

## Child Day Care Requirement Guidelines

The process for obtaining a Certificate of Occupancy for a Day Care requires that you submit a building permit application for a Change of Use – either to E (educational) Occupancy or I-4 (institutional) Occupancy. See code definitions below.

The following is a summary of the two paths the building code offers for a day care use:

The building code uses the number of children under the age of 30 months to determine which Certificate of Occupancy can be issued. 100 is always the maximum.

An E occupancy is limited to children over 30 months, unless these younger children are cared for in rooms that have exits directly to exterior grade level.

An I-4 occupancy can support up to 100 small children, but typically full sprinkler and fire alarm coverage is required.

### **Day Care decision matrix.**

Utilizing an existing building for private child care:

Does the facility have sprinklers and fire alarms?

Y – The area will likely qualify for I-4 occupancy and will support up to 100 children under the age of 30 months.

N – It will be limited to 5 children under the age of 30 months. However, this limit does not apply when these childcare rooms are served by doors that exit directly to the exterior and are at ground level. This would still qualify for E occupancy.

Applicant must supply:

1. A floor plan that shows each room and the number and ages of the children proposed for that room.
2. Indicate the associated exits and whether they are at ground level.
3. Detail location of Emergency exit signs & lighting units, Fire Extinguishers.
4. Indicate if Automatic Sprinkler and Fire Alarms are present with current maintenance certifications.

A final inspection of the facility to verify exits and safety features must be performed before a CO can be issued.

Any alterations proposed to the interior or exterior of the building must be designed and sealed by a professional architect or engineer. Additional inspections will also be required.

NOTE: This information is provided to help answer general questions. Specific questions about an existing facility's suitability to support a Day Care operation should be directed to a design professional. There are some exceptions that can be exercised with the proper design. But again, that will require the support of a design professional.

## **Reference Codes**

### **2018 IBC**

**305.2 Group E, day care facilities.** This group includes buildings and structures or portions thereof occupied by more than five children older than 2½ years of age who receive educational, supervision or *personal care services* for fewer than 24 hours per day.

**308.5 Institutional Group I-4, day care facilities.** Institutional Group I-4 occupancy shall include buildings and structures occupied by more than five persons of any age who receive *custodial care* for fewer than 24 hours per day by persons other than parents or guardians, relatives by blood, marriage or adoption, and in a place other than the home of the person cared for. This group shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

Adult day care

Child day care

**308.5.1 Classification as Group E.** A child day care facility that provides care for more than five but not more than 100 children 2½ years or less of age, where the rooms in which the children are cared for are located on a *level of exit discharge* serving such rooms and each of these child care rooms has an *exit* door directly to the exterior, shall be classified as Group E.

## Sprinkler

[F] **903.2.3 Group E.** An *automatic sprinkler system* shall be provided for Group E occupancies as follows:

1. Throughout all Group E *fire areas* greater than 12,000 square feet (1115 m<sup>2</sup>) in area.

[F] **903.2.6 Group I.** An *automatic sprinkler system* shall be provided throughout buildings with a Group I *fire area*.

### Exceptions:

1. An *automatic sprinkler system* installed in accordance with Section 903.3.1.2 shall be permitted in Group I-1 Condition 1 facilities.

2. An *automatic sprinkler system* is not required where Group I-4 day care facilities are at the *level of exit discharge* and where every room where care is provided has not fewer than one exterior exit door.

3. In buildings where Group I-4 day care is provided on levels other than the *level of exit discharge*, an *automatic sprinkler system* in accordance with Section 903.3.1.1 shall be installed on the entire floor where care is provided, all floors between the level of care and the *level of exit discharge*, and all floors below the *level of exit discharge* other than areas classified as an open parking garage.

## Fire Alarm

[F] **907.2.3 Group E.** A manual fire alarm system that initiates the occupant notification signal utilizing an emergency voice/alarm communication system meeting the requirements of Section 907.5.2.2 and installed in accordance with Section 907.6 shall be installed in Group E occupancies. When *automatic sprinkler systems* or smoke detectors are installed, such systems or detectors shall be connected to the building fire alarm system.

### Exceptions:

1. A manual fire alarm system is not required in Group E occupancies with an *occupant load* of 50 or less.

2. Emergency voice/alarm communication systems meeting the requirements of Section 907.5.2.2 and installed in accordance with Section 907.6 shall not be required in Group E occupancies with occupant loads of 100 or less, provided that activation of the manual fire alarm system initiates an *approved* occupant notification signal in accordance with Section 907.5.

3. Manual fire alarm boxes are not required in Group E occupancies where all of the following apply:

3.1. Interior *corridors* are protected by smoke detectors.

3.2. Auditoriums, cafeterias, gymnasiums and similar areas are protected by *heat detectors* or other *approved* detection devices.

3.3. Shops and laboratories involving dusts or vapors are protected by *heat detectors* or other *approved* detection devices.

4. Manual fire alarm boxes shall not be required in Group E occupancies where all of the following apply:

4.1. The building is equipped throughout with an *approved automatic sprinkler system* installed in accordance with Section 903.3.1.1.

4.2. The emergency voice/alarm communication system will activate on sprinkler waterflow.

4.3. Manual activation is provided from a normally occupied location.