

Common Building Code Requirements for Day Care Facilities - Sioux Falls, SD

The following specifies minimum standards which are required by locally adopted building codes for a childcare facility.

A Group E occupancy is defined as a building or structure that provides education, supervision, or personal care services for more than 12 children older than 2-1/2 years of age.

A facility that provides supervision and personal care for more than five children 2-1/2 years of age or less shall be classified as Group I-4.

Allowable Area of Limitations

Based on conventional, combustible, non-fire-resistive construction, the basic allowable area for a Group E occupancy is 9,500 square feet per story (without increases for yards or a sprinkler system). A Group I-4 occupancy is allowed 9,000 square feet per story (without increases for yards or a sprinkler system).

Allowable Height Limitations

The basic allowable height for a Group E or I-4 is one story. Modifications are allowed with the installation of an approved automatic sprinkler system.

Location on Property

In a Group E or I-4 occupancy where the exterior wall is less than 10 feet to an adjacent property line, the exterior walls must be constructed as a one-hour fire-resistive assembly. When the exterior wall is 3 feet or less from the adjacent property line, no openings are allowed in the exterior wall. When the exterior wall is greater than 3 feet (up to 5 feet) from the adjacent property line, no unprotected openings are allowed, and 15% of the wall may have protected openings. When the exterior wall is 5 feet or greater (up to 10 feet) from the adjacent property line, a total of 10% of the wall may have unprotected openings, and a total of 25% of the wall area may include protected openings.

Occupancy Separations

A childcare facility in a multi-tenant building may be required to maintain a two-hour, fire-resistive fire barrier between the facility and adjacent occupancies (such as offices, apartments, retail, etc.). A higher fire-resistive separation will be required for a more hazardous adjacent occupancy.

Basement Requirements

The maximum common path of travel for a basement shall not exceed 75 feet. The common path of travel is that portion of the exit access that the occupants are required to traverse before two separate and distinct paths of egress travel to two exits are available.

A basement used for childcare that has an occupant load greater than ten is required to have 2 exits

from the basement.

For an E occupancy in a basement that is not considered a level of exit discharge, an automatic sprinkler system shall be installed throughout the fire area.

An I-4 occupancy in a basement that is not considered a level of exit discharge must be sprinklered throughout the entire first floor and the basement.

Exits

The occupant load determines the exiting requirements and must be calculated at one occupant for every 35 net square feet of floor area.

Two separate exits are required for a Group E occupancy when the occupant load is 50 or more, or where the common path of egress travel is greater than 75 feet. If there is a second story, two exits are required, no matter what the occupant load is.

In a Group I-4 occupancy, if the occupant load is over 10, or where the common path of egress travel is greater than 75 feet 2 exits are required.

If there is a second story, two exits are required, no matter what the occupant load is.

Restroom Fixtures

One restroom of each sex is required when the occupant load exceeds 15. The occupant loads referred to below are based on 35 square feet of net floor area per person.

In a Group E occupancy:

- One toilet of each sex shall be installed for every 50 occupants or fraction thereof.
- One drinking fountain shall be installed for every 100 occupants or fraction thereof.
- One lavatory shall be installed for every 50 occupants or fraction thereof.

In a Group I-4 occupancy:

- One toilet of each sex shall be installed for each 15 occupants or fraction thereof.
- One drinking fountain shall be installed for every 100 occupants or fraction thereof.
- One lavatory shall be installed for every 15 occupants or fraction thereof.
- A minimum of one bathtub or shower is required.
- One service/mop sink is required.

Automatic Fire Extinguishing Systems

In a Group E occupancy, an automatic sprinkler system shall be installed throughout a fire area that exceeds 12,000 square feet or if the fire area is above or below the level of exit discharge.

An automatic sprinkler system shall be provided throughout the entire building with a Group I-4 occupancy.

Fire Prevention Standards

Fire extinguishers must rate a minimum of 2A and must be able to service a maximum of 1,500 square feet. The distance to an extinguisher from any point in the space should not be greater than 75 feet.

Accessibility

Access by means of a ramp or elevator must be provided for people with physical disabilities in a childcare facility. Toilet rooms and other facilities must additionally be designed for utilization by people with disabilities.

If you have any questions concerning childcare facilities, please call 367-8670 or stop into the Building Services Office on the ground floor of City Center.