

City of Arlington

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 childcare facility. 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. All building permits can be applied for online, please visit www.ArlingtonPermits.com.

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 Planning and Development Services 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.

Please visit [Arlington's Building Codes](#) for additional information

1) Space And Design

- There must be at least thirty (30) square feet of indoor activity space per child.
- 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.
- An area must be provided to isolate children with symptoms of communicable disease from other children at the center.
- All outer openings must be pest proof including doors and windows.

2) Playground Areas

- A fence must enclose outdoor play areas not less than four feet (4') in height.
- Playground equipment must be constructed with no sharp edges, dangerous protrusions, or other hazards, and designed to protect against entrapment.
- 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](#)
- Any pool, pond, or other body of water greater than two feet (2') in depth must be separated from a playground by a fence no less than four feet (4') 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.
- 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](#) and/or [U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission Handbook for Public Playground Safety](#)
 - 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.

3) Furnishings

- 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

- Toilet fixtures and facilities must be provided in accordance with the International Plumbing Code (IPC) as adopted in the City of Arlington's Plumbing Code. (Consult Child Care Licensing for number required.)
- 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 120o

- All diaper changing 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.
- Properly constructed diaper changing stations should be provided. Floor mats are not adequate changing areas.
- Toilet facilities, including diaper change areas, must be constructed with smooth, easily cleanable walls, ceilings, floors, and work surfaces.
- Permanent signs must be conspicuously posted in restrooms and food service areas reminding all people to wash their hands.

5) Smoke Detectors - Fire Alarm Systems

- 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.
- Fire evacuation and relocation diagrams must be conspicuously posted in all assembly rooms and classrooms.

6) Food Services

- 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.
- 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 \(CFM\)](#).

7) Swimming Pools

- 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.
- Plans must be submitted on newly constructed or renovated pools.
- The owner must obtain a permit and pay all required fees.

8) Application

- 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 childcare center that are in contact with the children.
- 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 childcare center, and with each room labeled with the children's ages.
- The childcare 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 always remain in effect that the center is operating.
- The childcare 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 nonowner and hired vehicles to include uninsured/under-insured motorists.
- 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 to be issued a City of Arlington Child Care Center Permit.
- 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 employe

9) Fees

- 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. Application can be found on www.ArlingtonPermits.com

Permit Type

- **Application Fee/Plan Review Fee:** \$425 per application
- **Change of Ownership:** \$350 per application
- **Operating Permit Fee with Food Service:** \$425 per application
- **Operating Permit Fee with No Food Service:** \$275 per application
- **Playground Inspection Fee:** \$50 per playground at facility
- **Reinstatement Fee:** \$125
- **Child Care Worker's Permit:** \$20

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.

For **additional information**, please call 817-459-6693 or email HealthPermits@ArlingtonTx.gov
To **visit** our website: www.ArlingtonTx.gov/HealthServices