



**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF CHILD CARE HEALTH AND SAFETY  
DIVISION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION**

**APPROVAL OF FUNCTIONAL DESIGN FEATURES OR  
GUIDANCE FOR FLOOR AND SITE PLANS  
CHILD DAY CENTERS**

Facilities must comply with the Building Code but must also meet functional design requirements in the regulation entitled *Standards for Licensed Child Day Centers*. Functional design means the design features of building and grounds not regulated by the Building Code, necessary for activities and operations of a facility subject to licensure by the Department of Education.

Standard 8VAC20-821-50 of *General Procedures for the Licensure of Child Day Programs and Family Day Systems and Background Checks* requires functional design features of child day centers be met prior to licensure. Prospective applicants looking to use a building not previously used for the type of license or Use Group being sought may request approval of functional design features prior to construction, renovation, or entering a contract to buy or lease a building. Upon receipt of floor plans that indicate the use of space, the Department of Education will notify the prospective applicant of findings of the review. This review may avoid costly errors since architects, contractors, or building officials may not be thoroughly familiar with functional design features.

The information that follows may help in developing floor plans for this functional design review. This guidance may also be used in developing floor plans and a sketch of available outdoor play areas to be submitted upon application, unless floor plans were previously submitted for approval of functional design features and no changes have been made. Please note that your floor plan must be drawn to scale but it does not need to be an architectural drawing. Applicants must have 35 square feet of indoor wall-to-wall space per child. Any building that was licensed as a child day center for at least one day between June 1, 2005, and May 31, 2008, shall have its capacity calculated using 25 square feet per child for the life of the building. Your floor plan must indicate the age group each area will serve and include the following measurements:

- areas used for children's activities. Offices, hallways, restrooms, kitchens, storage rooms or closets, cribs, changing tables and areas not routinely used for children's activities must also be indicated on the plan but measurements of these areas are not necessary (8VAC20-780-310 A); and
- outdoor activity area(s) used by the children and its location to adjacent streets or parking areas. Measurements shall also include unpaved surface(s) if care is provided to infants and toddlers (8VAC20-780-310 E and F and 8VAC20-780-330 A).

The floor plan shall include the following:

- restroom areas to include toilets, sinks, and any urinals. Restrooms must be readily available and within the building used by children (except for camps for school age children). Toilets must be flushable (except for primitive camps). Sinks must be near the toilets and supplied with running warm water which does not exceed 120° Fahrenheit (except for primitive camps) (8VAC20-780-320 A and B);
- enclosure of at least one toilet when a restroom used for school age children contains more than one toilet (8VAC20-780-320 G);
- operational tub or shower with heated and cold water for centers providing overnight care (except for primitive camps) (8VAC20-780-610 H);
- adult size toilet with privacy for staff use (except for primitive camps) (8VAC20-780-320 D);
- for children in the process of being toilet trained, the toilet(s) or toilet chair(s) must be located in an area which allows for sight and sound supervision of children in the classroom if necessary to maintain the required staff-to-children ratios (8VAC20-780-500 C);
- diapering area with a sink with running warm water not to exceed 120° Fahrenheit that allows for sight and sound supervision of children in the classroom or is accessible and within the building used by children if the required staff-to-children ratios are maintained while children are being diapered (8VAC20-780-500 B);
- separate space designated for children who are ill or injured (8VAC20-780-310 G); and
- for evening or overnight care, separate sleeping areas for children of the opposite sex eight years of age or older (8VAC20-780-610 E).

The narrative portion of the plan shall describe the ways the center will comply with the following requirements:

- safety fences and gates for enclosure of outdoor swimming pools (8VAC20-780-470 A 3);
- officially approved, heating system that allows the temperature to be maintained no lower than 68° Fahrenheit (except for camps for school age children) (8VAC20-780-270 B and C);
- appropriate barriers from heating system to prevent children from being burned, shocked, or injured and installation of the heating system to prevent accessibility of children to the system (8VAC20-780-270 B 1-2);
- fans or cooling system when the temperature of inside areas occupied by children exceeds 80° Fahrenheit. Fans, when used for children of preschool age or younger, must be out of reach of

children and cords secured as not to create a tripping hazard (8VAC20-780-270 D and 8VAC20-780-290 2); and

- outside lighting provided at entrances and exits used by children before sunrise or after sundown (8VAC20-780-270 F 1).