



## Ohio Administrative Code

### Rule 5180:2-20-05 Facility.

Effective: July 1, 2026

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(A) Where should a preschool program be located?

The preschool shall be located in a safe and convenient facility and space that accommodates the enrollment, supports child growth and development according to program objectives, and meets the requirements of section 3301.55 of the Revised Code. The space shall be for the exclusive use of the children enrolled in the preschool program when that program is in session.

(B) What are the fire inspection requirements for a preschool program?

The preschool shall provide written documentation of an annual fire inspection of the facility. Annually means within twelve calendar months of the previous fire inspection.

(C) What are the indoor space requirements for a preschool program?

The indoor space shall include not less than thirty-five square feet of usable, wall-to-wall floor space for each child.

- (1) Such floor space shall not include hallways, kitchens, storage areas, or any other areas not designated for the care of children.
- (2) Bathrooms shall be included only if they are used exclusively by children enrolled in the preschool when the program is in session.
- (3) Square footage, as detailed in section 3301.55 of the Revised Code, shall determine the maximum capacity or number of children that may be served in the space. Maximum group size shall not exceed the maximum capacity in any given space.
- (4) Spaces meeting the required square footage per child may be defined by barriers to serve more than one class/group of children. Barriers shall be at least thirty-six inches in height, may be permanent or nonpermanent walls, bookcases, partitions or some similar device used to define the area.
- (5) Electrical outlets are to be covered when not in use unless documentation is on file that the outlets are tamper resistant.
- (6) The preschool is to be cleaned daily and kept in a sanitary condition at all times. Cleaning and sanitizing is not to take place while rooms are occupied by children, except for general cleanup activities such as sweeping, vacuuming, mopping and wiping off tables which are part of the daily routine.
- (7) Smoking is prohibited on the premises.



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- (8) The public may use areas such as entry ways, hallways, bathrooms, and other areas normally available for public use if such access does not constitute a risk or hazard to the health and safety of the children in care.
- (9) A working phone and a backup form of communication will be within, or immediately accessible, to the preschool's primary space and accessible to staff at all times. A preschool staff member will be available to parents by phone during hours of program operation. Phone numbers for emergency services that may be locally appropriate will be posted in a visible location readily accessible to the appropriate preschool staff member in the area. Backup forms of communication may include, but are not limited to, email, text messaging services, or an additional phone.

(D) What are the play space requirements for indoor and outdoor gross motor play?

Safe play space, including both indoor and outdoor play space, totaling not less than sixty square feet for each child using the space at any one time, shall be regularly available and scheduled for use. Additionally, play spaces comply with the following:

- (1) The surface of the outdoor play space shall offer protection from falls and shall be well drained.
- (2) The play space, including both indoor and outdoor play space, shall be free of hazards such as, but not limited to, chipped and peeling paint containing lead, mold, peeling plaster, holes in the walls, broken glass, potholes, garbage, flammable materials and other debris. Equipment and furniture must be without sharp corners, splinters, or loose and/or peeling paint containing lead. Corrective action will be issued for any loose and/or peeling paint that may contain lead.
- (3) The play area shall be well defined to protect children from traffic, animals, or other hazards.
- (4) Child staff ratios are maintained at all times in accordance with rule 5180-37-04 of the Administrative Code or this chapter.
- (5) Groups of children are supervised when traveling to and from the play area.
- (6) For outdoor space, the preschool program is to provide sun protection for all children and protect children under six months from any direct exposure to the sun.

(E) What are the requirements for play spaces used by a preschool program that are regulated by another state or local agency?



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On-site or 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, playground equipment, and fall zones. Preschools 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.

(F) What are the swimming and water safety requirements for preschool programs?

Swimming pools, wading pools, and other swimming/wading sites shall be made inaccessible to the children when not in use. Additionally, swimming pools, wading pools, and other swimming/wading sites have the following requirements:

- (1) Wading pools are filtered or emptied daily. Portable wading pools are sanitized daily or more often, if needed.
- (2) Preschool staff members supervise children at all times while a wading pool is in use and preschool staff members are able to clearly see all parts of the wading area.
- (3) There is one lifeguard or water safety instructor certified by the American red cross or an equivalent water safety program present for every thirty-five children when children are involved in a water activity over eighteen inches in depth. If the lifeguard is a staff member, the lifeguard does not count in the staff/child ratio and additional staff would be needed in this scenario.

(G) What are the infant and toddler space requirements for the preschool program?

Infants and toddlers shall be provided space apart from their sleeping quarters so that each child is allowed to sit, crawl, toddle or walk, and play safely and comfortably according to his/her stage of development.

(H) What are the building and fire approval requirements for infants and non-ambulatory children eighteen months of age or older?

Infants and non-ambulatory children eighteen months of age or older shall receive care in rooms approved for that use by local building, fire officials, and DCY prior to use.

(I) Where are cribs to be located within the infant area of a program?

Cribs are to be separated from infant play space by a safe and sturdy physical barrier which does not impair the ability to supervise infants by sight and hearing and



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provides for safe accessibility. Sight and hearing is not impaired when the preschool staff can see the infants in and out of their cribs and hear their sounds.