



Guide for Family Daycare Facilities

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INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE

Dear Daycare Owner:

The Greenfield Fire Department (GFD) has developed this guide to assist daycare owners in maintaining good fire and life safety practices. We inspect your facility as required by Title 24. Daycare activities shall be confined to the area(s) approved by the Fire Department. Licensed large and small family child care homes are allowed in single-family homes, apartments, condos, townhouses, duplexes, and other multi-family buildings. This is allowed by state law. Health and Safety Code Sections [1597.45](#) and [1596.78](#).

In this guide, you will find a list of required items that will be checked during the inspection. Several items reflect possible hazards, both inside and outside the structure(s). Violations noted will be reviewed with the owner who is required to correct the violations. The length of time given to correct the violation will depend upon the circumstances and severity of the violation and the hazard it creates.

By using this guide, owners will have a better understanding of fire department concerns, and help you to ensure that your property is fire safe. Our goal is to work with owners to help them maintain a safe and operable daycare. If you have any questions, please call us at (831) 674-5484.

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Information Regarding Family Daycare Facilities

Family Child Care Homes

Family child care homes are the primary source of affordable care for babies and toddlers and offer a warm environment for all children. A family child care home is “a home that regularly provides care, protection, and supervision for 14 or fewer children, in the child care provider’s own home, for periods of less than 24 hours a day, while the parents or guardians are away, and is either a large family daycare home or a small family daycare home.”

A family child care home located in a residential area and is considered part of residentially zoned property, and its use does not alter the nature of the underlying residential use.

Family child care homes come in two forms: Small family child care homes care for up to 8 children, and large family child care homes care for 7 to 14 children.

Agencies that regulate Family Child Care Homes

Through its regional offices, the California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD) evaluates family child care homes and determines whether they meet the health and safety requirements in order to be licensed by CCLD. CCLD also conducts ongoing, unannounced inspections of all family child care homes and ensures child care providers meet the training requirements to care for children.

The OSFM prescribes the fire safety standards for family child care homes. CDSS ensures small family child care homes meet the state fire requirements and are not inspected by the local fire department.

Large family child care homes must pass an inspection by the local fire department in order to obtain their large family child care license from Community Care Licensing Division. The local fire department must follow the CA Code of Regulations, title 24 requirements that apply to large family child care homes and cannot apply local regulations that conflict with the title 24 requirements.

Large Family Child Care Homes

The California Child Day Care Facilities Act is the law that governs state health, safety, and licensing requirements of all child care facilities, including family child care homes. The statute pertaining to the fire safety standards for “Large Family Day Care Homes” can be found in the [Health & Safety Code 1597.46](#).

Overview of Large Family Child Care Homes:

- Must comply with State Fire Marshal regulations for Large Family Child Care Homes, found in the California Building Code (CBC) section 455. [CBSC link to 2022 CBC](#)
- Allowed in single-family homes, apartments, condos, townhouses, duplexes, and all other multi-family buildings (Group R-2 & R-3 occupancies).
- Does not constitute a change of occupancy. (Cal. Health & Safety Code 1597.45).
 - Only the regulations for the dwelling of the same occupancy (R-2 or R-3) and the specific OSFM regulations for Large Family Day Cares apply.
- Local Ordinances for fire & life safety do not apply unless applicable to all dwellings of the same occupancy group.
- No local jurisdiction shall impose a business license, fee, or tax for the privilege of operating a family child care home.
- No local jurisdiction shall impose a zoning permit for the privilege of operating a family child care home.
- Every family child care home for children shall have one or more carbon monoxide detectors in the home (CBC 915.1).
- CBC455.2 is no longer valid. The language that cross-references to the H & S Code 1597.46 is now found in the H & S Code 1597.45.

Pre-inspection

- The Local Fire Department which has primary jurisdiction shall conduct a pre-inspection upon receipt of a request from a prospective licensee of a child day care home. A pre-inspection is not required unless the family child care provider asks for a pre-inspection, but it recommend to verify the home is acceptable for the Large Family Home. The pre-inspection shall be conducted within 30 days. [H & S Code § 13235](#)
- The Local Fire Department shall provide consultation and interpretation of the state fire safety regulations, and shall notify the prospective licensee of the facility in writing of the specific fire safety regulations that are enforced to obtain fire clearance approval. A fee equal to, but not exceeding, the actual cost of the pre-inspection services may be charged for the pre-inspection of a facility. [H & S Code § 13235](#).

Fire Department Inspection

- The fire department will receive the Forestry and Fire Protection [State Form 850 inspection](#) request from the Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD). The State Form 850 must be filled out by the fire inspector and turned into CCLD. The top of form is to be completed by CCLD for Child Care Home.
- CCLD conducts regular inspections, verifies the number and age of children. It is not the role of the fire department to verify the numbers.
- A large family child care provider cannot be charged for the inspection.

Overview of the California Building Standards Code regulations for Large Family Child Care Homes:

California Building Code – CBC

California Fire Code – CFC

Single station smoke alarms number and placement determined by AHJ. (CBC 907.2.6.4)

- At least one manual fire alarm device at a location approved by the authority having jurisdiction. (CFC 907.2.6.4)
 - Shall actuate a signal which shall be audible throughout the facility at a minimum level of 15 dB above ambient noise level.
 - Need not be interconnected to any other fire alarm device, have a control panel or be electrically supervised or provided with emergency power.
 - Shall be attached to the structure and may be of any type acceptable to the enforcing agency, provided that such devices are listed and approved by the Office of the State Fire Marshal.
 - No building permit shall be required to install a fire alarm device in single home.
- 2A10BC Portable fire extinguisher (CBC 455.4)
- Children may be located above the first story when provided with a NFPA 13R fire sprinkler system. Where any level other than the first story is used for day-care purposes, one of the two required exits for that level shall provide access directly to the exterior without entering the first story. The second exit may either pass through the first story or exit directly to the exterior. (CBC 1006.2.2.7)
- Every story within the large family day-care home shall be provided with two exits that are remotely located from each other. (CBC 1006.2.2.7)
- Special Hazards – gas fired water heater or furnace shall be protected (inaccessible to children) (CBC 455.7)
- Residential Group R-3 Single Family Dwellings are not required to be inspected on an annual basis.
- 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, 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.
- Doors that lead to a fenced-in backyard or other confined space shall not count as an exit unless it complies with CBC 1009.7 for exterior areas for assisted rescue. and CBC 1028.5 for exit discharge.

Small Family Child Care Homes

The California Child Day Care Facilities Act is the law that governs state health, safety, and licensing requirements of all child care facilities, including family child care homes. The statute pertaining to the fire safety requirements for Small Family Child Care Homes can be found in the [Health and Safety Code 1597.44](#).

- **The inspections are conducted by the Department of Community Care Licensing, not the local fire department.** A State Form 850 inspection request for the Fire Department is not required.
- No Annual inspection is required by the fire department.
- All the following shall apply to small family child care homes:
 - The use of a single-family residence as a small family child care home shall be considered a residential use of property for the purposes of all local ordinances.
 - No local jurisdiction shall impose a business license, fee, or tax for the privilege of operating a small family child care home.
 - No local jurisdiction shall impose a zoning permit for the privilege of operating a family child care home.
 - Use of a single-family dwelling for purposes of a small family child care home shall not constitute a change of occupancy.
- A small family child care home shall contain:
 - Fire extinguisher.
 - Smoke detector device that meets standards established by the State Fire Marshal.
 - One or more functioning carbon monoxide detectors.

Daycare Facility Requirements

1. At least **two** approved exits are required from the house. Garages and bedrooms are not considered as exits. The kitchen sliding glass door can be used as an exit. The locking device on the screen must be removed. Every required exit doorway shall not be less than 36 inches in clear width and not less than 6 feet 8 inches in height. Horizontal blinds or curtains shall not obstruct the exiting portion of the sliding glass door used for exiting purposes (During daycare hours). Remember all exits are always to be kept clear of any storage.
2. Deadbolts are not allowed on any **exit** door. You shall provide a "Single Action, No Knowledge Lock" on the main exit door. (You should be able to open the door with one single action). For reference, see page 10.
3. Provide evacuation drawing and post at **both** exits. (See attachment).
 - a. Show both primary and secondary exits in contrasting colors.
 - b. Show the location of the fire extinguisher(s).
 - c. Show the location of the outside meeting place for emergency evacuations / fire drills.
4. Every Large Family Daycare shall be provided with a Manual Fire Alarm box (Pull Station) with horn and strobe. The Fire Alarm box shall be located near the **exit** door. It shall actuate a fire alarm signal, which shall be audible throughout the facility at a minimum level of 15 db. The device shall be listed and approved by the Office of the State Fire Marshal. For reference, see page 10.
5. Provide a commercial Fire Extinguisher with a rating of (2A 10BC). Your extinguisher shall be serviced and tagged annually by a licensed inspector. Read all instructions carefully and properly mount the fire extinguisher between 3ft-5ft for easy access. Ideally, you will want to mount the extinguisher near an exit. In an emergency, this will assist in a quicker and safer exit. Make sure adult members of your family know the proper use, as well as the limitations of these important fire safety tools.
6. Provide residential type smoke detectors which are approved by the State Fire Marshal. Smoke detectors shall be installed in every bedroom, one in the hallway, one on the top of the stairs (if you have a second story) and any room that the children sleep in. More information regarding smoke detectors, see page 11.
7. Install Carbon Monoxide (CO) detector in the home
8. Provide emergency numbers including 911, that can be easily read under adverse conditions. These numbers shall be on a separate sheet from any other informational sheet and in large and bold lettering.
9. In the case of the basement being used for daycare purposes, you are required to have at least one of the exits open directly to the exterior without entering the first floor of the home.
10. Drapes, curtains, and all decorative material shall be made out of non-flammable material or shall be treated and maintained flame retardant by means of flame-retardant solution.
11. Extension cords are not to be used as permanent wiring. Provide strip cords when necessary.

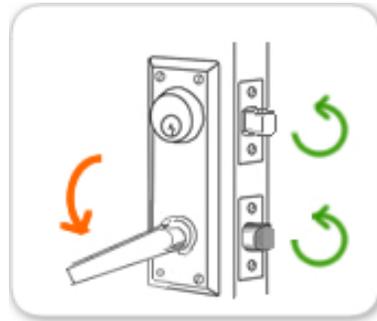
12. A self-closing, solid core door is required between the living area and the garage.
13. The garage or carport must be separated from the home by approved materials: One-hour fire resistive construction (5/8 sheetrock).
14. Every unenclosed gas/fire, water heater or furnace shall be protected in such a way as to protect children from contacting those appliances. Fireplaces, wood burning stoves, and open-faced heaters shall be screened to prevent access by children.

The following items are Department of Social Services policies that are not in the scope of the fire clearance inspection. They are items that affect the safety of the children and thus the Fire Inspector will report these items if it's observed that any of the following are not being complied with:

- A. Where children less than five years old are in care, stairs shall be fenced or barricaded.
- B. Poisons, detergents, cleaning agents, medicines, firearms, and other items which could pose a danger, shall be stored where they are inaccessible to children.
 1. Storage areas for poisons, firearms and other dangerous weapons shall be locked at all times.
 2. Ammunition shall be stored and locked separately from firearms
- C. All swimming pools shall have at least a 5' fence or covering inspected and approved by the licensing agency. Fencing shall be so constructed that it does not obscure the pool from view, cannot be easily climbed by children and is self-latching at the top of the gate. If a pool cover is used, it shall be strong enough to completely support the weight of an adult.
- D. An emergency information card shall be maintained for each child and shall include the child's full name, address, telephone number and location of a parent or other responsible adult to be contacted in an emergency. The name and telephone number of the child's physician and parent's authorization for the licensee or registrant to consent to emergency medical care shall be on file.
- E. For a large family child care home, the maximum number of children for whom care shall be provided when there is an assistant provider in the home, including children under age 12, who live in the licensee's home shall be:
 1. Fourteen (14) children, no more than four of whom may be infants
 2. The capacity specified on the license shall be the maximum number of children to whom care can be provided

Examples of “No Knowledge” Hardware

“Knob Release” shall mean the door is openable from the inside,
EVEN WHILE IN THE LOCKED POSITON.



Example of a Manual Fire Alarm box (Pull Station) with horn & strobe

The device shall be listed and approved by the Office of the State Fire Marshal.



Smoke Alarms

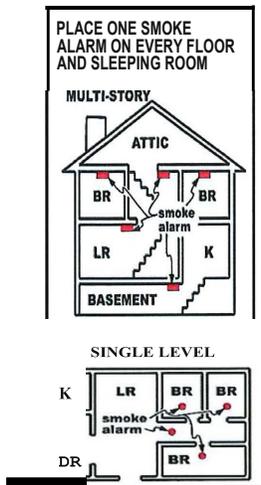


Residential fire deaths have decreased steadily as the number of homes with smoke detectors increased. Reports from the National Fire Protection Association on residential fire deaths show that people have nearly a 40-50 percent better chance of surviving a fire if their home has the recommended number of smoke detectors.

Protecting your home is simple: Change, Check, Clean!

Change Your Smoke Alarm!

We encourage you to purchase sealed 10-year smoke alarms. These alarms provide 10 years of continuous protection with no need to replace the battery for the life of the device. All smoke detectors should be replaced at least every 10 years and tested regularly to ensure the alarm is functioning properly. At the end of ten years, the smoke detectors will give an end-of-life warning letting you know to replace the alarm.



A smoke detector constantly monitors the air 24 hours a day. At the end of 10 years, it has gone through more than 3.5 million monitoring cycles. After this much use, components may become less reliable. This means that as the detector gets older, the potential of failure increases. Replacing them after 10 years reduces this possibility.

Check Your Smoke Alarms!

After inserting fresh batteries in your Smoke Alarm, make sure the Alarm is working by activating the safety test button. We recommend that you test all your Smoke Alarms at least once each month. If you have any doubt regarding the working condition of a Smoke Alarm, we recommend you replace it.



Clean Your Smoke Alarms!

Help your Smoke Alarm remain sensitive and ready to protect you by gently using a vacuum cleaner once a month to remove dust and cobwebs. If your Smoke Alarms have been accidentally painted or contaminated, replacement them immediately.

To best protect your home and family, we also suggest ...

Plan and Practice Your Escape!

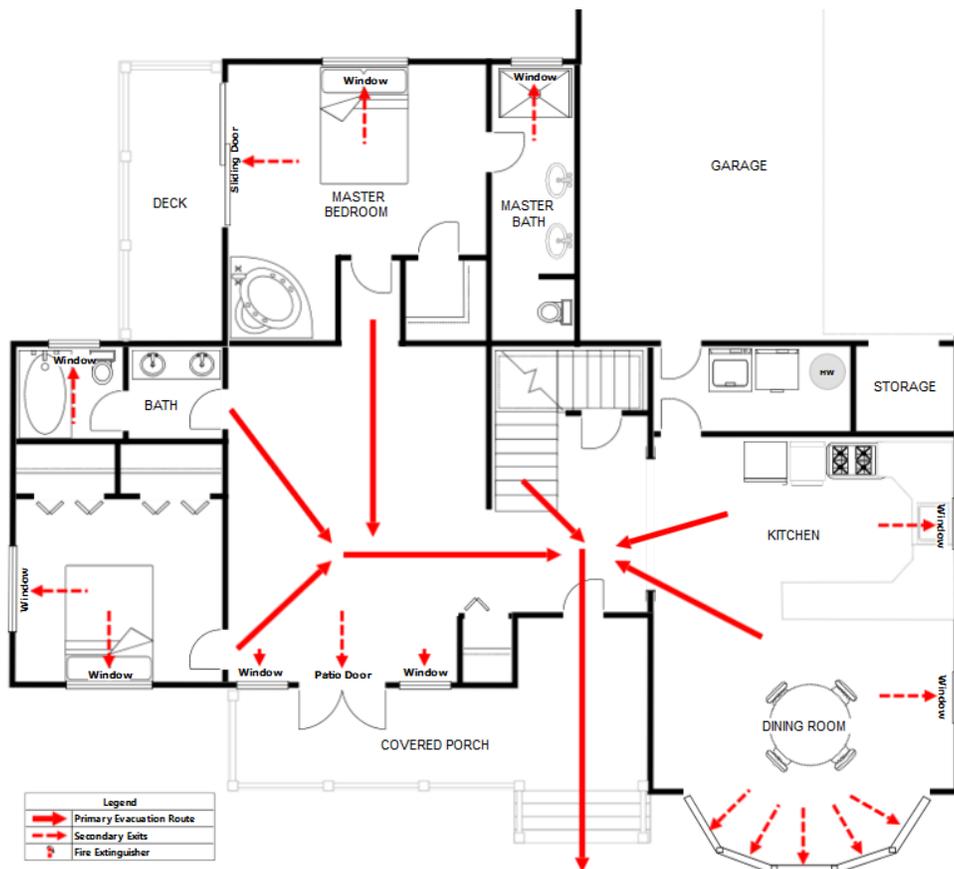
Children are at increased risk of dying in a home fire because they often become scared and confused when a fire erupts. Make sure your children recognize the sound of your home's Smoke Alarm and teach them to respond instinctively to its signal.

Create at least two different escape routes from every room and practice them with the entire family. Be sure all family members know the lifesaving practice of crawling below the dangerously thick smoke and intense heat of a fire.

All capable members of the family must learn how to open windows and remove screens. Realism is essential in your family's practice, as is your clear designation of a meeting place for everyone to gather outside the home in case of a fire or other emergency. Remember, this may be the only practice and discussion you will have before tragedy strikes!

A practice fire drill record is included on the proceeding page to help you plan and practice your escape. We encourage you to drill at least once a month. See if you can beat your previous months time! In an emergency, every second counts.

Sample Evacuation Plan





Greenfield Fire Dept.

380 Oak Ave.
Greenfield, CA 93927

Ph: 831-674-5484

Practice Fire Drill Record

Month	Date	Time of day	Length of Drill (time it took)	Number of Clients	Person in Charge
January					
February					
March					
April					
May					
June					
July					
August					
September					
October					
November					
December					