

The following specifies minimum standards which are required by locally-adopted building codes for a Group E occupancy. A **Group E occupancy** is defined as a building or structure facility that provides education, supervision, or personal care services for more than 12 children older than 2-1/2 years of age—i.e., a **day care facility**. A facility that provides supervision and personal care for more than five children 2-1/2 years of age or less shall be classified as **Group I-4**—i.e., a **child care facility**.

Allowable Area of Limitations

Based on conventional, combustible, nonfire-resistive construction, the basic allowable area for a Group E occupancy is 9,500 square feet per story (with allowable increases). For a Group I-4 occupancy, occupancy is 9,000 square feet.

Allowable Height Limitations

The basic allowable height for a Group E or I-4 is one story. Modifications are allowed with the installation of an approved automatic sprinkler system.

Location on Property

In a Group E or I-4 occupancy where the exterior wall is less than 10 feet to an adjacent property line, the exterior walls must have construction rated as one hour fire-resistive. When the exterior wall is 3 feet or less from the adjacent property line, no unprotected or protected openings are allowed. When the exterior wall is greater than 3 feet (up to 5 feet) from the adjacent property line, no unprotected openings are allowed, and 15 percent of the wall may have protected openings. When the exterior wall is 5 feet or greater (up to 10 feet) from the adjacent property line, a total of

10 percent of the wall may have unprotected openings, and a total of 25 percent of the wall area may include protected openings.

Occupancy Separations

A day care or child care facility may be required to maintain a two-hour, fire-resistive fire barrier between the said occupancies and adjacent occupancies (such as dwellings, businesses, apartments, etc.). A higher fire-resistive separation will be required on a more hazardous occupancy.

Basement Requirements

The maximum common path of travel for a basement shall not exceed 75 feet. The common path of travel is that portion of exit access that the occupants are required to traverse before two separate and distinct paths of egress travel to two exits are available.

A basement used for day care or child care (which has an interior exit access) that has an occupant load greater than ten shall be required to have a vertical exit enclosure. The walls will be required to be one-hour fire barriers. The fire barrier walls will be required to extend from the top of the floor to the underside of the roof deck above, and securely attached thereto. A minimum of 60-minute fire door assemblies shall be required at the top and the bottom, along with applicable landings.

An automatic sprinkler system shall be installed throughout the basement where the floor area exceeds 1,500 square feet. The exception would be if 20 square feet of openings in each 50 linear feet on at least one exterior side—or if an exterior ramp or stairway leading to grade level—are installed in each 50 linear feet on one exterior side.

Exits

The occupant load to determine the exiting requirements shall be figured at one occupant for every 35 net square feet of floor area. Two separate exits are required on a Group E occupancy when the occupant load on a single-story building is 50 or more; i.e., where there is 1,000 square feet of net floor area, or where the common path of egress travel is greater than 75 feet. Likewise, if there is a second story, two exits are required, no matter what the occupant load is. On a Group I-4 occupancy, if the occupant load is over 10 (i.e., 350 square feet of net floor area on a single story—or if there are two stories), two exits are required.

Bathroom Fixtures

One bathroom of each sex is required when the occupant load exceeds 15. The occupant loads referred below are based on 35 square feet of net floor area.

In a Group E occupancy:

- One toilet of each sex shall be installed for every 50 occupants or fraction thereof.
- One drinking fountain shall be installed for every 100 occupants.
- One lavatory shall be installed for each 50 occupants.

In a Group I-4 occupancy:

- One toilet of each sex shall be installed for each 15 occupants or fraction thereof.
- One drinking fountain shall be installed for every 100 occupants.
- One lavatory shall be installed for every 15 occupants.
- A maximum of one bathtub is required.
- One service/mop sink is required in each occupancy.

Automatic Fire Extinguishing Systems

In a Group E occupancy, an automatic sprinkler system shall be installed throughout if the area exceeds 12,000 square feet. An automatic sprinkler system shall be installed for every portion of the building that is below the level of exit discharge.

An automatic sprinkler system shall be provided throughout buildings that are classified as Group I-4 occupancies.

Fire Prevention Standards

Fire extinguishers must rate a minimum of 2A and must be able to service more than 1,500 square feet. The distance to an extinguisher should not be greater than 75 feet.

Accessibility

Access by means of a ramp or elevator must be provided for people with physical disabilities in a day care or child care facility. Toilet rooms and other facilities must, additionally, be designed for utilization by people with disabilities.

If you have any questions concerning day care or child care facilities, please call 367-8670 or stop in the Building Services Office on ground floor of City Hall.



City of Sioux Falls

Building Services

231 North Dakota Avenue
P.O. Box 7402
Sioux Falls, SD 57117-7402
(605) 367-8670
TTY/Hearing Impaired (605) 367-7039
www.siouxfalls.org



Building Code Requirements for Day Care Facilities in Sioux Falls, SD



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