



City of Chico Fire Department

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LARGE FAMILY DAY CARE REQUIREMENTS

Definition: Home licensed to provide day care less than 24 hours per day for fourteen or fewer children, in the providers own residence. 2019 California Fire Code (CFC), California Building Code (CBC) and California Residential Code (CRC).

Licensed large and small family child care homes are allowed in single-family homes, apartments, condos, townhouses, duplexes, and all other multi-family buildings (R-2 & R-3 occupancies). This is allowed by state law. Health & Safety Code Sections 1597.45 and 1596.78.

No local jurisdiction shall impose a business license, fee, or tax for the privilege of operating a family child care home.

1. Smoke Alarms

Install single station smoke alarms in each room used for sleeping purposes and on the ceiling or wall outside of each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of bedrooms. In multi-level dwellings and dwellings with basements, a detector shall be installed on each story and in the basement. CFC 907.2.10.2

2. Manual Fire Alarm Box

Every large family day care home shall be provided with at least one manual fire alarm box at a location approved by the Fire Inspector. This device shall activate a fire alarm signal, which shall be audible throughout the facility at a minimum level of 15 dB above ambient noise level. These devices need not be interconnected to any other fire alarm device, have a control panel or be electrically supervised or provided with emergency power. Such device shall be attached to the structure and must be a device that is listed and approved by the Office of the State Fire Marshal. CFC 907.2.6.4

3. Carbon Monoxide Alarms

Carbon monoxide alarms in dwelling units shall be installed and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's published instructions in the following locations: 1. Outside of each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms. 2. On every occupiable level of a dwelling unit, including basements. 3. Where a fueled-burning appliance is located

within a bedroom or its attached bathroom, a carbon monoxide alarm shall be installed within the bedroom.

4. **Fire Drills**

A fire drill shall be conducted at least once every 6 months and a record maintained and available onsite. Health & Safety Code § 1597.54.

5. **Fire Extinguishers**

- a) Provide (1) 2A:10BC rated fire extinguisher, mounted three and one-half to five feet from the floor and located near the kitchen area. Extinguisher(s) shall be serviced yearly, when pressure is low, and/or after use. CFC 906 and CBC 455
- b) The fire extinguisher must be accessible and easily visible.

6. **Exits**

- a) Every story or basement of a large family day care home shall be provided with two exits which are remotely located from each other. Every required exit shall be of a size to permit the installation of a door not less than 32 inches in clear width and not less than 6 feet 8 inches in height. A manually operated horizontal sliding door may be used as one of the two required exits. Exit doors, including manually operated horizontal sliding doors, shall be openable from the inside without use of a key or any special knowledge or effort. CBC 1006.2.2.7
- b) Rooms used for day care purposes shall not be located above the first story. CBC 1006.2.2.7
Exception: Buildings equipped with an automatic sprinkler system throughout and which have at least one of the required exits providing access directly to the exterior. NFPA 13R may be used in large family day care homes. The sprinkler omissions of NFPA 13R shall not apply unless approved by the enforcing agency.

7. **Additional Areas of Concern**

- a) Storage of combustibles in water heater closets (including accumulation of lint and spider webs) is not permitted. CFC 305.1
- b) Electrical extension cords are not to be used. Cords on appliances will be checked. CFC 604.5
- c) Every unenclosed gas-fired water heater or furnace which is within the area used for child care shall be protected in such a way as to prevent children from making contact with those appliances, does not apply to kitchen stoves or ovens. CBC 455.7
- d) Properly store flammable or combustible liquids in safety cans away from sources of ignition, i.e., gasoline next to water heater. CFC Chapter 57
- e) Garages cannot be used for a day care unless they have been permitted to be used as an occupied space. Typically, garages are used to park vehicles, contain storage, water heaters, A.C. and heating furnace, washers and dryers all which could be an inherent

hazard to the children if used as a play area. Since the garage is not considered a habitable area of the home and is not considered as part of the square footage of the home the garage should not be utilized as part of the family day care unless it has been converted through a building permit as a habitable space

f) Garage fire door separation shall be a self-closing and self-latching, tight fitting solid-wood door 1-3/8 inches in thickness, or a self-closing tight-fitting door having a fire protection rating of not less than twenty (20) minutes rating. CBC 406.3.2.1

PERMITS: Building, electrical and other permits are required to remodel buildings or convert garages to family rooms or rooms used for daycare. Contact the City 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

If you have any questions or concerns please contact the Fire Prevention Division at (530) 897-3400 or chicofire@chicoca.gov.

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