



***CAL FIRE***

**NAPA COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT**

**FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE**

**MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR  
LARGE FAMILY DAY CARE HOMES**

## **PURPOSE:**

The following guideline is intended to ensure compliance with the appropriate requirements for residential large family daycare facilities. Regulations regarding residential daycare facilities can be found in the California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 19, 2019 California Fire Code (CFC), 2019 California Building Code (CBC), 2019 California Residential Code (CRC), and the California Health and Safety Code (H&SC)

## **SCOPE:**

This guideline applies to licensed facilities classified as large family daycare by the Department of Social Services. These facilities may house up to 14 children for less than 24 hours, and are located in an R-3 (single family residence) or R-2 (multifamily residential building) occupancy. This guideline applies only to facilities located within the jurisdiction of Napa County Fire Marshals Office. This document does not include all regulations that may apply to homes used for large family daycare—it is only intended to provide guidance on issues and questions commonly encountered during fire clearance inspections.

## **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

### **ACCESS ROADS AND ADDRESS NUMBERS:**

1. Provide required access roads from the building to the public street with all-weather hard surfaced material.
2. Install address numbers which are a minimum of four inches in height and contrasting in color to the background. Numbers shall be clearly visible from both sides of the street.

### **ABATEMENT:**

1. Abate weeds, rubbish, trash, grass, vegetation, or other material that is dangerous or injurious to property, health, or welfare.
2. Remove that portion of any tree which extends within 10 feet of the outlet of any chimney or stovepipe.
3. Cut and remove all dead or dying portions of trees located adjacent to or overhanging any building.
4. Maintain the roof of any structure free of leaves, needles, or other dead vegetative growth.

### **SUPERVISION AND DAY CARE ACTIVITIES:**

Provide competent adult persons who shall give an alarm in the event of fire, assist the occupants of the building to safety, and take other action as necessary.

### **FIRE EXTINGUISHERS, FIRE ALARM, SMOKE DETECTORS, FIRE DRILL LOG, EVACUATION:**

1. Smoking is prohibited on the premises of a family childcare home.
2. Provide and maintain a minimum 2A-10BC rated fire extinguisher mounted three to five feet high (measured from the floor to the top of the handle) near the main entry to the day care center. Fire extinguishers shall be serviced annually by a licensed fire extinguisher company and provided with a state fire marshal tag.

3. Every family day care home shall provide permanent notification device for sounding and notifying all occupants to evacuate the building. Notification device should be near the main entry door.
4. Large family day care homes shall be equipped with single-station residential type smoke detectors, which are approved by the state fire marshal. The number and placement of detectors shall be determined by the enforcement agency.
5. Provide for and log monthly fire drills. Log shall include the following information: date, time, number of children present, and alarm device sounded.
6. Post a drawing of the dwelling that shows the entire house, the area to be used for day care, location of exits, fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, water heater, and heating appliances.
7. Provide a telephone (party lines are not allowed). Emergency phone numbers and address shall be posted on or near the phone.
8. Provide a disaster plan, near the telephone, which gives the following information:
  - In emergency dial 9-1-1.
  - What to do in event of an earthquake.
  - What to do in event of a fire.
  - Identify all the exits in the house.
  - Describe a central meeting place outside.
  - Emergency information card.

#### **GAS WATER HEATERS, FURNACES, FIREPLACES AND WOODSTOVES:**

1. Every unenclosed gas fire water heater or furnace which is within the area used for child care shall be protected in such a way as to protect children from making contact with those appliances. Exception: This does not apply to kitchen stoves or ovens.
2. Gas appliances shall be connected to the gas supply by approved connectors and vented approved flues in conformance with the Mechanical Code.
3. Heating appliances shall be listed by the American Gas Association or other recognized testing agency. The heating element or combustion chamber in any such appliance shall be permanently guarded so as to prevent accidental contact by any person or material.
4. Provide a barrier for fireplaces, woodstoves, and heaters. A screen is acceptable for fireplaces.
5. Maintain chimney in a safe condition. Provide and maintain at all times a screen over the outlet of every chimney or stovepipe that is attached to any fire place, stove, or other device that burns any solid or liquid fuel. The screen shall be constructed of nonflammable material with openings of not more than ½ inch in size.
6. Remove combustibles and storage from heater areas.
7. Fuel fire/heating equipment shall be operating properly with air gas combustion properly burning. Check pilot light for blue flame burning straight up. Clean air filters when clogged or dirty.
8. Unvented kerosene heaters are not permitted. Gas heaters shall be permanently installed and properly vented.

#### **ELECTRICAL:**

1. Extension cords shall not be used as a substitute for permanent wiring.

2. Extension cords are permitted only with portable appliances or fixtures, while in immediate use, in accordance with the following:

- Each extension cord shall be plugged directly into an approved receptacle and shall, except for approved multi-plug extension cords, service only one appliance or fixture.
- The current capacity of the cord shall be not less than the rated capacity of the appliance or fixtures.
- The extension cord is maintained in good condition without splices, deterioration or damage.
- The extension cord is of the grounded type when servicing grounded appliances or fixtures.

3. Extension cords and flexible cords shall not be affixed to structures, extend through walls, ceilings, floors, under doors or floor coverings, nor be subject to environmental damage or physical impact.

4. A minimum of 30 inches of clearance shall be provided in front of electrical control panels for access.

5. The use of surge protectors is recommended instead of extension cords.

#### **COMBUSTIBLE AND FLAMMABLE LIQUID STORAGE:**

1. Quantities not exceeding ten gallons are permitted for maintenance purposes and operation of equipment when stored in approved containers and located in a private garage or approved location.

2. Storage of class I, II, or III-A liquids in excess of 10 gallons shall be in storage cabinets which comply with 2019 California Fire Code.

#### **POISONS AND FIREARMS:**

1. Poisons, detergents, cleaning compounds, medications, firearms, and other items, which could pose a danger if readily available to children, shall be stored where they are inaccessible to children.

2. Storage areas for poisons, firearms and other dangerous weapons shall be locked.

#### **EXITS:**

1. Provide for two exits, one of which may be a manually operated horizontal sliding door. Exits may pass through kitchens. Doors must be operable without a key, special knowledge, or effort. Where basements are used for day care purposes, one of the two required exits shall open directly to the exterior of the building without entering the first floor. Doors to sleeping areas and bathrooms shall also be operable without a key, special knowledge, or effort.

2. A dedicated exit shall be maintained thru one of the side yards.

Horizontal blinds or other window treatments, which would impede emergency evacuation, are prohibited.

3. Exit doors shall not be equipped with any dead bolts, hook and eye, chains, or any other locking device. If necessary, repair doors so they open and close freely.

4. Required exits from the large family day care may not pass through a garage.

**OCCUPANCY:**

1. The occupancy separation between the house and the garage shall comply with the 2019 California Building Code.
2. Daycare activities shall not be conducted in garages.
3. Daycare activities shall not be conducted above the first story except in buildings of Type I and Type II Fire resistive construction unless the building is equipped with an automatic fire sprinkler system. The first story is the floor used for residential occupancy nearest the street level that provides primary access to the building.
4. Daycare activities shall be confined to areas approved by the Division.
5. Christmas trees must be flame-retardant treated by a state licensed concern and bear a tag stating the method of treatment.
6. Maintain building in a neat and orderly manner, free from any condition that would create a fire or life hazard or a condition which would add to or contribute to the rapid spread of fire.
7. Remove obstructions from all exits or hallways.
8. Where children less than five years old are in care, stairs shall be fenced or barricaded.

**POOLS AND OUTDOOR PLAY AREAS:**

1. Areas used for daycare activities whether outside or inside the building shall be isolated from swimming pools, in-ground or above-ground, fixed in place wading pools, hot tubs, spas, fish ponds and similar bodies of water, with a pool cover or by a fence not less than five feet in height.
2. Fences shall be constructed so that the fence does not obscure the pool from view.
3. Gates shall be self-closing, self-latching and swing away from the pool. Latches shall not be more than 6 inches from the top of the gate.
4. Pool covers shall be strong enough to completely support the weight of an adult and shall be placed on the pool and locked while the pool is not in use.
5. Outdoor play areas shall be either fenced or supervised by the licensee or caregiver. Where natural or man-made hazards such as canals, cliffs, condemned buildings, creeks, ditches, lakes, ocean fronts, mines, power lines, quarries, rivers, ravines, swamps, watercourses, and areas subject to flooding, lie on or adjacent to the facility premises, the outdoor play area shall be inaccessible to such hazards by means of a fence.

**PERMITS:**

1. Building, electrical and other permits are required to remodel buildings or convert garages to family rooms or rooms used for daycare. Contact Napa County Building Division for additional information.

Building permits active at time of large family day care fire clearance inspection may be required to have final inspection approval prior to fire clearance approval.

For further questions or clarification please call (707)299-1464.