



CHILD CARE CENTERS – CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION & REMODEL

This handout provides information to be used by owners, architects, and contractors wishing to construct or remodel a child care facility. In order to meet the City of Arlington's Health Code, these requirements are to be used in addition to requirements of other city departments, and do not replace other department's requirements. At the time of application for a Building Permit, one set of plans must also be submitted to the Health Division for review; Health, Article V, Section 5.06.

If a Building Permit is not required, a set of plans must be submitted directly to Health Services before beginning the work. The plans must include the center, kitchen and play equipment and play areas (both indoor and outdoor). Written comments will be sent to the applicant or general contractor, outlining any areas of concern and any additional comments concerning the facility and its operation. It will be necessary for the owner, architect, or contractor to respond to these comments before a Building Permit will be issued. Please notify Community Development & Planning Department when the facility is ready for a Certificate of Occupancy (CO) so that an on-site inspection may be conducted. A Child Care Center Permit will be issued after all requirements have been met and fees are paid. A Child Care Permit must be obtained before beginning operations, Health, Article V, Section 5.04 & Section 5.05.

For additional information, please contact our office at:

Community Development & Planning
Health Services
101 W. Abram Street
P.O. Box 90231, Mail Stop 01-0241
Arlington, Texas 76004-3231
Telephone number: 817-459-6502

<http://www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/technical-bulletins/>

1. Space And Design

- a. The number of persons regularly occupying the building shall not exceed one person (child or adult) for each thirty-five (35) square feet of building areas as determined by the City of Arlington's Building Code.
- b. There must be at least thirty (30) square feet of indoor activity space per child.
- c. A playground consisting of not less than one hundred (100) square feet of area for each child occupying the area at one time must be provided.
- d. An area must be provided to isolate children with symptoms of communicable disease from other children at the center.
- e. All outer openings must be rodent proof including doors and windows.

2. Playground Areas

- a. A chain link fence must enclose outdoor play areas not less than six feet (6') in height.
- b. Use Zones, previously referred to as Fall Zones, in outdoor play areas must be completely free of exposed concrete, rock, lumber, or any other obstruction, which could cause injury. The requirements for Use Zones for playground equipment are too extensive to cover all the types of equipment and surfacing in this brief document. For more information, consult the Texas State Minimum Standards for Licensed Child Care Centers, http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/child_care_standards_and_regulations/ and/or the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission Handbook for Public Playground Safety at <http://www.cpsc.gov/pagefiles/122149/325.pdf> Some basic requirements of use zones are an area extending six feet (6') from climbing structures; six feet (6') from the exit of a slide, for slides that are 6 ft or less, or the height of the slide up to eight feet maximum for slides over six feet (other parts of slide are climbing structures); six feet (6') from a merry-go-round or other revolving devices, where children are sitting, and seven feet (7') if children are standing or riding, in the front and rear of "to-fro" swings, that is twice the vertical height from the beam to the protective surface. Use zones should be constructed of wood chips, small gravel, unitary surfaces or other material designed to effectively absorb shock and prevent injury.
- c. Playground equipment must be constructed with no sharp edges, dangerous protrusions, or other hazards, and designed to protect against entrapment.
- d. All playground equipment installed, modified, or repaired after October 1, 1999, must meet or exceed the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission Handbook for Public Playground Safety at <http://www.cpsc.gov/pagefiles/122149/325.pdf>
- e. Any pool, pond, or other body of water greater than two feet (2') in depth must be separated from a playground by a chain link fence no less than six feet (6') in height. The fence must be constructed to meet all Building Department requirements and must be designed so that children cannot easily climb over it. Gates of the pool enclosure must be self-closing, self-latching, and remain locked when not in use.

3. Furnishings

- a. Adequate storage must be provided for children's personal articles. Storage areas should be constructed of smooth, easily cleanable materials with separate space for each child's clothing, bags, hats, coats, etc.

4. Sanitation

- a. Toilet fixtures and facilities must be provided in accordance with Appendix `C' of the International Plumbing Code (IPC) as adopted in the City of Arlington's Plumbing Code. (Consult Child Care Licensing for number required.)
- b. All adult handwash sinks must be provided with hot and cold water tempered by a mixing valve, soap, and sanitary towels. Hot water provided to handwashing sinks must not exceed 120°F.
- c. All diaper change areas must be provided with handwash sinks in the immediate area. The handwash sinks must be equipped with both hot and cold water, tempered by means of a mixing valve, soap, and sanitary towels.
- d. Properly constructed diaper changing stations should be provided. Floor mats are not adequate changing areas.
- e. Toilet facilities, including diaper change areas, must be constructed with smooth, easily cleanable walls, ceilings, floors, and work surfaces.
- f. Permanent signs must be conspicuously posted in restrooms and food service areas reminding all persons to wash hands.

5. Smoke Detectors - Fire Alarm Systems

- a. Smoke detectors must be installed to provide an effective warning to the building occupants of fire in any kitchen area, sleeping area, or any area containing mechanical equipment.
- b. An approved fire alarm system must be installed in centers with fifty (50) or more occupancy according to the City of Arlington's Fire Code.
- c. Fire evacuation and relocation diagrams must be conspicuously posted in all assembly rooms and classrooms.

6. Food Services

- a. A center that prepares or serves food shall comply with the pertinent food service regulations contained in the City of Arlington's Health Ordinance, Article IV – Regulation of Food Establishments (construction requirements attached.) Note: Centers that operate more than six (6) hours per day are required to provide supplemental food when children do not have sufficient dietary requirements in their meals.
- b. Centers that prepare or serve meals must employ at least one person who is certified by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) as a Certified Food Manager (CFM). See <https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/foodestablishments/cfm.shtm#apps>

7. Swimming Pools

- a. All swimming pools used by children must comply with City of Arlington's Health Ordinance, Article VII - Public Swimming Pools that regulates public and semi-public pools; as well as other City of Arlington Building Codes and applicable state laws.
- b. Plans must be submitted on newly constructed or renovated pools.
- c. The owner must obtain a permit and pay all required fees.

8. Application

- a. The permit application shall state the name, address and telephone number of the permit applicant, and the name and social security account numbers of all employees and staff members of the child care center that are in contact with the children.
- b. The permit application shall indicate the name and street and mailing address of the child care center, status of food service provided for children, times of operation and the current zoning of the property. A site plan shall be submitted, drawn to an accurate scale indicating the legal description of the property and showing the indoor and outdoor areas to be used for the child care center.
- c. The child care center applicant must have liability insurance coverage in the minimum amount of \$300,000 for each occurrence of negligence according to Chapter 42 of the Texas Human Resources Code. The policy must cover injury or death that occurs while a child is in the care of the facility and must remain in effect at all times that the center is operating.
- d. The child care center applicant must have liability insurance coverage in the minimum amount of \$300,000 combined single limit for each occurrence of bodily injury or death and property damage that occurs due to motor vehicle accident during transportation of a child. Coverage shall be provided for all owned/leased nonowned and hired vehicles to include uninsured/under-insured motorists.
- e. Applicant must possess a valid Texas Child Care Center License or Accreditation issued by Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) or has attained provisional status in order to be issued a City of Arlington Child Care Center Permit. See https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/child_care/

- f. Owner must provide proof of compliance with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) requirement for criminal history and background search for each employee.

9. Fees

- a. Upon completion of the plan review, the owner must submit a completed Child Care Center Permit Application; application fee or change of ownership fee, and annual permit fee. A permit will be issued upon compliance with the City of Arlington’s Health Ordinance requirements and payment of fees. Permit application is available at <http://www.arlington-tx.gov/cdp/environmental-health/health-permits/>

Child Care Centers		
Permit Type	Current Fee	Permit Validity
Application Fee/Plan Review Fee	\$375	Per Application
Change of Ownership	\$300	Per Application
Operating Permit Fee - With Food Service	\$400	One year from date of Issuance
Operating Permit Fee - No Food Service	\$200	Per Application
Playground Inspection Fee (per playground at facility)	\$50	Per playground at facility
Reinspection Fee	\$150	Per reinspection
Reinstatement Fee	\$75	Assess when annual renewal fee is not paid by due date
Duplicate Permit Fee	\$10	Three years from date of issuance
Child Care Worker's Permit	\$20	Three years from date of issuance

It is your responsibility to provide all the necessary information. It is your responsibility to notify all contractors and/or sub-contractors who will perform any work on your project of the requirements necessary. If these requirements are not met, a health permit will not be issued, and you will not be allowed to operate.

Please contact Health Services for more information:

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