



Ohio Administrative Code

Rule 5180:2-13-11 Indoor and outdoor space requirements for a licensed family child care provider.

Effective: July 1, 2026

(A) What are the indoor space requirements for a licensed family child care home?

- (1) There shall be at least thirty-five square feet of usable wall-to-wall indoor floor space per child for the total number of children who are present at one time.
- (2) Usable indoor floor space shall not include bathrooms, hallways, storage rooms or other areas not available or not used for child care.

(B) What are the on-site outdoor space requirements for a licensed family child care home?

- (1) The home shall have an on-site outdoor space that:
 - (a) Provides at least sixty square feet of usable space per child using the area at one time.
 - (b) Ensures that children are not able to leave the outdoor play area unsupervised and ensures that any hazards from the outside cannot enter the outdoor play area without the staff being aware of them. Outdoor space is protected from traffic or animals by one or more of the following:
 - (i) A continuous fence in good condition with functioning gates.
 - (ii) A continuous natural barrier.
 - (iii) A combination of fence and natural barrier.
 - (c) Provides access to bathroom facilities and drinking water during play times.
 - (d) Protects children under six months from direct exposure to the sun. Provides sun protection for all children.
- (2) The home shall not use outdoor porches above the first floor as play areas, unless the porches are fully enclosed and structurally sound.
- (3) Bodies of water (other than water tables designed for children to play in only with their hands) shall be separated from the play area by a fence or other physical barrier (the house door alone is not a sufficient barrier) that prevents children from accessing the water.

(C) What are the exemptions from having an on-site outdoor space?



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- (1) If an on-site play area is not available, a provider may use an off-site play area for daily use if it is determined, upon inspection by the provider that the area and its accessibility are safe.
- (2) The distance and means to access an off-site play area is to be safe and developmentally appropriate.

(D) What are the requirements for on-site outdoor equipment?

- (1) Outdoor equipment, whether stationary or portable, shall be safe and designed to meet the developmental needs of all of the age groups of children using the space.
- (2) Equipment such as, but not limited to, climbing gyms, swings, slides shall:
 - (a) Be free of conditions that pose a risk of harm to children.
 - (b) Be placed out of the path of the area's main traffic pattern.
 - (c) Be anchored or stable and have all parts in good working order and securely fastened.
 - (d) Have all climbing ropes anchored at both ends and not capable of looping back on themselves creating a loop with an interior perimeter of five inches or greater.
 - (e) Have "S" hooks that are closed in order to prevent the chain from slipping off of the hook and to prevent strangulation, if they are used.
 - (f) Have no openings that are greater than three and one half inches, but less than nine inches to avoid entrapment of the head or other body parts.
 - (g) Have protective barriers on platforms that are thirty inches high or higher. A protective barrier means an enclosing device around an elevated platform that is intended to prevent both inadvertent and deliberate attempts to pass through the device.
 - (h) Be assembled, installed and utilized according to manufacturer's guidelines.

(E) What are the requirements for a fall zone for on-site play equipment?

- (1) Equipment used for climbing, swinging, balancing and sliding is not to be placed over, or immediately next to, hard surfaces such as asphalt, concrete, dirt,



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grass, or flooring covered by carpet or gym mats not intended for use as surfacing for the equipment.

(2) All pieces of play equipment are to be placed over and surrounded by a shock absorbing surface.

(3) All loose fill materials shall be raked as needed to retain their proper distribution, shock absorbing properties and to remove foreign material.

(F) What are the requirements for family child care homes who use off-site play areas that are regulated by another state or local agency?

Off-site play areas that are regulated by another state or local agency are exempt from the Ohio department of children and youth (DCY) requirements for outdoor spaces, play equipment, and fall zones. Family child care providers are to protect children from harm while using these exempted play areas, including but not limited to, protection from traffic and animals; preventing child access to bodies of water; limiting direct sun exposure for infants; and providing sun protection for all children.