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## CHILDCARE FACILITY PLAN REVIEW GUIDE

This construction guide should be used in conjunction with the Department of Human Services Licensing Requirements for Child Care Centers, Chapter 14 of the Oklahoma City Municipal Code, and, if outside of Oklahoma City limits, your municipality's building code to meet construction requirements. You will find this guide extremely helpful when constructing a new childcare center, renovating an existing childcare center, or renovating any structure to become a childcare center within the Oklahoma City limits and within Oklahoma County. **This guide is not all inclusive and all of the documents listed in this paragraph must be reviewed for child care construction requirements.**

Prior to beginning construction or renovation project for a childcare center or a future childcare center, you should contact the following agencies:

- Oklahoma City County Health Department, Consumer Protection Division, 425-4347
- Oklahoma City Board of Adjustments, 297-2417
- Oklahoma City Fire Department Inspection Services, 297-3584
- Oklahoma State Department of Human Services, 767-2650
- Your local municipality's building code, fire department officials and licensing authority.

Within Oklahoma City limits all plans and specifications shall be submitted to the Oklahoma City Building Plans Division, 420 W Main, Oklahoma City. Their phone number is 297-2517. Childcare centers outside of Oklahoma City limits must follow the guidance of the local building code official for plan submission.

All plans within Oklahoma City limits shall include a:

Proposed site and floor plan. Site plans shall identify the location of the playground. Floor plans must depict the location of all kitchen equipment, restroom facilities, hot water tanks, and similar plumbing fixtures.

**Additionally, all classrooms and other rooms where care is to be given must be clearly labeled with the children's age groups.**

- Listing of proposed finishing material for bathroom and kitchen walls, floors and ceilings.
- Listing of proposed equipment for the kitchen, i.e., refrigerator, freezer, stove or oven type, dishwasher model and manufacturer.
- Listing of all playground equipment with manufacturer, model number, and manufacturer's address. "Home built" playground equipment shall only be authorized upon written request and approval from the Oklahoma City County Health Department, Consumer Protection Division.

Plans for childcare centers in other municipalities should also include the information listed above; however, your local building code official may omit, add to or change any of the above requirements.



## MINIMUM FACILITY REQUIREMENTS

\*The use of mobile homes for childcare centers is prohibited. This applies even if the wheels have been removed and the mobile home is permanently situated.

### FLOORS

- Floors of all food preparation, food storage, dishwashing, and restroom areas must be constructed with smooth, durable material that is impervious to water and easily cleaned. Floors in these areas may be linoleum, tile, ceramic tile, terazzo, or sealed concrete with a paint or sealant previously approved by OCCHD.
- Carpet is not permitted in food preparation, food storage or restroom areas.
- Junctures between walls and floors must be coved and sealed. Baseboards are required in all areas.
- Pipes and other utility lines should not be exposed if possible.

### WALLS AND CEILINGS

- Should be light in color, preferably white, smooth, durable, non-absorbent, sealed and easily cleanable. Re-enforced fiberglass panel (RFP) is recommended for all areas where moisture or water might contact drywall, i.e., restrooms, kitchens, and behind and around hand wash sinks. The paneling may be installed to a 4 foot height in those areas.
- Studs, joists and rafters should not be exposed in food preparation areas.
- Any evidence of ceiling or roof leaks must be absent from the facility.

### LIGHTING

While there may or may not be illumination levels required by your municipality, the American Academy of Pediatrics, Caring For Our Children, National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs, Second Edition, states:

“Natural lighting shall be provided in rooms where children work and play for more than two hours at a time. Wherever possible, windows installed at child’s eye level shall be provided to introduce natural lighting. All areas of the facility shall have glare-free natural and/or artificial lighting that provides adequate illumination and comfort for facility activities. The following guidelines shall be used for levels of illumination:

- a. Reading, painting, and other close work areas: 50 to 100 foot-candles on the work surface;
- b. Work and play areas: 30 to 50 foot-candles on the surface;
- c. Stairs, walkways, landings, driveways, entrances; at least 20 foot-candles on the surface;
- d. Sleeping, napping areas; no more than 5 foot-candles during sleeping or napping.”



## PLUMBING

- Plumbing shall conform to the current plumbing code as adopted by your municipality and health code.
- Water supply lines or fittings for every plumbing fixture shall be installed so as to prevent backflow. This includes hose bibs on a garden hose connected to the municipal water line.
- Equipment and fixtures used for the storage and preparation of ice shall discharge through an indirect waste pipe by means of an air gap.
- An air gap between the ice storage bin and the sewer line shall be two (2) times the diameter of the ice machine discharge line but not less than one (1) inch.
- Any floor drains must be easily accessible for maintenance and cleaning and be equipped with proper strainers or drain caps.
- Consult with the plumbing inspector about whether or not a grease trap will be required.

## WATER SUPPLIES

- Potable water for the needs of the child care center shall be supplied from a source that complies with the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) laws and regulations.
- If your center will be using a well, contact the ODEQ for guidance on childcare requirements. During the licensing process you will be required to provide a "safe" well report and a safe lead quality report from ODEQ.
- Hot water should be supplied to all sinks within 45 seconds of turn-on.
- Hot water tanks shall be large enough to supply hot water to the entire facility at all times of the center operation. In some instances, more than one hot water tank may be required. If smaller hot water tanks are installed to supply water to outlying sinks, the hot water tank must be no smaller than 20 gallons per sink or as recommend by OCCHD.
- In line hot water tanks that have volumes of water less than 20 gallons but are rapid heat or instant-heat variety may be considered. However, this type of hot water tank must be able to provide hot water for 30 seconds per child provided care in the room involved. For example, if a room is determined suitable for providing care for 8 children, the hot water tank must be able to provide 4 minutes of continuous hot water.
- Hot water supply to any fixture shall be installed on the left side of the fixture.

## SEWAGE DISPOSAL

All sewage and waste water shall be disposed into a public sewage system or an individual sewage disposal system that complies with state laws and regulations.



## RESTROOMS AND TOILETS

- In general, for every toilet within a facility, you are permitted to care for 15 children. For every toilet you must have at least one sink. The sink may be located in the room where the toilet is housed or immediately outside the room housing the toilet.
- All sinks must have hot and cold running water supplied to them at all times through a mixing valve or combination type faucet. . Hot water should be supplied to all sinks within 45 seconds of turn-on.
- Metered faucets that shutoff automatically via a spring-type mechanism are not permitted.

## HANDWASHING FACILITIES

- A minimum of one hand washing sink is required in all food preparation areas. Hot water should be supplied to all sinks within 45 seconds of turn-on.
- The Oklahoma State Health Department recommends that all hand washing sinks within a food preparation area be a minimum size of eighty (80) square inches with each side at least eight (8) inches, or a diameter of ten (10) inches and at least four (4) inches deep.
- A minimum of one hand washing sink is required in all areas where children in diapers are present or given care. Sinks located in bathrooms or restrooms that open immediately into a diaper care area may be used for hand washing in these areas. However, it recommended that a sink be installed inside the room where diaper care is provided.
- All hand washing sinks shall have hot and cold running water supplied to them at all times through a mixing valve or combination type faucet. Hot water shall be supplied to all sinks within 45 seconds of turn-on.
- Metered faucets (faucets which shutoff automatically via a spring-type mechanism) are not permitted.
- Hot water supplied to hand washing sinks accessible to children shall be between 100°F and 120°F in the Oklahoma City limits. Hot water temperature requirements vary from municipality to municipality. You must review your local municipality's ordinance for child care to determine what the temperature requirements are for your municipality. If no hot water temperature requirement is found in your local ordinances, the Oklahoma State requirement is 80°F to 120°F.
- Soap and disposable towels must be provided at each hand washing sink. Disposable towels must be in a dispenser.

## FOOD PREPARATION AREAS AND KITCHENS

- Childcare centers within Oklahoma City limits must have either a 3-compartment sink with drain-boards or drying racks, or a mechanical dishwasher capable of a final rinse cycle of 180°F and heating the plate surface of utensils, pots, pans, dishes, etc to a surface temperature of 161°F or above. If a mechanical dishwasher is installed, two sinks are required. One sink will be for food preparation processes, and the other used for hand washing only.
- For childcare centers outside of Oklahoma City limits you must consult your municipality's childcare center ordinances. For your convenience, we recommend that you follow the guidance outlined for Oklahoma City in this handout.



- Regardless of municipality the center’s kitchen must have a hand wash sink for use by employees in the food preparation area. This sink should be clearly marked “For Hand Washing Only” and be supplied with paper towels in a dispenser and soap. The faucet shall be a single, mixed valve type that supplies hot and cold running water. Hot water should be supplied to this sink within 45 seconds of turn-on.
- Floors will be impervious to liquids, i.e., linoleum, tile, ceramic tile, sealed or painted concrete (approval from OCCHD required). No carpet permitted. Floors must have base boards installed in all areas.
- Walls will be impervious to liquids, i.e., enamel paint, re-enforced fiberglass paneling (RFP), etc.
- Have adequate lighting to permit ease of cleaning in all areas of the kitchen. The Oklahoma State Department of Health recommends a minimum of at least 50 foot candles on surfaces where potentially hazardous foods are prepared.
- Have adequate refrigeration capable of maintaining stored chilled foods at less than 41°F.
- Have adequate freezer capability to maintain frozen foods at or below 10°F.
- All refrigerated compartments shall have a visible thermometer and be capable of holding foods at 41°F.
- Have adequate and well-lighted dry storage areas. Foods can not be stored directly on the floor.
- \Have shelves free of contact paper. Contact paper is not permitted in the child care facility because it provides harborage areas for insects.
- Have a digital, insta-read or bi-metallic stem-type, dial thermometer for checking food temperatures during storage and preparation. The bi-metallic, stem-type, dial thermometer must have a scale of 0 to 220°F. Digital type thermometers are an excellent choice and are relatively inexpensive.

## OUTDOOR PLAY AREAS

The play area that is located outside the facility must be located in a safe location. Whenever possible it should be located as far from streets and other high traffic areas as can be done. Children should not have to cross streets or parking lots to gain access to the playground.

Additionally, the following page highlights areas of concern. The DHS publication, “Licensing Requirements for Child Care Centers”, Chapter 14 of the Oklahoma City Municipal Code and your local municipality’s ordinances for childcare facilities also contain playground requirements and must be consulted.

1. Fenced with a minimum of 4 foot (48 inches) fence as measured from the ground to the top of the fence. There should be no opening in the fence large enough for a child to escape through. Gates must have a latch and the latch must be child-proofed. The fence can be chain-link, solid wood type or any type approved by OCCHD.
2. Play equipment must be approved by OCCHD prior to opening. The best way to ensure that your equipment will be approved is to consult with the Environmental Specialist prior to purchasing or installing the equipment. Another great way to conform is to follow the guidance provided by the publication “Caring for Our Children” provided by the American Academy of Pediatrics:

“To provide safety and prevent injury, play equipment and materials in the facility shall meet the recommendations of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and the American



Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) for public playground equipment. Equipment and materials intended for gross-motor (active) play shall conform to the recommendations in the U.S. CPSC Handbook for Public Playground Safety and the provisions in the ASTM F1487-98 Consumer Safety Performance Specifications for Playground Equipment for Public Use.”

3. Any play equipment that has a play surface higher than 48 inches must have a minimum of 6 inches of approved impact absorbing material. In actuality, while 6 inches of impact material is required, up to 12 inches is recommended by CPSC for some playground equipment. Consult with the Environmental Specialist prior to purchase or installation of any impact material. They can give you more specific guidance in this area. Also, refer to your DHS publication “Licensing Requirements for Child Care Centers”, Chapter 14 of the Oklahoma City Municipal Code and your local municipality’s ordinances for childcare facilities.
4. Footers on play equipment must be under ground level and covered with impact material.
5. There must be adequate shade provided as determined by DHS.
6. Any equipment such as air conditioning units, gas meters, and electrical boxes should have a barrier to prevent access by a child.
7. Tree limbs should not be within 7 feet of any play surface. A play surface can be the top of a particular piece of equipment that a child has access to or the ground.