



# CHILDREN’S OUTDOOR PLAY SPACE PLAN CHILD CARE

## COMMUNITY CARE FACILITIES LICENSING PROGRAM

Application and approval process for new facilities and for existing facilities modifying or adding to their outdoor play space (including adding equipment):

- Applicants/Licensees for all child care programs (except for Occasional Child Care) must provide each child with daily outdoor play periods (unless weather conditions make it unreasonable to do so).
- The application for a new facility shall include plans for the outdoor play space (except School Age Care on School Grounds).
- Licensees for existing facilities are required to submit plans for modifications or addition to the existing play space (except School Age Care on School Grounds).
- Using the “checklist” below ensures that you have included all the required documentation when submitting your plans.
- Submit your plans to your local Licensing Office.
- Please keep copies of all documentation submitted to Licensing for your own reference.

Regular daily outdoor play experiences are not only required by the Child Care Licensing Regulation, they are also an important part of healthy child development.

Licensees and Applicants are advised that health and safety considerations around utilizing outdoor play areas outside of the property boundaries of the Community Care Facility must be carefully considered.

If you are considering an outdoor play area away from the facility, you are encouraged to provide a detailed plan regarding these items. The plans will be reviewed by Licensing to determine if the proposed play area meets the minimum standards as set out in the Child Care Licensing Regulation.

One of the following two plans (**A or B**) for regular or daily outdoor play must be submitted to Licensing with your Application for a Community Care Facility licence:

### A. Outdoor Play Space Onsite Available:

Plans submitted for designated outdoor play space should include the following:

- A site plan showing the location of the community care facility [including the property boundaries], the location and dimensions of the outdoor play area intended for regular or daily activities.
- The types of existing enclosures or those planned, including the location, type of enclosure and height.

### If the designated outdoor play space includes large fixed play equipment, the following information must be included in your submission:

- A listing of all pieces of playground equipment. Playground equipment may include indoor or outdoor slides, balance beams, climbers, upper body equipment, seesaws, merry-go-rounds, etc. Items that are not playground equipment may include: playhouses, picnic tables or other furnishings, indoor or outdoor toys, sandboxes, ride on toys, etc.
- If available, manufacturer’s instructions indicating age range suitable for, installation and safe use of equipment protocols. Include the age of children you intend to use the equipment.
- Height of equipment [equipment for toddlers <36 months must be not more than 3 feet, preschool children ages 3-5 no more than 5 feet and school age children no more than 7 feet].
- The position of the playground equipment and surfacing within the play area, including the amount of space between pieces of playground equipment.
- If available, pictures of the play space and playground equipment.
- The type and depth of protective surfacing and fall height of playground equipment.
- If equipment is new, description of plans for installation.
- Equipment inspection, replacement and maintenance plan.

The Licensee is responsible for ensuring that sufficient and appropriate protective surfacing is provided, and that equipment and features are safe. Protective surfacing must be checked on a regular basis to ensure the depth and adequacy of the material. The Licensee must comply with the Director of Licensing Standard of Practice for Safe Play Space.

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**If the designated outdoor play space includes natural play structures/features that the Applicant/Licensee intends children to use.**

If the Licensee/Applicant is proposing to use a natural play space where children will utilize features such as trees, rocks or other natural structures, Licensing staff may use the same principles applied to manufactured equipment to assess the suitability and safety of the play area depending on the intended use of these features.

For example, if children will be using a tree as a climbing structure, Licensing staff will assess the tree for hazards such as [but not limited to]: entrapment, protrusions and adequate protective ground surfacing based on the fall height.

- As part of the plan submitted for review, Applicants should include the intended use by any children in care of any natural features.

**Outdoor Play Space Off Site Available:**

**If children will be attending outdoor play areas or activities located outside the property boundaries (off site) on a regular or daily basis [this includes a designated play area or enriched/extra activities in addition to regular outdoor play], the site plan must include all of the following:**

- How reasonable is it that children will be able to access this outdoor area on a regular basis?
- The distances from the community care facility to the outdoor play areas and activities.
- The routes to the outdoor play areas and activities.
- Any major physical features that may affect the safety of children, including roads and bodies of water, located along the routes to and in the immediate vicinity of the outdoor play areas and activities.
- A supervision and staffing plan, including while children are being transported to and from outdoor play areas or activities located outside the property boundaries describing:
  - How children will be walking and/or transported i.e.: vehicle, walking ropes, strollers.
  - Staff to child ratio.
  - Easily identifiable clothing worn by children.
  - Staff communication plan.
  - Staff positioning.
  - Plan addressing inclement weather.
- Permission to use play space from Municipality or owner of property.
- Other community users; Public school, other daycares.
- Outdoor area used by dogs (off leash).
- A supervision and staffing plan including while children are attending daily outdoor play areas, or regular or daily activities, located outside the property boundaries describing:
  - Age and developmental needs of children in care.
  - Staff to child ratio.
  - Easily identifiable clothing worn by children.
  - Staff communication plan.
  - Staff positioning.
  - How the facility staff will handle public interacting with children.
  - How the facility staff will ensure access to age-appropriate equipment only.
  - Plan if child has a minor injury or requires transporting back to the facility.
  - How facility staff will communicate with parents i.e.: Cell phones, access, emergency.
  - If not fully enclosed outdoor space, addition of visual boundaries.
  - Toileting facilities available at site or brought by the facility (plan to include toileting equipment used, disposal, privacy, hand washing).
  - Plan for children in diapers.
  - Considerations for children attending identifying approved Temporary Placement and Retentions (TPRs).
  - Plan addressing inclement weather.
  - Daily safety checks.
  - Plan if child has a minor injury or requires transporting back to the facility.
  - How the facility staff will communicate with parents i.e.: Cell phones, access, emergency.

**B. No Outdoor Play Area Available for Regular/Daily Outdoor Activities:**

The Applicant must provide an activity plan that describes the following:

- How the program standards set out in Section 1 of Schedule G will be met; and
- Any community services to be used, including visits to parks, pools or recreation centres.
- A supervision and staffing plan, including while children are attending or being transported to and from outdoor play areas or activities located outside the property boundaries.

Once the Licensing Office has received and reviewed all of the above information, you will be notified in writing on whether or not your plans have been approved.

Please Note: Your plans for outdoor play spaces, and/or play areas/activities should not be implemented until Licensing approval is received.