



Section 7  
**Facility Requirements**





## Section 7

# Facility Requirements

This section explains the specific requirements that must be met when a building or part of a building is used as a child care facility.

Regulations 13–19 deal with the requirements of the *inside* of the facility. They focus on health and safety and discuss:

- the quality of space used by children
- the amount of space required
- how much sleeping space is required
- storage space – for children's personal belongings, and for toys, materials, etc.
- requirements if animals are present in the facility
- appropriate furnishings and equipment
- sleeping equipment

Regulation 20 deals with the requirements for a safe play area and equipment *outside* the building.

# 7

**13**

A room that is used as part of a child day care facility must be dry, ventilated, lighted, sanitary, heated, in good repair and suitable for the care of children.

## Regulation 13

**Quality of Rooms Used By Children****Why**

- To ensure a healthy and safe physical environment inside a child care facility

**What it means**

- All facilities must meet or exceed the appropriate health, fire and safety requirements.
- Annual inspections by the Regional Early Childhood Officer, Fire Marshal and EHO will include checking the quality of rooms used by children. See *What to do if an inspector requires improvements* after Regulation 2(7).

**How**

- Choose an appropriate facility for a child care program. Some things to look for:
  - natural light whenever possible,
  - when artificial light is used, a level appropriate for the type of activity,
  - the ability to keep room temperature at approximately 20°C (68°F),
  - low window sills whenever possible so children can see outside,
  - windows which open to allow fresh air to enter the facility.
- Set up and follow a schedule for maintaining the facility and the equipment. For example:
  - routine maintenance – such as getting the furnace or boiler serviced,
  - repairing damages without delay – such as a broken window.
- Follow the cleaning and sanitizing schedule established
- Keep records of all facility purchases, maintenance, service work, inspections or replacements (e.g., furnace, water tank, hot water tank, air exchanger, fuel tank, plumbing, painting, etc.)
- If there is an animal in the facility make sure the animal's cage or area is well ventilated, kept clean and free from offensive odors.

**14(1)**

Every centre day care facility must have a minimum of 2.75 square metres of free and usable indoor floor area per child, based on the maximum number of children regularly attending the facility for child day care purposes.

## Regulation 14(1)

**Minimum Indoor Space in a Centre****Why**

- To ensure that children attending child care centres have enough room to engage in developmentally appropriate activities

**What it means**

- This regulation applies only to centres. (Family day home operators see Regulation 14(2).)
- Child care centres must have *at least* 2.75 square metres of *usable* indoor floor space for each child attending the facility.
- When the Director issues a license, the license states how many licensed spaces there are. Basically, 2.75 square metres of usable space = 1 licensed space = 1 child.
- The operator must not have more children in the facility at any given time than the number of licensed spaces.
- If children attend part time, then two or more children could share the same licensed space – they just can't be there at the same time.

**How**

- Measure the room, or rooms to determine how much usable space there is. Room measurements *do not* include fixed equipment, storage space or other space not used by the children including offices, staff rooms, stairways, fixed storage, hallways, washrooms, kitchen facilities, laundry facilities, and/or isolation rooms.
- Try to have more space per child than the minimum.
- Arrange furniture and equipment to create visible pathways so that children can move independently and safely from one area of the facility to the next.
- Arrange the indoor space so that:
  - children can make individual choices about their play activities,
  - there are areas for individual, small group, and large group play,
  - staff can see all areas used by children.

**14(2)**

The operator of a family home day care facility shall provide indoor play space suitable for the number, ages, and development of the children attending the facility.

Regulation 14(2)

## Indoor Play Space in a Family Day Home

### Why

- To ensure that children attending family day homes have a comfortable space where they can participate in activities that are appropriate for their developmental levels

### What it means

- This regulation applies only to operators of family day homes. (Centre operators see Regulation 14(1).)
- The family day home must be large enough and arranged so that children can:
  - move independently and safely within the family day home,
  - engage in activities that are appropriate for their age and development level.

### How

- Arrange furniture and equipment to create visible pathways so children can move independently and safely from one part of the home to another.
- Arrange the indoor space:
  - so that children can make individual choices regarding their play activities,
  - to accommodate individual, small group, and whole group activities,
  - so that you can see all of the children.
- Make sure children cannot access potentially hazardous areas of the home, such as the mechanical room, or home workshop containing tools and/or chemical products.

**15(1)**

A door that can be locked without the use of a key must not be used in an area accessible to children, unless the door can be unlocked from either side.

## Regulation 15(1)

**Doors and Locks****Why**

- To ensure that staff can easily access all children at any time and particularly in the event of an emergency
- To ensure that children cannot accidentally lock themselves in a room

**What it means**

- If a door can be locked without a key, you must be able to unlock the door from both sides.
- Annual inspections by the Regional Early Childhood Officer, Fire Marshal and EHO will include checking doors and locks. See *What to do if an inspector requires improvements* after Regulation 2(7).

**How**

- Make sure all doors that can be locked without a key can be opened and unlocked from both sides if they are in an area that children can access, including areas where children are not supposed to be.
- Limit the number of lockable doors.
- If bathroom doors have a locking mechanism, make sure that the unlocking device (pick, pin, long piece of wire) is located on a hook outside door, and out of reach of children.

## 15(2)

No room or space that is

- (a) accessible only by a ladder or folding stairs, or through a trap door; or
- (b) more than one storey below ground level is to be used for a child day care facility.

Regulation 15(2)

## Rooms or Spaces that Must Not Be Used

### Why

- To ensure that children, staff and volunteers can easily exit all areas of the child care facility in case of an emergency

### What it means

- If a facility has any room or space like those described in the shaded box, those areas cannot be used as part of the child care facility. The Director will not issue a license for these spaces.

### How

- If the facility has any room or space like those described in the shaded box, make sure there is no way for children to access the area. For example, lock it.

## 16(1)

When a child is sleeping in a sleeping area within a child day care facility, the sleeping area must not be used for meals or play activities.

Regulation 16(1)

## Designated Sleeping Area

### Why

- To ensure that children have a quiet place to sleep or rest

### What it means

- Children sleeping and resting must be separate from other activities happening in the child care facility.
- When children are sleeping, the area must not be used for any other activities. (The area can be used for other activities when children are not sleeping there.)

### How

- When children are sleeping or resting make sure there are no other activities happening in the area where they are sleeping or resting.
- If sleeping and play activity takes place in the same room set up a partition to separate the two areas to ensure quiet for sleeping children and quiet activities for the others. The partition does not need to be a floor to ceiling wall – for example, a flame retardant curtain or shelving unit (that cannot be knocked over) is acceptable.



**16(2)**

Where a sleeping area is provided within a child day care facility, the sleeping area for children under 18 months must be sufficiently separate from older children to ensure quiet sleeping accommodation.

## Regulation 16(2)

**Separate Sleeping Area for Infants****Why**

- To provide a sleeping area throughout the day that supports infants' individual sleeping routines

**What it means**

- The facility must have a separate sleeping area for infants.
- Preschoolers must have a sleeping/resting area separate from the infants sleeping area.
- Children sleeping and resting must be in separate area from other activities happening in the child care facility.

**How**

- It is recommended that there is at least 2.75 square metres of usable indoor floor space for each licensed infant space.
- It is recommended that a floor to ceiling partition is used to separate the two areas to ensure quiet for sleeping children.
- If the partition is a wall with a door that closes, ensure that there is a window on either the wall or the door that allows for visual supervision from the play room.
- Arrange the space so that visual supervision for sleeping infants is provided.
- There should be no additional items in the crib with the child and blanket. This means no stuffed toys, pillows, bumper pads or bottles.

**17(1)**

Individual lockers, cubbyholes, or hooks that are:

- (a) easily accessible to the child;
- (b) in a lighted area; and
- (c) arranged so that each child's personal belongings can be kept separate from those of other children, must be provided for.

Regulation 17(1)

## Individual Storage for Children's Belongings

### Why

- To provide each child with a place for personal belongings
- To ensure that each child's belongings are kept separate from the belongings of other children so that:
  - belongings don't get lost or mixed up
  - children learn how to take care of their own belongings
  - the risk of spreading germs is minimized

### What it means

- Each child must have a storage space that adequately holds all of their personal belongings.
- The storage space can be either a locker, or a cubbyhole or a hook.
- The storage space has to be set up so that each child's belongings can be kept separate from the belongings of other children.
- The storage space must have enough light so that children can easily see their belongings.
- The storage space must be in a location, and organized so it is easy for children to access their belongings.

### How

- Set up the individual storage area:
  - near the door where children enter and exit the facility,
  - with adequate adult supervision. Avoid areas where adults cannot see and supervise children.
- Make sure the height and organization of the individual storage area allows children to easily see and access their personal belongings.
- Label each individual storage area with a child's name.
- Store personal belongings in accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Health Officer. See *What to do if an inspector requires improvements* after Regulation 2(7).
- Ask parents to make sure that all personal belongings have the child's name on them.
- Do not exchange, or allow children to exchange, personal belongings.
- Ensure that hooks have rounded ends and are not sharp.

**17(2)**

Cupboards and other storage space that are easily accessible to children must be provided for indoor and outdoor play materials, equipment, clothing and supplies.

## Regulation 17(2)

**Storage for Play Materials, Equipment and Supplies****Why**

- To ensure that play materials, equipment, clothing and supplies are stored so that:
  - children can make their own choices about activities and equipment, whenever possible
  - children and staff know where to find things
  - children can learn how to take out and put away things
  - toys and other equipment do not become safety hazards when not in use

**What it means**

- The facility must have enough cupboards, shelves, bins, hooks and other types of storage so that all play materials, equipment, clothing and supplies, can be:
  - kept tidy and orderly,
  - easily accessed by children,
  - put away when not in use.
- This applies to both indoor and outdoor materials, equipment, clothing and supplies.

**How**

- Store all play materials, equipment, clothing and supplies so that:
  - they are close to where children actually use them,
  - children have choice, whenever possible and appropriate,
  - children can easily find and access what they need for a given activity – e.g., open shelves, materials not heaped on top of each other.
- Label all storage areas so that staff and children know where to find things.
- Teach children how to take out and put away what they need for a given activity.
- Have enough storage space so that materials and equipment in learning and activity centres can be changed regularly to allow for variety, and promote individual choice.

**18**

No animal shall be kept in a child day care facility:

- (a) except;
  - (i) with the approval from the Health Officer; and
  - (ii) in an area specifically set aside for the animal; and
- (b) unless the animal is vaccinated annually against rabies and has all other vaccinations required by a veterinarian.

## Regulation 18

**Animals****Why**

- To ensure that children are protected from potential harm from animals

**What it means**

- The operator must have written approval from the Environmental Health Officer to have an animal at the child care facility.
- The facility must have an enclosure or other area specifically for the animal.
- The operator must have written records of any required shots for the animal, on file at the facility.
- Annual inspections by the EHO will include checking the animal's enclosure and record of shots, as appropriate. See *What to do if an inspector requires improvements after Regulation 2(7)*.

**How**

- Get written approval from the EHO for the animal and the animal's cage, enclosure or area.
- Make sure the animal's shots are up-to-date, if applicable.
- Inform prospective parents and staff that there is an animal in the facility, as well as what its needs are for food, handling and general care.
- Make sure the animal's cage or area is well ventilated, clean and free from odours.
- Include care of the animal in the daily program.
- Teach children to wash their hands immediately after handling any animal.

**19(1)**

Furnishings and equipment provided for children attending a child day care facility must be

- (a) in good repair and free from sharp, loose or pointed parts;
- (b) consistent with the developmental capabilities of the children; and
- (c) available in sufficient quantity and variety to occupy all the children.

**Regulation 19(1)**

## **Appropriate, Safe, Clean Furnishings and Equipment**

**Why**

- To ensure that furnishings and equipment are safe, clean and suitable for the number, ages and development of the children who use them
- To support a quality early childhood program

**What it means**

- Furnishings mean things like furniture, carpets and curtains.
- Equipment means things like toys, games and books.
- The operator must provide furnishings and equipment that match children's development.
- There must be enough furnishings for all the children to participate in the daily program.
- There must be enough equipment for all the children to participate in the daily program.
- Furnishings and equipment must be child-size, assembled, installed and used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, properly put together, and well maintained.
- Furnishings and equipment must be cleaned and sanitized on a regular basis.
- Cleaning means removing visible dirt by wiping or scrubbing with soap and water, and then rinsing.
- Sanitizing means destroying most germs by using a mild bleach solution and leaving it on the surface for two minutes. (A mild bleach solution is 1 tablespoon bleach added to 16 cups of water.)

**How**

- Choose furnishings and equipment that support a quality daily program.
- Purchase child-size equipment and furniture. Don't "make-do" with equipment or furniture which is too big.
- When purchasing new furnishings and equipment follow the directions that come with the product – where to set it up, how to set it up, how to use it, etc.
- Use equipment for its intended purpose *only*.
- Do not let older children play on equipment that is intended for younger ones. Their extra weight could damage the equipment and injure the child.
- Check equipment regularly for loose or broken parts. Repair or replace as necessary.

- Regularly inspect all materials, toys and equipment – e.g., seasonally, or when toy washing. Repair or discard anything that is damaged.
- Follow the cleaning and sanitizing schedule for regular cleaning and sanitizing of all furnishings and equipment, and have it available for review by parents, inspectors and others.
- Make sure plastic toys which can be chewed or sucked do not contain polyvinyl chloride (PVC). Throw out any toys which do contain PVC.
- Arrange furnishings and equipment so that they support a quality daily program.

## 19 (2)

Sufficient tables and chairs of a suitable size must be provided.

## 19(3)

A high chair or an infant seat with safety harness must be provided for each child in attendance that is not able to sit independently on a chair.

Regulation 19(2) and 19(3)

## Tables, Chairs, High Chairs and Infant Seats

### Why

- To ensure there are enough child-size tables and chairs for each licensed space
- To support a quality early childhood program
- To ensure that children who cannot sit on their own have a safe chair

### What it means

- The number of tables and chairs must be appropriate for the number of licensed spaces, as well as the ages and developmental needs of the children.
- The facility must have a high chair or infant seat with safety harness for each child (licensed infant space) who cannot sit on a chair by themselves.

### How

- Use tables and chairs that are appropriately sized, sturdy and easy to clean and sanitize.
- Use high chairs and infant seats that meet the latest federal consumer product safety guidelines.
- As with all equipment, inspect tables, chairs, high chairs and infant seats regularly; repair, or discard and replace, any that are damaged.
- If high chairs and infants seats are shared between children, wash and sanitize after each use – before another child uses them.

**19(4)**

A cot, bed or sleeping mat must be provided for each child who sleeps at a child day care facility.

Regulation 19(4)

## **Sleeping Equipment including Traditional Inuit Sleeping Equipment**

### **Why**

- To ensure that all children who rest or sleep at a child care facility have appropriate individual sleeping equipment and space in which to rest or sleep. There should be one for each licensed space

### **What it means**

- The operator must provide a cot, bed, crib or sleeping mat for each child who rests or sleeps at the facility,
- The operator can use traditional Inuit sleeping arrangements, such as an amauti, if the parent:
  - gives written permission,
  - provides the necessary equipment, and
  - agrees to keep the equipment clean/sanitized, as needed.

### **How**

- Leave a minimum of 18 inches between cots, beds, cribs or sleeping mats so that children cannot touch each other.
- Use cribs that meet the latest federal consumer product safety guidelines. Do not use drop side cribs.
- Sleeping mats should be a minimum of 5 cm thick and be made of high density foam.
- Do not use bunk beds in a child care facility.
- For children using traditional Inuit sleeping methods:
  - get written permission from the parent,
  - ask the parent to provide the necessary equipment, e.g., amauti
  - find out how to safely and properly use the equipment if you don't already know how, and
  - set and follow a schedule with the parent for necessary cleaning and/or sanitizing.
- Ask the Regional Early Childhood Officer, Environmental Health Officer and Fire Marshal about further requirements of cots, beds, cribs and sleeping mats.

## 19(5)

A cot, bed, crib or sleeping mat referred to in subsection (4) must meet the requirements of the Fire Marshal and be covered with moisture resistant washable material.

Regulation 19(5)

## Fire Inspection of Sleeping Equipment

### Why

- To reduce fire and safety hazards during sleeping and rest times

### What it means

- During the annual fire inspection, the Fire Marshal will inspect cots, beds, cribs and sleeping mats. See *What to do if an inspector requires improvements* after Regulation 2(7).
- The Fire Marshal could inspect a facility at any time – not just annually as part of license renewal.
- Cots, beds, cribs or sleeping mats must be covered with material that is moisture resistant and washable.

### How

- Keep the annual fire inspection report on file at the facility.
- Replace cots, beds, cribs or sleeping mats if required by the Fire Marshal, and as needed.



**19(6)**

A clean, dry covering must be provided for each child who is sleeping or resting.

## Regulation 19(6)

**Cleanliness of Sheets and Blankets****Why**

- To provide clean bedding to children when they are resting or sleeping
- To prevent the spread of germs

**What it means**

- The operator must have enough sheets and enough blankets so that each licensed space has a sheet and blanket.
- If sheets and blanket are used by only one child they must be labeled with the name of the child, and washed once a week or more often if required.
- If sheets and blankets are used by more than one child, they must be washed after a child uses them – before any other child uses them.
- During annual inspections the Regional Early Childhood Officer and the Environmental Health Officer will check procedures for keeping sleeping equipment clean. See *What to do if an inspector requires improvements* after Regulation 2(7).

**How**

- Have enough sheets and enough blankets so that each child who rests or sleeps has his or her own sheet and blanket. This requires much less washing, and reduces the risk, even with washing, of spreading germs.
- Label each sheet and blanket with the name of the child who uses it and make sure you can still read the labels after repeated washing.
- Set up a weekly washing routine for sheets and blankets and post this in a visible location at the facility. Use a scent-free, hypoallergenic detergent.
- Wash sheets and blankets more often if they are soiled.
- If a sheet or blanket is soiled change it immediately.
- Have extra sheets and blankets on hand.
- Buy sheets and blankets that are soft and do not irritate children's skin.
- If a sheet or blanket is used by more than one child wash it after a child uses it – before any other child uses it.
- If a child brings a personal belonging to use during nap time, e.g., stuffed animal, it should be stored in a clean bag in the child's individual cubby or locker to prevent the spread of germs and sent home weekly for cleaning and sanitizing.

## Recommended

A cot, bed, crib, amauti or sleeping mat:

- (a) if used by only one child, must be clearly labeled with the name of the child and must be washed and sanitized once a week, or more frequently if required; or
- (b) if used by more than one child, must be washed and sanitized between uses.

## Recommendation

# Cleanliness of Sleeping Equipment

## Why

- To ensure that cots, beds, cribs and sleeping mats are clean
- To reduce the risk of spreading germs

## What it means

- If a cot, bed, crib, amauti or sleeping mat is used by only one child, the operator must label it with the child's name, and wash and sanitize it once a week, or more often if necessary.
- If a cot, bed, crib or sleeping mat is used by more than one child it must be washed and sanitized after a child uses it – before any other child uses it.
- During the annual inspection the Regional Early Childhood Officer and Environmental Health Officer will check procedures for keeping sleeping equipment clean and sanitized. See *What to do if an inspector requires improvements after Regulation 2(7)*.

## How

- If you have room, provide cots, beds, cribs or sleeping mats that are used by only one child. This requires much less washing and sanitizing, and reduces the risk, even with washing and sanitizing, of spreading germs.
- If cots, beds, cribs or sleeping mats are used by only one child, label each one with the name of the child who uses it. Make sure you can read the labels.
- Set up a weekly washing and sanitizing routine for cots, beds, cribs and sleeping mats and post this in a visible location at the facility.
- If a cot, bed, crib or sleeping mat is used by more than one child wash and sanitize it after a child uses it – before any other child uses it.

**20(1)**

Every operator shall provide safe outdoor play space.

## Regulation 20(1)

**Outdoor Play Space and Equipment****Why**

- To minimize the risk of injuries and accidents to children during outdoor play times
- To support a quality early childhood program

**What it means**

- The operator must provide an outdoor play space that meets the space and safety requirements.
- The outdoor play space must be safe – shock absorbent surfaces, free of hazards.
- The equipment in the outdoor place space must be safe – properly installed, maintained and used for the purpose intended by the manufacturer. Play structures should be appropriate for children's developments.
- During annual inspections the Regional Early Childhood Officer and the Environmental Health Officer will check the outdoor place space and equipment. See *What to do if an inspector requires improvements* after Regulation 2(7).

**How**

- If building a new play space it should meet the criteria of the Canadian Standards Association (CSA).
- Aim to upgrade existing outdoor play space and structure to meet CSA criteria over time. Follow the list called "Check your playground".
- Set up and follow a routine for regular inspection and maintenance of the outdoor space and equipment.
- Remove hazards immediately – e.g., broken glass.
- Remove and/or repair and/or replace damaged equipment immediately.
- Keep a record of the maintenance schedule.
- Keep a record of injuries and accidents that occur during outdoor play to determine if there is any piece of equipment, or area of the outdoor play space where accidents and injuries are more common. Remove the equipment, or try to modify the accident-prone area.
- Choose outdoor play equipment that meets the developmental needs of children, including children with disabilities.
- In addition to regular inspections and routine maintenance, perform a quick check of the outdoor play space and equipment, before children use them, each time.

**20(2)**

Where the outdoor place space is not adjacent to the child day care facility, the operator shall:

- (a) provide safe access to the space; and
- (b) ensure that the space is within walking distance of the facility.

Regulation 20(2)

## Outdoor Play Space Not Next to the Building

### Why

- To ensure the safety of children travelling to and using outdoor play spaces away from the child care facility

### What it means

- If the outdoor play space is not beside the building, it must be within walking distance.
- The operator must establish a procedure for safely taking children to the outdoor place space.
- The play space and equipment should be suitable for the number of children, their age and development. Proper supervision is always required.
- If the area around the play space is potentially dangerous – such as a busy street or steep drop – the play space must be fenced.

### How

- Ensure that the play space and equipment are suitable for the age of children at the facility. Check with your Regional Early Childhood Officer if you're not sure.
- Develop a procedure for safely taking children to an outdoor play space not beside the child care facility. This includes:
  - having written parental permission in each child's file to take children to an outdoor play area,
  - stating how children will actually get to the play area – e.g., stroller, hold the rope, hold hands, etc.,
  - posting a schedule of outdoor play times on the information board,
  - posting a map of outdoor play areas near the facility on the information board,
  - ensuring that staff carry with them to the play area:
    - > parent and emergency contact numbers,
    - > emergency medication such as EpiPens and puffers,
    - > a list of the children in the group,
    - > the daily attendance record,
    - > a first aid kit,
    - > a cell phone, if applicable.

- Include the procedure in the parent information handbook.
- If the play area does not have washroom and washing facilities make sure children use the bathroom before going to the play area.
- Make sure children have proper clothing for the weather – e.g., sun hats, rain coats, winter clothing – and have clean extras on hand for children who need them.
- Use sun screen provided by the child's parent on sunny days.
- Use children's insect repellent provided by the child's parent as necessary.

**20(3)**

Where the outdoor play space is adjacent to the child day care facility,

the operator shall ensure that:

- (a) a minimum of 5m<sup>2</sup> of play space is provided for each child; and
- (b) the space is fenced if the surrounding environment is potentially hazardous to children.

Regulation 20(3)

## Outdoor Play Space Next to a Centre

### Why

- To ensure that children attending child care facilities have enough room for developmentally appropriate outdoor play
- To ensure that children cannot access any hazards surrounding the play area

### What it means

- The amount of outdoor play space must be at least 5 square metres for each child in the play area.
- The operator cannot have more children in the outdoor play space than this regulation allows. This may mean that there is more than one outdoor play period if the space cannot accommodate all children at once.
- If there are any potential hazards to children in the area surrounding the outdoor play space, the play space must have a fence that is at least 1.5 metres high.

### How

- Measure the space to see how many children can play at the same time and make sure that the number of children in the play space does not exceed that limit.
- There are no federally approved standards for playground fences. The following would ensure that the fence is safe:
  - completely encloses the play area – all four sides,
  - is constructed so it is difficult for children to climb,
  - has a gap under the fence no more than 5 cm (2 in) all the way around,
  - if constructed with vertical rails, has rails that are less than or equal to 10 cm (4 in) apart,
  - if constructed with chain link fencing, has chain link openings less than or equal to 3.8 cm (1.5 in),
  - has self-closing, self-latching gates that open out (away from the playground) and are difficult for children to climb.
- If there are any questions or concerns about possible hazards, and the need for a fence, talk to your Regional Early Childhood Officer. Don't wait for the annual inspection.