



CITY OF COSTA MESA

Fire Prevention

Telephone: 714.327.7400

Fax: 714.327.7408

LARGE FAMILY DAY CARE HOMES

DEFINITION

A Large Family Day Care Home is a home which provides family day care to nine (9) to fourteen (14) children for periods of less than 24 hours per day. This shall include children who reside at the home. Large Family Day Care Homes are classified as R-3 occupancies by the State Fire Marshal.

PURPOSE AND INTENT

It is the purpose and intent to provide children in a Family Day Care Home the same environment that is provided in a traditional home setting.

CONSTRUCTION

Fire-resistive requirements for exterior walls shall be the same as for R-3 occupancies.

The separation between the garage and the house may be of materials approved for one-hour fire-resistive construction on the garage side. A self-closing, tight-fitting, solid wood door 1 3/8" in thickness must be provided between the garage and the house. Fire dampers need not be installed in air ducts passing through the wall, floor, or ceiling separating the garage from the house, provided the ducts are constructed of steel not less than No. 26 galvanized sheet gauge and have no openings into the garage.

EXITS

Large Family Day Care Homes shall be provided with two (2) exit doorways. Every required exit door shall be capable of opening so that the clear width is not less than 32" and the clear height is not less than six feet, eight inches (6'8"). A manually-operated, horizontal sliding door may be used as one of the two required exits. Exits may pass through kitchens.

Every required exit door shall be openable from the inside without the use of a key or any special knowledge or effort. A single turn of the knob should release the latch and lock bolts.

Yard gates blocking egress to the public way shall also be openable from the inside without the use of a key or any special knowledge or effort.

ALARMS

Large Family Day Care Homes shall be equipped with single station, residential-type smoke alarms which are approved by the State Fire Marshal. Evidence of State Fire Marshal approval shall be kept on site. Smoke alarms shall be installed according to manufacturer's instructions and should be tested *monthly*.

Smoke alarms shall be installed in all sleeping rooms, hallways, and gathering rooms (living room). Smoke alarms shall be replaced every ten years.

Large Family Day Care Homes shall provide and maintain a device or devices suitable for manually sounding a fire alarm. Such devices shall be attached to the structure, be distinctive in tone, and be audible throughout the structure. A standard, wall-mounted, manually-activated electric fire bell is recommended.

FIRE SAFETY

A portable fire extinguisher with a minimum rating of 2A10BC shall be provided. Extinguishers should be conspicuously located where they are readily visible; preferably located along normal paths of travel. Extinguishers shall be mounted so the top is not higher than five (5') feet or lower than three (3') feet from the floor. Fire extinguishers shall be serviced annually or immediately after use, whichever occurs first.

Storage and handling of gasoline, fuel oil, and other flammable liquids shall be in accordance with Article 79 of the Uniform Fire Code.

Rooms used for day care purposes shall not be located above or below the first story except in buildings provided with an automatic fire sprinkler system. Special exiting requirements apply when exceptions are used.

Buildings shall be maintained in a neat and orderly manner, free from any condition that would create a fire or life hazard or a condition which would add to, or contribute to, the rapid spread of fire.

Appliance cords and extension cords shall be kept in good conditions with no slices.

LIFE SAFETY

Fire drills are required at frequency determined by Inspector.

Unenclosed gas-fired water heaters and furnaces, within the area used for child care, shall be protected to keep children from coming in contact with the appliances. This does not apply to kitchen stoves and ovens.

No children permitted to be above the ground floor at any time.

RECOMMENDED

Have an emergency fire-exit plan. Draw a plot plan of your home on an 8 ½" x 11" sheet of paper. Indicate the two required ways out with red lines. Indicate the meeting place. Post your plan in an obvious location.

Conduct monthly fire drills using your escape plan and designated meeting place. Initiate the fire drill using your required fire alarm sounding device to familiarize the children with its distinctive tone.