

The Child Care Regulations, 2001

PART IV – Standards For Centres	SUBJECT – Usable floor area	PAGE 6-16
DIVISION 3 - Physical Environment, Facilities and Equipment		DATE February 28, 2010

SECTION 55

(1) In this section “usable floor area” does not include space used for offices, hallways, entryways, washrooms, kitchens, closets, locker areas, furnace and boiler rooms and large or fixed equipment.

(2) Subject to subsection (3), a licensee of a centre must provide:

(a) a minimum of 3.7 square metres of usable floor area for each licensed child care space; and

(b) a sleeping area of at least 2.3 square metres that is separate and apart from the usable floor area mentioned in clause (a) for each infant child care space.

(3) In the case of a centre for which the licensee holds a valid licence on the coming into force of these regulations, the licensee must provide:

(a) a minimum of 3.7 square metres usable floor area for each infant child care space;

(b) a minimum of 3.25 square metres usable floor area for each toddler, preschool and school-age child care space; and

(c) a sleeping area of at least 1.4 square metres that is separate and apart from the usable floor area mentioned in clauses (a) and (b) for each infant child care space.

(4) Where a centre to which subsection (3) applies relocates to a new premises or increases its number of child care spaces, the requirements of subsection (2) apply to the centre.

(5) The licensee of a centre must ensure that the usable floor areas and sleeping areas required by this section are used exclusively by the centre during its hours of operation.

INTENT

The intent of this section is to ensure children have adequate, safe and comfortable space to engage in activities (e.g. playing, resting/sleeping, eating).

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

“Young children relate to the world through their bodies and their senses. They require large amounts of space in which to learn by moving and doing. Thirty-five sq ft [3.25 sq.m] per child [common in many provincial/state regulations] is a 5’-x-7’ space - a little over twice the dimensions of the average playpen - hardly the “free-range” toddlers need for gaining assurance on their feet, or that rambunctious five-year-olds need to let off steam and develop physical coordination.” *Anita Rui Olds. Child Care Design Guide. McGraw-Hill, 2001, p.65*

“The physical characteristic of [the] room affect the behaviours of both children and staff. Small crowded, noisy rooms are associated with fatigue, irritability, negative behaviours such as quarrelling and physical aggression or the opposite ones of withdrawal and passivity. Sufficient well-organized, sound-absorbing space contributes to happy, involved behaviour and pleasant, supportive, cooperative interactions among children and staff.” *Health and Welfare Canada. Facilities and Equipment for Day Care Centres. 1984, p. 10*

GUIDELINES

All rooms have a ceiling height of 2.3 metres (7.5 ft) above a minimum of 50% of the floor area. Any areas where the ceiling height is less than 1.2 metres (4 ft) are not included in the calculation of usable floor space.

All rooms are heated, cooled and ventilated to maintain the required temperatures, humidity and air exchange, to prevent/reduce airborne health hazards, and to avoid accumulation of objectionable odours. Ventilation may be in the form of openable windows or electric fans.

Light levels in all rooms, including sleeping rooms, is maintained at a sufficient level to provide visual observation of the space and to allow the premises to be cleaned properly.

While deductions will be made for main entryways to the child care centre, no deductions from usable floor space will be made for other doorways in the facility.

Fixed equipment includes anything that is attached to the wall or immovable. Large equipment includes storage units, television stands and cabinets and excludes low toy shelves that are accessible to children at all times.

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Fixed cupboard/counter space will be deducted from usable floor space. In the initial stages of development, a 15% deduction will be made to estimate space required for large or fixed structures within the remainder of the space.

Final measurements of usable floor space will include actual size deductions for large or fixed equipment within the space. It is recommended that all spaces are not filled until the final actual floor space is determined.

Partial walls, shelving units and folding room dividers (but not hanging fabric) may be used to create infant sleeping space that is separate and apart from the usable floor area as an alternative to having a sleep room.

A centre can split their infant sleep space into two to provide for younger infants in cribs in one area and for older infants in cots, if desired, in another area. It is recommended that younger infants are in cribs in a separate sleep room.

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BEST PRACTICE

All space calculations include adults as well as children in each group room.

Space Standards for Child Care Centre Buildings

Space Standard (Quality)	Primary Activity Space* in Each Group Room	Secondary Activity Space* in Each Group Room **,*	Adult & Common Space* (Outside the Group Rooms)	Tertiary (Nonassignable) Space* (25-30%)	Total Building Floor Area
Minimum (insufficient)	3.25 sq.m/ child	1.86 sq.m/ child	1.39 sq.m/ child	1.68 sq.m/ child	8.18 sq.m/ child
Workable	3.9 sq.m	1.86 sq.m	1.67 sq.m	1.86 sq.m	9.29 sq.m
Better	4.27 sq.m	1.86 sq.m	2.04 sq.m	2.51 sq.m	10.68 sq.m
Recommended	4.65 sq.m	2.04 sq.m	2.23 sq.m	2.69 sq.m	11.61 sq.m

* Definitions:

Primary activity space is space needed for children’s developmental activities and play.

Secondary activity space is space essential to support caregiving aspects of the program: bathrooms, diapering areas, kitchenettes, storage, cubbies, laundry and built-in furniture.

Adult/common space is space outside the group rooms that is needed for administrative offices, staff lounge, work, resource and training areas, parent areas, conference rooms, entry/reception, sick child bay, staff/visitor bathrooms; utility/janitor’s rooms, main kitchen and recycling areas, resource and other storage, communal areas, gathering places and a common area at the heart.

Tertiary space is space essential for the architecture and building structure such as entries, corridors, stairways, mechanical and electrical equipment and wall thickness.

** In infant rooms, an **additional** 2.8 sq.m/child is needed for each crib and the ½ - 1 m clearance required between adjacent cribs.

*** Because toddlers need **both** diapering and toileting, an additional 0.28 sq.m/child are desirable.

NOTE: In centres with intended enrolments under 50-55 children, it will not always work to “plug-in” the above formulas. Community, common and staff spaces will come up short; a higher percentage of the total space will need to be allotted for them.

Reference: Anita Rui Olds. *Child Care Design Guide*. McGraw-Hill, 2001.

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Activity Areas for Each Group Room

<p><u>Active Zone</u> Large Blocks Dramatic Play Housekeeping Doll Play Puppet Play Costumes and Dress-Up Fantasy Themes Miniatures Music and Movement Gross Motor</p>	<p><u>Quiet Zone</u> Sleeping/Napping Math Reading Listening Manipulatives Writing Small Blocks</p>	<p><u>Messy Zone</u> Toileting/Diapering Sink and Counter for Staff Feeding/Eating/Snacks Broom Closet/Clean Up Water Sand Clay Painting Arts and Crafts Wood Working Cooking Science and Nature</p>
<p><u>Additional Space Required</u> (room location may vary) Large Group Meeting Space Private & Semiprivate Spaces Staff Personal Storage Staff Work Station Telephone</p>	<p><u>Entry/Transition Zone</u> Children’s personal storage space Parent Sign- in Communication</p>	

*Reference: Anita Rui Olds.
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 McGraw-Hill, 2001.*

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Spaces for the Entire Centre, Across Age Groups

(In addition to group rooms for children as above)

Parking Building Approach Main Entry/Reception Area Circulation Administrative Area Director’s office Secretary’s Office Bookkeeper’s Office Social Service Office Storage for Files and Records First Aid Emergency Records and Supplies Separate Service Entrance Janitorial Area Kitchen or Food Prep Area Staff Area Staff Lounge Staff Resource Area Staff Storage of Personal Belongings Staff Individual Work Stations and Files Staff Conference Area	Parent Area Parent/Staff Conferencing Bathrooms Water Fountains Assembly Area Central Resources Area (AV, Curriculum Prep, Library) Multi-purpose/Gross Motor Area Storage of Indoor Equipment Storage of Outdoor Equipment Observation Points or Areas Sick Bay or Retreat Space Laundry Mechanicals/Electricals Adaptations for the Individuals with Diverse Needs Community Based Activities
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Reference: Anita Rui Olds. Child Care Design Guide. McGraw-Hill. 2001.

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