

## Child Care Facilities

This brochure provides general guidelines for building code requirements for child care facility.

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*"This information is provided for convenience only and is not in substitution of applicable City Bylaws or Provincial or Federal Codes or laws. You must satisfy yourself that any existing or proposed construction or other works complies with such Bylaws, Codes or other laws."*

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### Other brochures related to this topic

- [New Businesses](#)
- [Tenant Improvement Permits](#)
- [Children and Child Care](#)
- [Child Care Planning Resource Package](#)

### Family Child Care up to 8 children within a dwelling unit

Family Child Care with up to 8 children including any preschool children of the resident operated within a dwelling unit is considered as part of the residential use (Group C).

Unless physical modifications to the building are contemplated no building permit is required. An inspection will be undertaken by the Fire Department. Additional smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms and fire extinguishers may be required. Code and Bylaw infractions identified in the course of this inspection may require correction under appropriate permits.

Child Care with over 8 children operated within a dwelling unit is not considered as part of the residential use and is subjected to all the requirements stated below.

Child care facilities are not permitted in buildings containing secondary suites.

### Child Care over 8 children or operated in buildings other than dwelling units

A Child Care Centre other than those stated above is considered assembly occupancy (Group A, Division 2).

The relaxation in the BC Building Code to classify an assembly occupancy (Group A Division 2) with occupant load not exceeding 30 as a personal services occupancy (Group D) would not apply to Child Care Centres since the relaxation is intended for small restaurants and adult vocational schools.

Effective 2014 December 19 if the Child Care Centre serves children under 30 months old the following additional requirements would apply:

- The building must be sprinklered throughout or the child care centre must have exterior exits at ground level.
- The building must have a fire alarm system if building contains one or more other suites or the child care centre shares an interior common egress with other suites.

## **New Child Care Building**

New Child Care building, including pre-fabricated modular building, has to comply with all the requirements in Part 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 of the BC Building Code. Drawings submitted for building permit application shall be signed and sealed by professionals of all disciplines with appropriate Letters of Assurance. Underground electrical service is also required.

## **Upgrading of existing building**

The BC Building Code applies to existing building when an owner wishes to rehabilitate a building, change its use, or build an addition.

An existing building may have to be upgraded to full compliance with all appropriate requirements of the BC Building Code in order to accommodate a Child Care Centre. Such upgrades may include (but not limit to) the following:

- fire separations between the child care and other occupancies/tenants, exit stairs and service room
- fire-rated floors and loadbearing structural members and walls
- fire dampers on all ducts
- fire stops to all penetrations of fire separations
- spatial separation (including amount of windows facing the property line and type of cladding)
- exit doors to swing in the direction of exit travel
- fire alarm system
- emergency lighting
- sprinkler system
- size of water service
- interconnected hard wired smoke and or CO detector
- structural floor loading and seismic upgrades
- access and washroom for disabled persons
- electrical, plumbing and mechanical services

It is highly recommended that a professional, such as architect or professional engineer is engaged to review the building for code compliance prior to signing a lease or purchasing a property.

Permits are required to carry out all upgrades. Drawings submitted for permit application must be signed and sealed by Registered Professionals, such as architects and professional engineers with appropriate Letters of Assurance.

## **Further Information**

If you have any questions please contact the Building Department at 604-294-7130.