

- Do the child's feet touch the ground?
- Can a child independently sit and get off the chair?
- Is the table height appropriate to allow the child to sit comfortably?

In addition, comfortable furniture can provide opportunities for children to rest and engage in quiet activities such as reading a book.

### Preschool (children aged 30 months or older but younger than 6 years)

Well-designed play activity rooms for licensed preschool groups invite children to investigate and make meaning of experiences in open space where they move, interact with one another, and explore a variety of play materials. Open shelving and storage spaces that invite children to visually and physically access diverse play materials are recommended. Again, it is important to consider the furnishings and equipment that are included to ensure that they are developmentally appropriate for children in licensed preschool groups.

The appropriate counter height for preschool children is approximately 55.9 cm (22 in.).

It is also recommended that tables and chairs be child-sized and portable/stackable to allow for flexibility in using space within the play activity room. Consider asking the following questions:

- Do the child's feet touch the ground?
- Can a child independently sit and get off the chair?
- Is the table height appropriate to allow the child to sit comfortably?

### Family Age Groups (children 0–12 years of age)

Well-designed play activity rooms for family age groups carefully consider the varied ages of the children who will be using the space. It is important to plan for an environment that will encourage opportunities for children with diverse abilities and interests. Consideration may be given to using different areas of the space for children at different developmental levels. It is also important to include furnishings, equipment and play materials that are accessible yet safe in appropriate areas within the space (e.g., consider where play materials with loose parts can be stored so they are available to older children but inaccessible to younger children).

Additionally, it is important to consider the changing dynamics of family age groups. Flexible furnishings and design are important to support necessary adaptations as children grow and develop new skills and abilities.

## School Age (children aged 44 months up to 13 years)

Large groups of children attending before- and after-school programs may benefit from spaces designed with activity areas that allow for flexibility and choice and promote small- and large-group activity and interaction. In addition, dedicated space for projects that may extend over a period of time and comfortable areas and furnishings for rest and quiet activities (e.g., homework completion) are recommended for these age groups. Areas with semi-privacy – for example, a loft area – can support autonomy.

It is recommended that rooms allocated to licensed child care centres located in schools be positioned in close proximity to Kindergarten classrooms to support early years transitions. It is also recommended that infant, toddler and preschool rooms be located close to one another within a school.

## Other Play Activity Room/Area Considerations

### Storage

Well-planned and sufficient storage is vital in a licensed child care centre, but the amount needed is often underestimated. Consideration should be given to providing adequate space for the organized storage of equipment and play materials in each play activity room/area. This space should be accessible to staff (e.g., interior closet space, mobile/lockable cabinets). Elevated storage cabinets may be considered as a means to help maximize unobstructed floor space. In addition, cubbies are





recommended to support independence and provide space for children to store individual belongings. It is important for cubbies and hooks to be at children's height and positioned close to the entry/exit. Consider locating storage for toys and play materials within each play activity room/area so they are available and accessible to children to support individual interests and growing independence.

Storage spaces should meet all requirements of the **Ontario Building Code** and provide a measure of convenience for children and staff within the child care centre.

## Wall Space

A well-designed licensed child care centre includes space (e.g., documentation panel, bulletin board) within play activity rooms/areas for pedagogical documentation as a means to value, discuss and make children's learning visible. It is recommended that documentation be placed near the entrance of the play activity rooms/areas, to help and encourage families to find out more about their children's experiences, learn ways they can extend their child's learning at home and participate in conversations about their child.

Low interior windows between play activity rooms, hallways and the outdoors are encouraged for viewing to support children's growing curiosity as well as visual connection between spaces.

## Space for Eating and Resting

When designing play activity rooms/areas it is important to consider space that is suitable for resting and eating (where applicable). For example, a small eating space may be made available throughout the day to respond to children's varied biological rhythms, in addition to a larger eating area for family-style dining that encourages interaction and discussion. As well, play activity rooms/areas may be thoughtfully planned to allow for areas that support active play, rest and quiet time.

It is also recommended that durable, easy-to-clean floors be installed with the addition of area rugs (instead of permanent carpets) for sanitizing and cleaning purposes.

(See the section "**Floor, Site and Playground Plan Approval in Principle**" for information on designated space requirements.)

In addition, each play activity room/area must be barrier free in accordance with the **Ontario Building Code** and the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005**.

## Questions for Reflection

Consider the following questions when designing your play activity areas/rooms:

- If we see all children as curious, competent and capable of complex thinking, how will this be reflected in the environment? How could greater complexity and challenge be integrated into the environment?



- How will the different areas of the environment attract children?
- How can families be engaged and drawn into the space? How can children and families be engaged in shaping the environment?
- How can a space be created that is adaptable to support children's varied abilities? What furnishings would provide the most flexibility?
- What environmental factors could cause stress for children? What might be done to reduce stress for all who use the space?

## Separate Sleeping Areas

For licensed age groups that require separate sleeping areas (licensed infant groups and family age groups where children require cradles or cribs), it is recommended that separate sleeping areas be located so that visual connection can be maintained between the sleeping area and the play activity room. Windows between the play activity room and sleeping area can also support visual connection. Sleeping areas may be separated using purpose-built walls/dividers, with built-in gates for access to the area. This option allows for flexibility within the space. It is recommended that a source of natural light be available to meet requirements related to sufficient lighting for the safe supervision of children. Consideration may be given to including a rocking chair in sleeping areas to support peaceful rest and sleep in infant groups.

It is also important to consider the size of sleeping areas during the planning stage to ensure that all necessary furnishings can be included in the space.

## Cribs

Maximum crib dimensions may be approximately 76.2 cm by 137.2 cm (30 in. by 54 in.). When cribs are arranged in separate sleeping areas, they should be placed at least 45.7 cm (18 in.) apart with an aisle space at least 91.4 cm (36 in.) wide. This is to help

ensure that all children and staff can safely evacuate in case of an emergency. Where rolling cribs are included in a separate sleep room for use in an emergency evacuation, ensure that the doorway is wide enough for the cribs to exit. When determining crib layout, it is also important to consider accessibility (e.g., space for specialized/assistive equipment such as a wheelchair). Please refer to local fire department information and the **Ontario Building Code** for specific requirements that apply to sleeping areas (e.g., aisle space, required floor surface area, ceiling height).

## Cots

Cots may be approximately 61 cm by 160 cm (24 in. by 63 in.). When arranging cots for rest time in the play activity room/area (or other areas), where applicable, they should also be placed at least 45.7 cm (18 in.) apart, with an aisle space at least 91.4 cm (36 in.) wide. This is to help ensure all children and staff can safely evacuate in case of an emergency. Please refer to local fire department information and the **Ontario Building Code** for specific requirements that apply to sleeping areas (e.g., aisle space, required floor surface area, ceiling height).

## Sleep-Related Storage

Under subsection 15(3) in O. Reg. 137/15, it is required that space for the storage of beds and linens be available in licensed child care centres operating for more than six hours in a day. It is important to consider a safe and appropriate location to store linens and beds (e.g., cots) for all age groups that won't impede children's play. Consider seeking recommendations from the local public health unit on the sanitary storage of linens.

Either separate closets with double doors or trolleys may be used for the storage of cots. Cots stored in play activity rooms/areas are considered permanent obstructions and should not be included in the calculation of unobstructed play activity space.

## Equipment and Furnishings

It is recommended that equipment and furnishings within each play activity room/area be age appropriate and of a suitable size to support children's growing independence. It is important to include furnishings with rounded corners and edges for safety. Portable and stackable chairs and tables can be helpful to free up floor space if needed. When determining the size of equipment and furnishings to include in each play activity room/area, consider flexible options, to accommodate the changing needs of the children. For example, a child-sized counter or sink might also include a stool, and adjustable tables and chairs might be purchased so that the height can be changed to meet individual needs.

It is also important to consider appropriate equipment and furnishings for staff working in the play activity rooms/areas. For example, a well-designed play activity



room/area will include a staff preparation area that has counters (approximately 91.4 cm [36 in.] high) with a sink and with lockable cabinets above and below the counters.

Recommendations for washrooms and for space suitable for dressing or changing diapers can be found in the section “**Interior Design: Other Rooms/Areas in a Licensed Child Care Centre.**”

## **Regulatory References**

### **Ontario Regulation 137/15**

#### **Play activity rooms**

**17.** (1) Every licensee of a child care centre, except a child care centre for children with special needs, shall ensure that in each child care centre it operates,

- (a) each licensed infant group has a separate play activity room and a separate sleeping area that is separated from any play activity area;
- (b) each licensed toddler group has a separate play activity room;
- (c) each licensed preschool group has a separate play activity room;
- (d) each licensed kindergarten, primary/junior school age or junior school age group has a separate play activity area, unless otherwise approved by a director; and
- (e) each licensed family age group has a separate play activity room and, if the group requires cribs or cradles, has a separate sleeping area that is separated from any play activity area.

#### **Play materials, equipment and furnishings**

**19.** (2) Every licensee shall ensure that the following equipment and furnishings are provided in each child care centre it operates:

- 1. A table or counter space that is adjacent to a sink and suitable for dressing or changing the diaper of one child at a time for every licensed infant group, toddler group or family age group.

# Window Glass and Artificial Illumination

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## Requirements

### Window Glass

- Licensed child care centres that operate for more than six hours per day are required to have a window glass area that complies with the **Ontario Building Code**. As of the date of publication of these guidelines, the OBC requires an unobstructed window glass area, exclusive of skylights, of not less than 10 per cent of the area of the room. Please refer to the current OBC for the most up-to-date specific requirements that apply to licensed child care centres.

This provision requires that children in licensed full-day child care programs are in rooms and areas where they are exposed daily to natural light. Natural light from windows supports children's healthy development and learning by providing exposure to a variety of sights, sounds and smells.

Ministry of Education program advisors do not measure unobstructed window glass area. The applicant or licensee must submit written confirmation that the licensed child care centre meets the requirements for child care in the **Ontario Building Code**, including minimum unobstructed window glass area. This written confirmation may be a formal approval from the building department or written documentation from an architect or engineer that indicates all requirements have been met.

-  The window glass requirement does not apply to licensed child care programs that operate for less than six hours per day.
-  This requirement does not apply to licensed child care centres located in publicly funded schools that only serve children who are Kindergarten age and older.

### Exemptions:

- Licensed child care centres that were licensed prior to December 31, 1983, are exempt from the window space requirement.

### Artificial Illumination

- Artificial illumination in each play activity room must be capable of operating at a level of at least 55 dekalux.

This provision ensures that each play activity room where artificial illumination is used has enough lighting for children to play, inquire and explore the world around them. Dekalux can be measured using a light meter.

- 🏠 This requirement does not apply to licensed child care centres located in publicly funded schools that only serve children who are Kindergarten age and older.

## Sleeping Area or Room

- There must be sufficient light in the sleeping area or room to conduct direct visual checks of each sleeping child (natural light from windows or artificial illumination).

## Temperature

- The temperature in each licensed child care centre must be maintained at a level of at least 20 degrees Celsius (68 degrees Fahrenheit).

This section safeguards the health and well-being of children and staff by requiring that the licensed child care centre be kept warm enough.

## Recommendations

### Windows

Natural light from windows is preferable to artificial illumination, as it supports children's healthy development and learning. The inclusion of unobstructed window glass and natural light in the design of a centre will support children's connections to the natural world. Allowing children the opportunity to observe the outdoors (e.g., birds in the sky, changes in weather) enhances their connections and dialogue with the world around them.



Applicants are encouraged to consider how rooms will be kept at a comfortable temperature for children and staff year round, including consideration of windows that open, blinds, fans, and/or air conditioning to keep the room cool in hot weather.

## Location of Windows

A well-designed licensed child care centre includes unobstructed window glass areas at children's eye level to provide children with sensory experiences involving sight, sound and smell. Such experiences may serve as learning opportunities for children and a focus for conversation. Consider including a window bench to allow older children to sit and look outside safely and comfortably.

In addition, consider installing windows that open onto corridors or between play activity rooms to help children see themselves as part of a larger community. Supporting children in developing a sense of belonging as part of a group can contribute to children's lifelong well-being.

## Sleeping Areas

Patterns of sleep that are established in early childhood continue into later life. Licensed child care centres should respect and find ways to support each child's varied physiological and biological rhythms and needs for rest and quiet time. Natural light is recommended; however, window coverings can be used effectively to block some of the light and help promote quiet rest periods. Sufficient lighting to conduct direct visual checks of sleeping children is required in the sleeping area or room (O. Reg. 137/15, subsection 33.1(2)).

Refer to the **Ontario Building Code** for requirements for sleeping areas in licensed child care centres.

## Safety

Where children may have access to a window, it is recommended that windows be installed with a regulator that prevents them from opening more than 10.2 cm (4 in.). Windows should be installed with screens to reduce drafts and prevent wildlife or any unsafe debris from entering.

It is recommended that any window coverings installed (e.g., shades or lockdown blinds) be easy to clean. Curtains are not recommended, as they can pose a health risk (e.g., suffocation) for children. Cords from shades and curtains may pose a choking hazard, so it is recommended that they be kept out of children's reach. Looped cords should not be used.

## Artificial Illumination

When installing lighting, consider:

- using light bulbs that provide the most natural colour mix while ensuring that fixture covers are installed to lessen the glare and diffuse lighting;
- using a range of lighting in order to provide program areas with lighting appropriate for specific tasks; and
- installing dimmer switches throughout the play activity space, especially in sleep and/or rest areas. (During rest time some children may be sleeping while other children may be awake and participating in quiet activities such as reading books or playing with puzzles.)

Lighting levels may be reduced during rest time to promote quiet, inactive periods or napping; however, sufficient lighting to conduct direct visual checks of sleeping children is required in the sleeping area or room (O. Reg. 137/15, subsection 33.1(2)).

When installing light fixtures in licensed child care centres, consider positioning them so that the light does not shine directly into children's eyes.

## Temperature

When planning and designing a licensed child care centre it is important to consider the location of the entries/exits to the outdoors in relation to the play activity rooms/areas. For example, if a main entry opens into a play activity room/area, it may be difficult to maintain minimum temperature requirements during periods of arrival and departure as cold air enters during the winter months. In addition, furnishings such as carpets may be needed for children who are not yet walking and may be exposed to cold surfaces.

It is also important to consider installing appropriate heating units within each play activity room/area. Individual thermostats/controls in each room/area can help ensure that the minimum required temperature (20 degrees Celsius [68 degrees Fahrenheit]) is maintained throughout the licensed child care centre. Covers should be installed on radiator grates to protect the safety of children.

## Regulatory References

### Ontario Regulation 137/15

#### Window glass

**21.** (1) Section 10 of Regulation 262 of the Revised Regulations of Ontario, 1990 (General), made under the *Day Nurseries Act*, as it read on the day before that Act was repealed, applies to every licensee of a child care centre that was licensed for the first time under the *Day Nurseries Act* after December 31, 1983 and that has a program that runs for six hours or more each day.

(2) Every licensee, other than a licensee to which subsection (1) applies, that has a program that runs for six hours or more each day shall ensure that the window glass area in each child care centre it operates complies with the requirements of Ontario Regulation 332/12 (Building Code) made under the *Building Code Act*, 1992.

#### Artificial illumination

**22.** Every licensee shall ensure that artificial illumination in each play activity room of each child care centre it operates is at the level of at least 55 dekalux.

#### Child care centres in schools

**12.** Clauses 13 (1) (d), (e) and (f), subsection 14 (2) and sections 15, 20, 21, 22 and 24 do not apply to a child care centre, or part of a child care centre, if the centre or part is located in a school and is licensed to provide child care only for children in licensed kindergarten, primary/junior school age or junior school age groups.

#### Sleep policies and supervision

**33.1** (2) Every licensee shall ensure that, if child care is provided for a child who regularly sleeps at a child care centre the licensee operates or at a premises where it oversees the provision of home child care,

(a) an employee or home child care provider periodically performs a direct visual check of each sleeping child who is in a licensed infant or toddler group, is in a licensed family age group and is younger than 24 months, or is at a home child care premises and is younger than 24 months, by being physically present beside the child while the child is sleeping and looking for indicators of distress or unusual behaviours;

(b) there is sufficient light in the sleeping area or room to conduct direct visual checks

#### Temperature

**23.** Every licensee shall ensure that the temperature in each child care centre it operates is maintained at a level of at least 20 degrees Celsius.

# Interior Design: Other Rooms/Areas in a Child Care Centre

## Entry, Hallways and Security Systems

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### Requirements

The CCEYA does not set out requirements specific to the entry, hallways or security systems.

### Recommendations

#### Entry

A well-designed licensed child care centre has a main entry that provides a welcoming environment for children, families and others who may be visiting the premises. A large entry space can provide important opportunities for connection to support relationships and participation in the program. A resource board at the entry with important information about the program and documentation of children's learning can support a sense of belonging for children and families participating in the program and provide space for information that is required to be posted.

When planning the entry it is recommended that the location be considered in relation to the parking and/or drop-off area. An entrance that leads directly to the licensed child care centre is preferred over an entrance shared with other users, as this supports security and supervision when children are entering and exiting the premises and moving between play activity rooms/areas. Where this is not possible, it is recommended that methods to secure the entrance to the licensed child care centre be considered and that the route to the child care centre be clearly indicated (e.g., with signage to



direct parents and visitors and make it clear how to enter and exit the licensed child care centre). Where the entrance does lead directly to the licensed child care centre, it is important to consider the location of the door in relation to the play activity rooms/areas, as the flow of outdoor air may affect the temperature inside the play activity rooms/areas.

The amount of space dedicated to the entrance, particularly the pick-up and drop-off areas, is also important. It is recommended that it be large enough to accommodate all parents, staff and children during peak hours. In addition, it is important to ensure that entry areas are well lit and are free from obstructions (e.g., strollers) to allow for walking traffic and to provide a clear path out of the centre in case an evacuation is required. It is important to ensure that entrances are well maintained (e.g., cleared of snow) to avoid hazardous conditions. Applicants and licensees may want to consider providing dedicated storage near the entrance for strollers/car seats, including those belonging to parents as well as any belonging to the licensed child care centre. This will support a clear entrance that is free from obstacles and provide a convenient and safe location for storage so parents are not required to take empty strollers/car seats with them into the centre.

## Hallways

A well-designed centre considers methods for creating warm and welcoming hall space (e.g., with inviting colours, plants, comfortable seating, interesting and appropriate resources) to support a sense of belonging. Space in hallways for information and documentation (e.g., bulletin boards) is recommended to provide resources for families and display evidence of children's learning. In addition, it is important to provide adequate space and facilities for arrival and departure to support drop-off and pick-up routines (e.g., space for flow of traffic, storage for individual belongings, areas to dress/undress for the outdoors, non-slip floor coverings). Individual cubbies and hooks at children's height may be included in hallway spaces in close proximity to entry/exits of play activity rooms/areas to provide space for children to store individual belongings and support independence.

Where possible, it is recommended that the licensed child care centre be designed to minimize the number and length of hallways. In addition, it is recommended that hallways be well lit and clear of potential trip hazards. When designing the centre, applicants and licensees also need to consider the different objects that will travel through the hallways (e.g., food trolleys, triple strollers) to ensure that there is adequate space.

Please refer to the **Ontario Building Code**, the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005**, and local public health unit/fire department information for requirements related to hallways.



## Security Systems

Careful consideration of provisions for building security is important to protect the safety of the children being cared for and to ease any concern parents may feel when leaving their child at the licensed child care centre.

When child care is co-located with other community-based services (e.g., EarlyON child and family centres, community centres, hospitals), additional consideration may be given to including security systems.

Measures that may be taken to prevent children from leaving the licensed child care centre when not supervised and to prevent strangers and unauthorized persons from entering the premises include the following (where budgets allow):

- limiting entry/exit access into the building with a card reader or key pad system;
- installing a buzzer/phone system with video surveillance (e.g., closed-circuit television) at the entrance;
- installing webcams in play activity rooms/areas that are connected to an area where they may be viewed. Where webcams are installed, it is the responsibility of the applicant or licensee to ensure that related standards are met;
- installing heavy doors on play activity rooms/areas so that young children cannot enter and exit on their own. Consider whether child-proofing the doors may also be necessary. To prevent injuries, it is recommended that door hinges be installed high enough to prevent children from reaching them easily;
- installing a chime to indicate entry/exit from the building; and
- installing an individual security system for a licensed child care centre that shares an entrance with another facility.

Where security systems are used, the following questions need to be considered:

- Who will be responsible for managing the security system (e.g., watching cameras, buzzing families in)?
- How can use of the security system be managed to minimize disruptions and support staff engagement with children?
- Has the necessary information been provided to staff and families with respect to the use of security systems (e.g., policies and procedures)?

Please refer to the **Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act** to ensure that all requirements related to the use of security systems have been met.


# Storage for Medical Supplies, Cleaning Materials and Equipment, Other Poisonous or Hazardous Substances and Heating and Electrical Equipment

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## Requirements

- Every licensed child care centre must have a designated area that is inaccessible to children for the storage of medical supplies, cleaning materials and equipment and other items that could cause harm to a child, such as poisonous or hazardous substances.
- Every licensed child care centre must have a designated area that is inaccessible to children for the storage of heating and electrical equipment, and items in the designated storage area must also be inaccessible to children.
- These designated spaces must be reflected in floor plans for new applications, and for revision requests, where applicable.

To maintain the safety and well-being of children, poisonous or hazardous substances and heating and electrical equipment must be inaccessible to children. Incorporating appropriate storage space at the planning and design stage will ensure that adequate space is available for storage of these substances and items.

-  This requirement does not apply to licensed child care centres located in publicly funded schools that only serve children who are Kindergarten age and older.

## Recommendations

Storage areas that are inaccessible to children could include lockable equipment rooms, lockable supply closets and/or high cabinets/shelves that are out of children's reach. It is recommended that the location of storage areas be carefully considered. For example, it is recommended that a space be designed within cabinetry for the dedicated storage of medical supplies such as a first-aid kit. It is important for equipment rooms and supply closets to be accessible to staff so they can access supplies or equipment when necessary. Consideration may also be given to including additional storage areas outside of play activity rooms/areas to store equipment and supplies that are not in current use (e.g., extra cleaning supplies).

It is helpful to consider the impact of the installation of noisy equipment, as noise can be distracting to children (e.g., during periods of rest and quiet time). Consider designing ductwork to minimize sound transition from one room to another.

When planning the furniture layout within each play activity room/area, consider the location of the electrical outlets, phone outlets and wiring so the space can be used effectively while protecting children's safety. It is recommended that tamper-resistant electrical outlets be installed or that safety coverings be affixed to all electrical outlets that are not in use, to meet the requirements related to electrical equipment.

Where any mixing of chemicals is to take place, it is recommended that applicants and licensees consult occupational health and safety regulations and the local public health unit to ensure that appropriate safety information and equipment are provided (e.g., an eye-washing station, a handwashing sink).

## Regulatory Reference

### Ontario Regulation 137/15

#### Designated spaces

**15.** (1) Every licensee shall ensure that each child care centre it operates includes space designated for each of the following:

1. Washing, dressing and toileting.
2. Storage for toys, indoor play materials and equipment.
3. Storage for food.
4. Storage of hard copies of records, if necessary.
5. Storage for medical supplies, cleaning materials and equipment and other items that could cause harm to a child, such as poisonous and hazardous substances.
6. Heating and electrical equipment.

(2) Every licensee shall ensure that the spaces in each child care centre it operates that are referred to in paragraphs 5 and 6 of subsection (1), and the items kept in those spaces, are inaccessible to children.

# Laundry Room

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## Requirements

The CCEYA does not set out requirements specific to laundry rooms.

## Recommendations

Laundry rooms can provide child care centres with adequate space for day-to-day washing, drying and folding of linens and other miscellaneous items, including children's clothing. A laundry room may be included in the design of a licensed child care centre to support sanitary practices (e.g., washing bed linens onsite). Where a laundry room will be present in a licensed child care centre, consider including the following:

- a separate entrance to the laundry room to avoid disruptions to the program;
- a separate room that has the necessary space for equipment (where space is limited, a stackable washer and dryer may be considered);
- a room/area that is in close proximity to the kitchen;
- space for sorting, washing, drying and storing linens;
- equipment of suitable capacity to serve the number of children in care;
- if space permits, counters with a double sink or laundry tub;
- space that is inaccessible to children for storing poisonous or hazardous substances (e.g., laundry detergent, cleaning supplies);
- finishes that are non-slip and easy to maintain; and
- lockable doors to the laundry room/area.

Please refer to the **Ontario Building Code**, the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005**, and local public health unit/fire department information for requirements related to laundry rooms.

# Staff Rest Area

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## Requirements

- Licensed child care centres that operate for six hours or more per day must have a designated staff rest area.

A staff rest area must be reflected in the floor plans for new applications and revision requests where applicable.

- 🕒 The staff rest area requirement does not apply to licensed child care centres that operate for less than six hours per day.
- 🏫 This requirement does not apply to licensed child care centres located in publicly funded schools that only serve children who are Kindergarten age and older.

## Recommendations

A staff rest area is a place where child care employees, volunteers and students can have their lunches, short breaks and rest from their daily responsibilities. A designated rest area that is thoughtfully designed can support staff in feeling valued and appreciated and promote a sense of staff well-being, which in turn supports children's well-being. For example, it is recommended that staff rest areas be calm and relaxing so employees can return to their work refreshed.

When planning the location of the staff rest area, it is recommended that it be positioned so that it is accessible to, but clearly separated from, play activity rooms/areas. This allows staff to assist children in the event of an emergency while maintaining a private space to relax. Where possible, place staff rest areas close to, but separated from, the centre's office area and/or adult washrooms. It is recommended that staff rest areas include windows that admit natural light.

It is important to consider meal preparation and space for eating for employees. It is recommended that a refrigerator be included in the staff rest area for employees to store their lunches/meals. If meals are not prepared on the premises, consideration may be given to building a small kitchenette in which staff can prepare their food. This could include a sink; a countertop with small appliances such as a microwave oven, a kettle and/or a toaster; and a table and chairs.

In order to create a relaxing space for staff, consider furnishing the rest area with comfortable furniture such as couches and/or cushioned chairs. It is important to include enough seating and equipment to accommodate all staff in the program. Staff rest areas should also include secure storage space (e.g., lockers) for employees' personal belongings.

Finally, it is recommended that staff rest areas include a small library and/or workstation with a computer and telephone to support continuous learning and development. The environment can provide an opportunity for staff to engage in continuous professional learning or to complete administrative responsibilities related to the program (e.g., pedagogical documentation). It is also helpful to arrange the space to encourage collaboration (e.g., program and pedagogy discussions) among members of the staff team. A message board can also be included to communicate emergency procedures, day-to-day activities and professional development opportunities, and to allow staff to share ideas and insights.

Staff rest areas can be shared in schools and other facilities where licensed child care centres may be co-located with other services.

## **Regulatory Reference**

### **Ontario Regulation 137/15**

#### **Designated spaces**

**15. (3)** A licensee that operates a child care centre that has a program that runs for six hours or more in a day shall ensure that in addition to the spaces referred to in subsection (1) the child care centre has space designated for each of the following:

1. Eating and resting.
2. The preparation of food, if meals are prepared on the premises.
3. Storage for beds and linen.
4. A staff rest area.
5. Storage for outdoor play equipment.
6. Office area.
7. Outdoor play.



# Office Area/Storage of Hard Copy Records

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## Requirements

- Licensed child care centres that operate for six hours or more per day must have space designated for an office area.
- Every licensed child care centre must have space designated for the storage of hard copy records, if necessary.

Space for an office area as well as designated space for the storage of required records must be reflected in floor plans for new applications and revision requests, where applicable.

-  The office area requirement does not apply to licensed child care centres that operate for less than six hours per day. If hard copy records are maintained a space designated for storage is required.
-  This requirement does not apply to licensed child care centres located in publicly funded schools that only serve children who are Kindergarten age and older.

## Recommendations

### Office Area

It is recommended that the office be designed as a multifunctional area where the licensee/supervisor can:

- perform administrative work;
- meet with parents and other visitors;
- meet privately with individual staff, students and volunteers;
- store required documents; and
- supervise sick children.

When designing the licensed child care centre, consider placing the office area in a central location near the entrance of the building so that the licensee/supervisor can greet parents and visitors while still having access to the licensed child care centre's activities. Recommended design features that would help the licensee/supervisor in monitoring children, staff and visitors include:

- placement of the office area within "hearing range" of play spaces; and
- installation of windows that provide views of the centre's interior and exterior.

The office area should allow for privacy when needed (e.g., have a door with a lock; have blinds on windows).

It is important to design an office area that is large enough to allow the licensee/supervisor to work comfortably and support a sense of well-being in the workspace, and with enough space to conduct meetings with other people and accommodate necessary equipment and furnishings.

The table below provides furnishing/equipment recommendations for the office area:

	Administrative work	Meetings	Storage of required documents	Supervision of a sick child
<b>Furniture</b>	Desk, office chair	Meeting table, 2-3 chairs	Lockable door	Cot
<b>Equipment</b>	Computer, printer/scanner, photocopier, telephone, intercom, mailbox, information board		Bookshelves, lockable filing cabinets	First-aid kit

## Storage of Hard Copy Records

It is recommended that records be stored in a secure and organized manner. Efficient organization of records supports compliance with requirements under the CCEYA because licensees can more easily identify and retrieve information when it is needed (e.g., when enrolling a new child, during an emergency, licensing inspections).

Where records contain confidential personal information (e.g., children's files, staff police records checks), it is recommended that they be stored in lockable filing cabinets. For records that are frequently used and do not contain confidential information (e.g., playground inspections), consider open and accessible storage options such as book shelves. The office entrance should have a lockable door to maintain security of records when the office is not in use.



## Regulatory Reference

### Ontario Regulation 137/15

#### Designated spaces

**15.** (1) Every licensee shall ensure that each child care centre it operates includes space designated for each of the following:

1. Washing, dressing and toileting.
2. Storage for toys, indoor play materials and equipment.
3. Storage for food.
4. Storage of hard copies of records, if necessary.
5. Storage for medical supplies, cleaning materials and equipment and other items that could cause harm to a child, such as poisonous and hazardous substances.
6. Heating and electrical equipment.

(3) A licensee that operates a child care centre that has a program that runs for six hours or more in a day shall ensure that in addition to the spaces referred to in subsection (1) the child care centre has space designated for each of the following:

1. Eating and resting.
2. The preparation of food, if meals are prepared on the premises.
3. Storage for beds and linen.
4. A staff rest area.
5. Storage for outdoor play equipment.
6. Office area.
7. Outdoor play.

# Washrooms

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## Requirements

- Every licensed child care centre must have space designated for washing, dressing and toileting.

An area for washing, dressing and toileting must be reflected in floor plans for new applications and revision requests, where applicable.

- Every licensed infant, toddler or family age group must each have a table or counter that is next to a sink and is suitable for dressing or for changing a diaper.

This requirement ensures that furniture for diaper changing is suitable and sufficient for the number of children in care.

-  This requirement does not apply to licensed child care centres located in publicly funded schools that only serve children who are Kindergarten age and older.

## Recommendations

### Children's Washrooms

It is recommended that the public not have access to children's toilet facilities during the centre's hours of operation. Depending on the age of the children, consideration should be given to designing washrooms so that staff can easily supervise and provide assistance to children who are in the washroom, as well as the children remaining in the play activity room. To do so, consider the following:

- positioning washrooms so that they are within or directly accessible from the play activity room/area to support self-regulation and independence;
- where washrooms are shared between licensed groups, positioning them so they are centrally located and accessible to both play activity rooms/areas;
- where washrooms are shared between licensed groups, including a door or gate so that the licensed groups remain separated; and
- positioning washrooms so they are convenient to outdoor play areas.

Note: It is important to consider employee-to-child ratio requirements when determining the location of washrooms.

Regular-sized toilets may be installed in children's washrooms. A step stool may be used to support access, and a removable toilet ring may be used to ensure that the toilet is appropriate for the child's size. As an alternative, child-sized toilets may be installed; however, smaller toilets may be more susceptible to clogging. Depending on the age groups using the washroom, a mix of regular and child-sized toilets may

be installed for greater flexibility. Toilets with lids are recommended as an additional water safety precaution.

It is recommended that washrooms be furnished with manual flushing toilets because automatic flushing can startle children and may discourage use. It is also recommended that toilets be located away from windows or that window coverings be installed in washrooms to ensure privacy.

It is important to consider installing hot water temperature limiters to prevent children from coming in contact with scalding water during handwashing routines. When constructing multiple washrooms, it is recommended that they be placed back to back, with a dividing wall between, to allow plumbing to be used for more than one washroom.

Washrooms can serve as an environment to encourage children's growing independence and capacity for self-care. The following washroom fixtures may be placed at children's height:

- counters and sinks
- mirrors
- soap dispensers
- hand dryers/paper towel holders
- garbage/recycling bins

Careful consideration must be given to designing accessible washrooms that support convenience, privacy and personal hygiene. Please refer to the **Ontario Building Code**, the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005**, and local public health unit information for requirements related to washrooms.



## Change Table/Counter

Children are never to be left unsupervised on a change table/counter, and railings should not be relied on to prevent children from rolling off; however, rounded/upward edges and safety restraints/buckles can help support a safe environment. It is recommended that change tables include a step to support staff when lifting children.

It is important to consider the material used for the table or counter. All materials should be non-porous and easily sanitized. A covered and easily cleaned backsplash is also recommended.

When determining where the change table/counter will be placed, it is recommended that the table/counter be oriented so that a staff person can maintain visual surveillance of the play activity room while changing a child's diaper. It is recommended that the change counter be approximately 1.2 m long by 0.8 m wide by 0.9 m high (4 ft. by 2.5 ft. by 3 ft.). It is also recommended that the sink adjacent to the change table be at approximately the same height (i.e., not at the child's height). Child-sized sinks are recommended in addition to the sink adjacent to the change table. It is also important to ensure that diapering supplies (e.g., gloves, wipes, diapers) are readily accessible to staff, and it is recommended that waste disposal bins be placed in close proximity to change tables.

While the CCEYA does not require a change table/counter for preschool groups, many children who are of preschool age will still require diapering. If space allows, consider consulting with the local public health unit about creating a diapering space for preschool classrooms. This type of planning may also allow for greater flexibility in the future should the licensee wish to convert a preschool room to a toddler room.

## Storage

It is helpful to safely store extra diapering/toileting materials where they are accessible to staff (e.g., in a cabinet above the sink). If supplies are to be located on upper shelves or cabinets above the diaper changing area, provision needs to be made to ensure that the shelves are high enough to allow for clearance when children are lifted up and that supplies are securely stored and will not accidentally drop onto the diaper-changing area. It is recommended that cleaning supplies for diaper changes be stored on a shelf or in a cabinet that is easily accessible to staff (bearing in mind that **cleaning supplies must be inaccessible to children**). See the section "**Floor, Site and Playground Plan Approval in Principle**" for more information on designated storage space requirements.

## Adult Washrooms

A washroom for staff and other adults in the licensed child care centre (e.g., parents, students, volunteers) is necessary for convenience, privacy and personal hygiene.

It is important that washrooms are located within a reasonable distance so staff can access them throughout the day. For ease of access, washrooms may be located within or close to the staff rest area, where applicable. While it is recommended that adult washrooms be located within the licensed child care centre, washrooms located in schools or other public facilities may be shared among other staff in the school/facility. In order to maintain security and privacy, it is recommended that lockable single-room washrooms be built.

A well-designed washroom will be furnished with an adult-sized toilet and adult-height washroom fixtures, including a sink, a mirror, a soap dispenser and a hand dryer/paper towel holder. It is recommended that a garbage bin and/or sanitary napkin disposal bin be accessible. It is also important to install a change table.

Please refer to the **Ontario Building Code, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005**, and local public health unit information for requirements related to washrooms.

## Regulatory References

### Ontario Regulation 137/15

#### Designated spaces

**15.** (1) Every licensee shall ensure that each child care centre it operates includes space designated for each of the following:

1. Washing, dressing and toileting.
2. Storage for toys, indoor play materials and equipment.
3. Storage for food.
4. Storage of hard copies of records, if necessary.
5. Storage for medical supplies, cleaning materials and equipment and other items that could cause harm to a child, such as poisonous and hazardous substances.
6. Heating and electrical equipment.

#### Play materials, equipment and furnishings

**19.** (2) Every licensee shall ensure that the following equipment and furnishings are provided in each child care centre it operates:

1. A table or counter space that is adjacent to a sink and suitable for dressing or changing the diaper of one child at a time for every licensed infant group, toddler group or family age group.

# Kitchen



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## Requirements

- Every licensed child care centre must have space designated for storing food.
- Licensed child care centres that operate for six hours or more in a day that choose to prepare food at the licensed child care centre must have a space designated for the preparation of food.

Kitchens can play an integral role in preparing safe and nutritious food for children. Having proper storage space for food is important for ensuring that food is safe to eat. Following correct procedures for food storage, preparation and service contributes to the retention of maximum nutritive value and the prevention of illness.

In addition, proper food handling/storage may be a necessary component in reducing exposure to allergens for some children. Any instructions set out in a child's anaphylactic plan (per O. Reg. 137/15, section 39) that may impact food handling/storage must be followed at all times.

-  The requirement to have a space designated for the preparation of food does not apply to licensed child care centres that operate for less than six hours per day unless the program chooses to prepare food at the licensed child care centre.
-  The requirements related to space designated for storing and preparing food do not apply to licensed child care centres located in publicly funded schools that serve only children Kindergarten age and older.

## Recommendations

Kitchens provide space for the storage, preparation and distribution of food. kitchens include areas for hand washing, food preparation, dishwashing, storage, freezers, fridges, and all kitchen equipment.

A kitchen can be designed as either a full on-site meal preparation area (required where food is prepared on the premises) or as a receiving kitchen to which a caterer would deliver meals and snacks on a daily basis. It is important to have discussions during the planning stage about the type of meal service to be provided to children. Considerations related to capital costs, operating costs and the availability of community catering services will influence this decision. The quality of equipment installed (e.g., robust countertops exposed to steam from dishwashers) should be considered to reduce the need for future maintenance costs.

When developing a floor plan, it is important to consider the flow of activity, from food arrival/preparation to kitchen clean-up. Location and accessibility are important. It is recommended that the kitchen be located close to the receiving area (where food is catered) as well as in close proximity to play activity rooms/areas, for ease in delivering food. It is important that the kitchen does not open directly onto the centre's exterior and that windows to the exterior do not open directly onto food preparation surfaces. It is also important to choose a location that minimizes the impact of noise on play activity and sleeping areas. In addition, a washroom should not be located next to a kitchen area, nor should the kitchen be a passageway to the washroom.

When furnishing the kitchen area, consider installing the following:

- non-porous and impervious floors, surfaces and cabinets
- sufficient floor drains
- approximately 3 to 5 separate sinks for food preparation, hand washing, toy sanitizing and dishwashing
- grease interceptors installed on sinks
- a dishwasher
- holding areas for garbage, recycling and/or compost
- lockable storage facilities for kitchen cleaning supplies, equipment and other poisonous or hazardous substances
- lockable cabinets/pantry for appropriate food and utensil storage
- trolley storage for food delivery
- counter space appropriate for the number of children in care (e.g., to store bottle and/or food warmers)
- a microwave oven
- refrigerator(s)/freezer(s)
- a stove with a fire suppression system and appropriate heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) (where food is prepared on the premises)
- an oven (where food is prepared on the premises)
- adequate electrical outlets

It is recommended that a bulletin board be hung in the kitchen so that required information and other resources (e.g., menus/food substitutions, anaphylactic information, allergies and food restrictions and nutrition resources) can be posted.

The kitchen can also provide ample opportunities to teach children about different cultural foods and how food is prepared. To foster learning, it is recommended that windows to the kitchen from the play activity space be installed for viewing to foster interest and discussions (e.g., about measurement, temperature).

Please refer to the **Ontario Building Code**, the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005**, and local public health unit/fire department information for requirements related to kitchens (e.g., residential versus commercial appliance requirements). Applicants and licensees are also encouraged to consult their local public health unit for instructions on the use of kitchen spaces (e.g., safe food storage; preparation and service procedures, including correct temperatures for fridge and freezer; location of food within the fridge; sanitation/dish-washing procedures). It is recommended that applicants and licensees consult with all necessary authorities early in the design process to ensure that all applicable requirements and associated financial costs are considered during the planning stages.

## Regulatory References

### Ontario Regulation 137/15

#### Designated spaces

**15.** (1) Every licensee shall ensure that each child care centre it operates includes space designated for each of the following:

1. Washing, dressing and toileting.
2. Storage for toys, indoor play materials and equipment.
3. Storage for food.
4. Storage of hard copies of records, if necessary.
5. Storage for medical supplies, cleaning materials and equipment and other items that could cause harm to a child, such as poisonous and hazardous substances.
6. Heating and electrical equipment.

(3) A licensee that operates a child care centre that has a program that runs for six hours or more in a day shall ensure that in addition to the spaces referred to in subsection (1) the child care centre has space designated for each of the following:

1. Eating and resting.
2. The preparation of food, if meals are prepared on the premises.
3. Storage for beds and linen.
4. A staff rest area.
5. Storage for outdoor play equipment.
6. Office area.
7. Outdoor play.

*(continued)*



**Requirements re food and drink**

**42.** (1) Every licensee shall ensure that,

(b) where food or drink or both are supplied by a parent of a child receiving child care at a child care centre operated by the licensee or at a premises where it oversees the provision of home child care, the container for the food or drink is labelled with the child's name.

# Exterior Design: Outdoor Play Space

The following sections, on various aspects of exterior design, are structured so that **requirements under the CCEYA** are clearly identified at the outset. The requirements are followed by **recommended design considerations**. While the recommendations are important to consider when planning a quality child care environment, they are not mandatory requirements under the CCEYA. Please note, however, that some of these recommendations may be requirements under other legislation and standards. This publication is not intended as a substitute for any legislation or local by-laws. Reference should be made directly to the CCEYA and its regulations as well as all other applicable legislation (e.g., the Building Code Act, 1992). These can be found at [www.ontario.ca/laws](http://www.ontario.ca/laws).




## Outdoor Play Space Size Requirements

### Requirements

- Licensed child care centres that operate for more than six hours per day are required to have an outdoor play space that is at least 5.6 m<sup>2</sup> (60.3 sq. ft.) for each child based on the licensed capacity, unless otherwise approved by a Ministry of Education director.

This provision requires that the space available for active outdoor play be sufficient to accommodate the licensed capacity of the child care centre.

Children thrive in programs where they can engage in physical play in natural outdoor spaces and playgrounds. Allowing children the opportunity to play outside nurtures their healthy development and well-being (e.g., by strengthening functioning in cognitive areas such as perception and creative problem solving).

-  This requirement does not apply to licensed child care centres located in publicly funded schools that only serve children who are Kindergarten age and older.
-  A Ministry of Education director may approve an outdoor play space that has less than 5.6 m<sup>2</sup> per child in accordance with the licensed capacity.
-  Licensed child care centres that operate for less than six hours per day are not required to have an outdoor play space. However, if a program has an outdoor play space, it must meet all licensing requirements for the space even if it operates for less than six hours in a day.

For the purposes of outdoor space measurement, *obstructed space* includes fixed items within the outdoor play space, such as:

- above-ground sewers
- large planters that cannot be moved
- outdoor storage (e.g., a shed)
- a built-in garbage/recycling area.

Space for items that cannot be moved and/or areas that cannot be used for children's play is excluded from the calculation of total outdoor play space.

Movable equipment and furnishings and/or areas that are used for children's play (e.g., picnic tables, sand boxes) are not considered obstructions when determining the total outdoor play space.

### Director Approval: Rotation Plans

Some licensed child care centres do not have enough outdoor play space to accommodate the entire licensed capacity. In these situations, Ministry of Education director approvals may be granted for a smaller outdoor play space if the licensee is able to provide a rotation plan. Rotation plans allow different groups of children to use the playground at different times and help the licensee demonstrate how they will meet the requirement for two hours of outdoor play while not exceeding the capacity of the playground.

During playground rotations, consideration should be given to whether there will be enough daylight to supervise children. The number of daylight hours varies throughout the year, and there are fewer daylight hours during the fall and winter months. The **Sunrise/Sunset Calculator** may assist with determining suitable times for outdoor play.

Alternatively, sufficient outdoor lighting should be provided to supervise children if playground rotations run late into the afternoon in fall and winter.



## Recommendations

### Outdoor Play Space Size

The following tips may be used for measuring play activity space to ensure that minimum space requirements are met:

- measure the outdoor play space in square metres, as this is the unit of measurement set out in O. Reg. 137/15;
- measure the length and width of the outdoor play space and calculate the total area (*length x width = area*);
- if the outdoor play space is an irregular shape, it may be easier to calculate the areas of sections of the space and then add these together to get the total area;
- calculate the area of “obstructions” in the space; and
- subtract the space for “obstructions” from the total space. (Note that any fixed play structures do not need to be deducted from the total amount of space because children can play in this space.)

*Example: Total area of the outdoor play space – total area of obstructions = unobstructed space ( $73 \text{ m}^2 - 5 \text{ m}^2 = 68 \text{ m}^2$ ).*

The requirement of  $5.6 \text{ m}^2$  for each child based on the licensed capacity is the minimum space required. Opportunities for gross motor and highly active play are often easier to offer in outdoor play spaces. Consider designing an outdoor play space that exceeds the minimum space (square metres) per child to provide more space for active outdoor play.

A well-designed licensed child care centre will have direct and/or convenient access from each play activity room to the outdoor play space. Direct access to the outdoor play space is recommended where possible to provide easy access to the outdoor environment and support opportunities for outdoor exploration and inquiry.

If space permits, two or more dedicated playgrounds may be included in the design. For example, one outdoor space may be designated for infant and toddler groups and another space may be designated for preschool and school-aged children.

## Outdoor Play Space Design

Children thrive in programs where they can engage in active physical play in natural outdoor spaces that present manageable levels of challenge. While these environments need to be safe, it is also important that they be flexible and allow for opportunities that meet the varied and emerging interests of children while supporting a reasonable degree of risk taking.

When designing an outdoor play space, it is important to consider the layout during the planning phase (e.g., avoid designing L-shaped playgrounds, where not all the space can be supervised at once). It is important to consider the flow of the space and how the outdoor environment will support each child's varied physiological and biological rhythms and needs for active play, rest and quiet time. Well-designed outdoor play spaces act as an extension of indoor play activity rooms/areas (e.g., outdoor materials may be available indoors, and vice versa). It is also important to consider ways to make the play space accessible for all children to encourage the meaningful participation of children of diverse ages and developmental abilities. Program adaptations and physical accommodations can be made to allow every child to participate fully and be challenged in meaningful ways. For example, when







installing fixed-play structures, consider equipment with varying heights and opportunities for exploration.

It is important to consider different surfacing, such as natural grass and rubberized surfaces, for outdoor play spaces to prevent injuries during outdoor play. Hard surfaces, such as concrete, may not be suitable for young children who are crawling or learning to walk. Riding areas for the use of bicycles and other equipment and areas for water or sand play may also be included to support children's developing interests.

When integrating other equipment and materials (e.g., logs, stepping stones,

storage spaces, wind chimes) consider offering a variety of materials to accommodate all children and foster inclusive play experiences. It is important to note that fixed play structures often have age limitations, so applicants and licensees may wish to consider whether equipment appropriate to the ages of children currently being served could be expanded or adapted to meet the changing/future needs of the community. A well-designed outdoor space supports all areas of development, including language, cognitive, social, emotional and motor development. For example, consider designing an outdoor play space that incorporates a quiet, shaded grass area with books or puzzles to allow children the opportunity to participate in rest or quiet activities in addition to gross motor play. A well-designed outdoor play space will include open-ended materials rather than single-purpose materials, to allow opportunities for exploration and inquiry.

It is also important to consider how the outdoor play space will be utilized during all seasons. Some fixed play structures may not be safe in certain weather conditions (e.g., ice, rain), and a well-designed outdoor play space will offer a variety of other opportunities to engage children regardless of weather conditions.

The number of daylight hours varies through the year, with fewer daylight hours during the fall and winter months. It is important to consider providing sufficient outdoor lighting so that children can be supervised if outdoor play runs late into the afternoon in fall and winter.

Please refer to the **Ontario Building Code** and the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005**, for requirements related to outdoor play space.

## Outdoor Storage

It is important to plan for sufficient space to store outdoor play materials and equipment. Please note that outdoor storage is considered obstructed space, where it is located in the outdoor play space, and is therefore excluded when calculating the square metres required for the outdoor play space.

Well-designed outdoor storage is convenient to the outdoor play space. In addition, since blind spots may be created by equipment or sheds, the storage units should be positioned to ensure safe play and the effective supervision of children by staff (e.g., place storage areas around the perimeter of the outdoor play space).

It is also helpful to consider including outdoor storage that offers protection for toys and equipment from inclement weather (e.g., a sturdy shed). Outdoor storage may be designed in different ways – for example, as one large shed or multiple small sheds within the outdoor play space (e.g., one shed for each age group).

It is also helpful if storage for outdoor equipment is easily accessible and well organized. Adding labels and categorizing the storage space will allow for easy and quick access to equipment and play materials. Storing items in an organized manner will:

- help staff to maintain control of inventory, equipment and materials;
- allow staff and children to safely store and retrieve materials and equipment to allow freedom of choice and independence; and
- ensure that the storage space is fully utilized so that space is not taken away from the outdoor play space.

Consider adding adjustable and fixed shelving, as appropriate, to make the best use of the space. Large hooks can be placed on walls to hang up certain equipment (e.g., toboggans).

In addition, consider providing ventilation to eliminate odours and dampness and to ensure that the equipment stored is maintained in good condition. It is recommended that outdoor storage be located near an outdoor sink to facilitate the regular cleaning of equipment.

It is recommended that the outdoor storage be lockable when the outdoor play space is not being used, to keep materials and equipment secure (e.g., when the licensed child care centre is closed).

Consider using the sides of the outdoor storage for items that can be used for a variety of activities, such as:

- a blackboard
- a water exploration station;
- a magnet story board



## Incorporating Nature in the Outdoor Play Space

Children thrive in indoor and outdoor spaces that invite them to investigate, imagine, think, create, solve problems and make meaning from their experiences. When designing the outdoor play space, consider ways to use the environment as a third teacher that provides opportunities for children to experience, care for and interact with the natural world. This will help to enhance children’s connections to the world around them.

A growing body of research suggests that connecting to the natural world positively contributes to children’s mental, physical, emotional and spiritual health and well-being. It is important to provide children with opportunities to engage with nature regardless of where the licensed child care centre is located. Natural environments provide opportunities to enhance children’s sense of wonder and joy in the world around them, whether in large urban centres with small patches of green space or in rural settings among fields and/or forests.





When designing an outdoor play environment, it is recommended that materials be chosen to evoke children's curiosity about the natural world and provide a variety of sensory experiences while considering the needs of all children. The outdoor environment provides opportunities for children to ask questions and experience nature using different senses (e.g., smelling freshly cut grass, listening to the birds, touching rough bark on a tree, looking at changing weather). Consider incorporating the following equipment and furnishings in your outdoor play space:



- rocks or tree stumps to sit on or use as a table
- logs to walk along
- stepping stones
- a garden or planting bed where children can learn about plant life cycles

It is also important to ensure that any vegetation in the outdoor play space will not be harmful to children. For information about poisonous plants, please visit the **Ontario Poison Centre website**.

### Questions for Reflection

Consider the following questions when designing your outdoor play space:

- How can you provide an outdoor environment and experiences that engage children? What might draw them in?
- How can the outdoor environment be arranged to encourage children to engage in activities that involve an element of manageable risk (as appropriate for children's varied capabilities)?
- How can the environment be designed to put more emphasis on outdoor exploration and play activities that engage the body, mind and senses?
- How can an outdoor space be created that is adaptable to support children's varied abilities? What equipment would provide the most flexibility?

## **Washrooms**

It is important that washrooms for children and staff are located at a reasonable distance from the outdoor play space to allow for convenient access. Where possible, consider adding a dedicated washroom and access to water (e.g., an outdoor tap

that a hose can attach to) for the outdoor play space. Please see the section, “Interior Design: Other Rooms/Areas ...” for more information on washrooms.

## Recycling and Waste Management

It is helpful to store recycling and waste near a door to the licensed child care centre and away from play areas to avoid the accumulation of smells and insects.

### Regulatory References

#### Ontario Regulation 137/15

##### Outdoor play space

**24.** (1) Every licensee shall ensure that each child care centre it operates that has a program that runs for six hours or more in a day has an outdoor play space that is at least equivalent to 5.6 square metres for each child based on the licensed capacity, unless otherwise approved by a director.

##### Designated spaces

**15.** (3) A licensee that operates a child care centre that has a program that runs for six hours or more in a day shall ensure that in addition to the spaces referred to in subsection (1) the child care centre has space designated for each of the following:

1. Eating and resting.
2. The preparation of food, if meals are prepared on the premises.
3. Storage for beds and linen.
4. A staff rest area.
5. Storage for outdoor play equipment.
6. Office area.
7. Outdoor play.

## Maximum Capacity of Outdoor Play Space

### Requirements

- A licensed child care centre must not allow more than 64 children per fenced section of the outdoor play space at one time.

This provision sets a maximum capacity to help prevent overcrowding in the outdoor play space and to allow staff to supervise children in a manageable outdoor area.

Where a program has more than 64 children using an outdoor play space at one time, the area may be divided into two or more areas by a fence to allow for all the children to safely use the play space at one time. No more than 64 children may play in each fenced area at one time.



This requirement does not apply to licensed child care centres located in publicly funded schools that only serve children who are Kindergarten age and older.



Licensed child care centres that operate for less than six hours per day are not required to have an outdoor play space. However, if a program has an outdoor play space, it must meet all licensing requirements for the space even if it operates for less than six hours in a day.

## Recommendations

It is recommended that the outdoor play space be designed with the number and ages of children in mind to maximize opportunities for meaningful outdoor play and ensure the safe supervision of children. A well-designed licensed child care centre may have separate outdoor play spaces for different age groups to prevent overcrowding and to provide the best possible outdoor environment to support age-appropriate learning and development (e.g., licensed infant and toddler groups are required to be separated from other children during active indoor and outdoor play periods). In the case of family age groupings, to promote the safety and optimal development of the children, consider how the outdoor play space will support flexibility and varied developmental levels and interests.

Where there is sufficient space, fencing may be positioned well beyond the minimum space requirements to support greater opportunities for children to explore and discover in the natural world (e.g., in the context of outdoor/nature programs)

### Regulatory Reference

#### Ontario Regulation 137/15

##### Outdoor play space

**24.** (2) Where the licensed capacity of a child care centre is greater than 64 children, the outdoor play space referred to in subsection (1) may be divided into two or more areas by a fence to allow all the children to use the play space at one time, if each fenced-in area is not used for more than 64 children at one time.

# Outdoor Play Space Location and Fencing

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## Requirements

- The outdoor play space must be located at ground level and adjacent to the premises, unless otherwise approved by a Ministry of Education director.


This provision supports easy access to first aid, telephones, washroom facilities, shelter and flexible indoor-outdoor programming.

- Outdoor play spaces used by a licensed infant, toddler, preschool or family age group must be fenced to a minimum height of 1.2 m (4 ft.) , and the fence must be furnished with one or more gates that are securely closed at all times.
- Outdoor play spaces used by a Kindergarten group must be fenced to a minimum height of 1.2 m, and the fence must be furnished with one or more gates that are securely closed at all times, unless otherwise approved by a director.

These provisions are intended to assist staff with supervision, to help prevent children from wandering outside of the outdoor play space and to prevent unwanted individuals and wildlife from wandering into the play space.

- The outdoor play space must be designed so that staff can maintain constant supervision of the children.
-  The above requirements do not apply to child care programs located in publicly funded schools that serve children Kindergarten age and older.
-  A Ministry of Education director may approve alternative arrangements for outdoor play space on a site-by-site basis. Alternative arrangements could include rooftop playgrounds or outdoor play space that is not directly adjacent to the licensed child care centre.

A Ministry of Education director may approve an outdoor play space without a fence for Kindergarten groups. Note that school age children are not required to have a fence.

-  Licensed child care centres that operate for less than six hours per day are not required to have an outdoor play space. However, if a half-day or before- and/or after-school program chooses to have outdoor play space, it must meet all licensing requirements for the space.

## Director Approval: Playgrounds Not Adjacent to the Premises

Ministry of Education director approval may be granted for an outdoor play space that is not adjacent to the premises. Considerations for the approval of non-adjacent outdoor play spaces may include:

- the location of available outdoor play space and distance from the child care centre building; and
- a transition and supervision plan appropriate to the ages and developmental needs and abilities of the children.
- please note that director approval will not be granted to use community parks as the child care centre's required outdoor play space.

### **Director Approval: Rooftop Playground**

Ministry of Education director approval may be granted for an outdoor play space that is located on a rooftop. Considerations for approval of rooftop playgrounds may include:

- the age of the children using the play space;
- the type and height of fencing (the height required for ground-level playgrounds is not sufficient for rooftop playgrounds);
- the presence of fixed play structures, storage areas, seating and so on, and their distance from the fence;
- confirmation of the structural integrity of the roof/building if fixed play structures are planned;
- additional provisions for protection from environmental factors that may be more severe at rooftop level, including wind, sun, shade, snow and poor air quality;
- the adequacy of enhanced supervision plans, including whether staff-child ratios need to be altered so that more staff are present;
- provisions for securing equipment (e.g., play structures, wind/shade screens and guards) from the impact of high winds;
- ability to meet air quality and noise-level standards (e.g., for rooftop playgrounds located in urban areas);
- the adequacy of emergency procedures including the number of primary and secondary exits; posted, detailed evacuation procedures; a communication system (phones, intercom); and the availability of first-aid supplies; and
- proximity to washroom facilities.

### **Director Approval: Kindergarten Group Fence Height**

Ministry of Education director approval may be granted for an outdoor play space for a licensed Kindergarten group that is fenced less than 1.2 m in height. Considerations for the approval of fence exemptions may include:

- a perimeter fence around the site;
- traffic patterns and proximity to roads and parking areas;
- the adequacy of a detailed supervision plan for the outdoor play space;
- exclusive or shared use of the play space during hours of operation; and
- mixed age approval.





## Recommendations

### Outdoor Space Location

When selecting the location and designing the layout of the play space, consider planning for how materials can be transported from indoors to the outdoor space to support programming. It is also important to consider the availability of shade and shelter for both hot and cold weather conditions. It is recommended that areas where children may play for extended periods of time (e.g., the sandbox) are shaded. Shade may be achieved through the use of awnings or small trees. Consider sightlines when planning, so that constant supervision can be maintained. In addition, consider methods to promote adequate drainage (e.g., to ensure that children can play in a safe environment free from pooling water).

### Fencing and Gates

It is important to install fences that are safe and secure. Aluminum fencing may be considered as a cost-effective option; however, chain-link fences may be climbable, so their height and design are important. Vinyl coating over fencing may be installed for safety purposes. It is recommended that fixed objects not be installed in front of a fence (e.g., planters, benches) to prevent children from climbing towards the top of the fence. In addition, consider installing higher fences for centres located in areas of the province that may typically receive heavy snowfalls.

Where there is opportunity to position fencing in different ways, consideration may be given to incorporating space into the outdoor area to support children's curiosity and promote exploration. For example, outdoor/nature programs may wish to extend fencing well beyond minimum space requirements in order to provide ample space for children to explore the outdoors.

It is recommended that gates be installed facing outwards from the playground to prevent children from trying to unlatch them from the inside. Where the outdoor play space is divided into two spaces, it is recommended that a secure gate be installed between each area.

Consider how seasonal changes may affect the functionality of locks and latches (e.g., from ice build-up during the winter months).

Please refer to the **Ontario Building Code**, the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005**, and local public health unit/fire department information for requirements related to outdoor play spaces.



## Regulatory References

### Ontario Regulation 137/15

#### Outdoor play space

**24.** (3) Every licensee shall ensure that the outdoor play space at each child care centre it operates,

- (a) is at ground level and adjacent to the premises, unless otherwise approved by a director;
- (b) if used by licensed infant, toddler, preschool, or family age groups is fenced to a minimum height of 1.2 metres and the fence is furnished with one or more gates that are securely closed at all times;
- (c) if used by a licensed kindergarten group, is fenced to a minimum height of 1.2 metres and the fence is furnished with one or more gates that are securely closed at all times, unless otherwise approved by the director; and
- (d) is designed so that the staff can maintain constant supervision of the children.

# Outdoor Play Space and the Requirements of the Canadian Standards Association

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## Requirements

- As of August 29, 2016, any outdoor play space, fixed play structure or surfacing under those structures must meet the requirements set out in the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) standard **CAN/CSA-Z614-14, “Children’s playspaces and equipment”** as amended from time to time.



Ensuring that play structures meet the requirements set out in the CSA standard will help to support safety and reduce the likelihood of injuries on licensed child care centre playgrounds.

Where an outdoor play space has a fixed play structure, a comprehensive inspection of the play structure and protective surfacing must be performed prior to first use to confirm compliance with the requirements set out in the CSA standard CAN/CSA-Z614-14. The person inspecting the playground must have the necessary training and equipment in order to accurately assess the technical requirements set out in the CSA standard. Licensees are responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the play space and equipment to reduce the likelihood of injuries.

Applicants are not required to install fixed play structures; however, if they choose to do so, these structures must meet the safety requirements set out in O. Reg. 137/15, subsection 24(4).





-  This requirement does not apply to licensed child care centres located in publicly funded schools that only serve children who are Kindergarten age and older.
-  Licensed child care centres that operate for less than six hours per day are not required to have an outdoor play space. However, if a half-day or before- and/or after-school program chooses to have outdoor play space, it must meet all licensing requirements for the space.

## Recommendations

The CSA is a non-profit, voluntary association engaged in standards development and certification activities. The standard in Ontario for licensed child care centre playgrounds is **CAN/CSA Z614-14, “Children’s playspaces and equipment.”** This standard specifies design and maintenance criteria to reduce the risk of injury.

For more information about the CSA standard regarding children’s play spaces and equipment or to purchase a copy, visit the **CSA website** or call 1-800-463-6727. Information about how to request services from a certified playground inspector may be found on the CSA’s website.

### Regulatory Reference

#### Ontario Regulation 137/15

##### Outdoor play space

**24. (4)** Every licensee shall ensure that, at each child care centre it operates, any outdoor play space, fixed play structure or surfacing under those structures that is constructed or renovated on or after August 29, 2016 meets the requirements set out in the Canadian Standards Association standard CAN/CSA-Z614-14, “Children’s playspaces and equipment”, as amended from time to time.

**(5)** Every licensee shall ensure that at each child care centre it operates,

- (a) a playground safety policy is developed that reflects the Canadian Standards Association standard mentioned in subsection (4) and indicates the roles and responsibilities of employees regarding safety on playgrounds;
- (b) daily, monthly and annual inspections of the outdoor place space, fixed play structures and surfacing are conducted in accordance with the requirements set out in the Canadian Standards Association standard mentioned in subsection (4);
- (c) a plan is developed on how issues or problems identified in a playground inspection will be addressed; and
- (d) a playground repair log is maintained.

# Appendices

## A. Directory

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### Building and Zoning

To find your local municipality for building approval and zoning approvals, refer to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing web page **List of Ontario Municipalities**.

### Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Standard

To find information about the CSA standard regarding children's play spaces and equipment or to purchase a copy of the standard, visit the **CSA website** or call 1-800-463-6727.

### CMSMs/DSSABs

To find your local Consolidated Municipal Service Manager/District Social Services Administration Board (CMSM/DSSAB) for inquiries about funding and child care needs, refer to the Ministry of Education web page **Child Care Service System Managers and Their Service Areas**.

### Fire

To find your local fire department for fire approvals, contact the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs at 1-800-774-6651 or visit the association's **contact web page**.

## First Nations

To find contact information for First Nation councils, refer to **First Nation Communities in Ontario**.

## Funding/Child Care Needs

To find your local Consolidated Municipal Service Manager/District Social Services Administration Board (CMSM/DSSAB) for funding and child care need inquiries, refer to the Ministry of Education web page **Child Care Service System Managers and Their Service Areas**.

## Health

To find your local public health unit or local medical officer of health for health approvals, refer to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care web page **Health Services in Your Community**.

The Government of Ontario website provides information about the **Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002**, the **rules for testing drinking water for lead** for licensed child care centres, schools and private schools, and **laboratories licensed to test for lead**.

To contact Health Canada, please call 1-866-225-0709 or email [Info@hc-sc.gc.ca](mailto:Info@hc-sc.gc.ca). You can also complete a feedback form by visiting their **contact web page**.

## Police

To find your local police detachment, where you can complete police record checks, refer to the Ontario Provincial Police web page **Find a Detachment**.

## B. Floor, Site and Playground Plan Checklist

Applicants and licensees must obtain ministry approval for a new building or an existing building to be used, altered or renovated for use as a child care centre and cannot start building, using, altering or renovating the premises until plans are approved by the Ministry of Education. Ministry approval is also required to add a room (or rooms) within an existing building if the room has not previously been licensed for child care.

The following information must be included in site, floor and playground plans submitted for director approval under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, and O. Reg. 137/15.

SITE PLAN
Requirements that must be clearly labelled directly on the Site Plan
<input type="checkbox"/> Name of child care centre
<input type="checkbox"/> Address of child care centre
<input type="checkbox"/> Name of publicly funded school (if applicable)
<input type="checkbox"/> Adjacent streets
<input type="checkbox"/> Location of child care centre in relation to the rest of the building
<input type="checkbox"/> Child care centre entrance
<input type="checkbox"/> Location of playground in relation to the child care centre
<input type="checkbox"/> Access to playground that will be used by children and staff from child care centre

FLOOR PLAN
Requirements that must be clearly labelled directly on the Floor Plan
<input type="checkbox"/> Name of child care centre
<input type="checkbox"/> Address of child care centre
<input type="checkbox"/> Name of publicly funded school (if applicable)
<input type="checkbox"/> Location of each play activity room/space (e.g., basement, ground floor, second floor)
<input type="checkbox"/> Total unobstructed floor space measurement in square metres for each play activity room/space
<input type="checkbox"/> Proposed age group and capacity for each play activity room/space

(continued)

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Additional Requirements</b> (ALL programs except Kindergarten and school age programs in publicly funded schools)</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Requirements that must be clearly labelled directly on the Floor Plan</b></p>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Space for washing, dressing and toileting to include location of counter with sink for diapering for each group of 10 infant children, each group of 15 toddler children and each family age group
<input type="checkbox"/>	Space for storage for toys, indoor play materials and equipment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Space for storage for food
<input type="checkbox"/>	Space for storage of hard copies of records, if necessary
<input type="checkbox"/>	Storage for medical supplies, cleaning materials and equipment and other items that could cause harm to a child, such as poisonous and hazardous substances and evidence that these items are inaccessible to children
<input type="checkbox"/>	Space for storage for heating and electrical equipment and evidence that these spaces are inaccessible to children
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Additional Requirements</b> (ALL programs operating for six hours or more in a day)</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Requirements that must be clearly labelled directly on the Floor Plan</b></p>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Space for eating and resting
<input type="checkbox"/>	Space for preparation of food if meals are prepared on the premises or a server area for catered food (meals/snacks)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Space for storage for beds (cots/mats) and linens
<input type="checkbox"/>	Staff rest area
<input type="checkbox"/>	Office area

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PLAYGROUND PLAN (OUTDOOR PLAY SPACE)</b> <i>Playground plans are required where a program runs for six hours or more in a day or where a licensee chooses to have an outdoor play space.</i></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Requirements that must be clearly labelled directly on the Playground Plan</b></p>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Total unobstructed measurement in square metres for each proposed outdoor play area
<input type="checkbox"/>	Proposed age group for each outdoor play area
<input type="checkbox"/>	Location of storage for outdoor play equipment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fixed equipment (if applicable)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Location of gates (must have secure latching mechanisms)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fence height (must be at least 1.2 m high)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Location of playground in relation to child care centre (where information is not provided on the Site Plan)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Access to playground from child care centre that will be used by children and staff (where information is not provided on the Site Plan)

## **Additional Information**

### **Unobstructed Space**

Unobstructed space refers to the total area (available floor space) of the room and/or playground that can be used for children's play, excluding the total area of obstructions (e.g., items that are attached to the floors or walls, such as counters, sinks and children's cubbies, outdoor shed and items that are not readily moveable such as filing cabinets). Moveable equipment and furnishings such as easels, sensory bins/tables, chairs, activity tables as well as sandboxes and fixed play structures (used for children's play) are not considered obstructions when determining the total floor space in a play activity room and/or playground.

### **Municipal Approvals**

Applicants and licensees are responsible for arranging inspections with public health, fire and building inspectors to obtain necessary municipal approvals as per the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, and O. Reg. 137/15 (section 13).

# Resources

## **Legislation**

- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
- Architects Act
- Building Code Act, 1992
- Cannabis Control Act, 2017
- Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014
- Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017
- Education Act
- Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997
- Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA)
- Health Protection and Promotion Act
- Highway Traffic Act
- Planning Act
- Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002
- Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017

## **Regulations**

- Ontario Regulation 137/15
- Ontario Regulation 191/11
- Ontario Regulation 213/07 (Fire Code)
- Ontario Regulation 332/12 (Building Code)

## **Websites**

- Canadian Standards Association website
- Licensing Kit Sample Floor, Site and Playground Plan Checklist
- Operating A Licensed Child Care Program

- Ontario Association of Architects
- Ontario Poison Centre website
- Start a Child Care Program

#### **Additional Resources**

- CAN/CSA-Z614-14 - Children's playspaces and equipment
- Child Care Centre Licensing Manual
- Child Care Licensing System (CCLS)
- CCLS Reference Guide for Applicants/Licensees
- CCLS Registration Guide for New Applicants
- How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years
- Sunrise/Sunset Calculator
- Think, Feel, Act: Empowering Children in the Middle Years
- Think, Feel, Act: Lessons from Research about Young Children  
(The Environment Is a Teacher)



