



# ***OFFICE OF THE ILLINOIS STATE FIRE MARSHAL***

## **New Day Care Homes and New Group Day Care Homes**

### **Life Safety Code Requirements, Plan Review Services, and Inspection Practices of the Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal's Fire Prevention and Technical Services Divisions**

*Effective January 1, 2020*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) conducts fire safety inspections of day care homes at the request of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). Licensing rules of DCFS require that day care homes comply with the *Life Safety Code* (LSC) adopted by the OSFM before licensing can be completed. The OSFM has developed this document in an effort to assist new or potential day care homes owners with understanding the rules, policies and procedures of the OSFM.

It should be noted that the day care occupancy chapters in the LSC also apply to Adult Day Care Homes which are under the authority of the Illinois Department of Aging.

While the OSFM is willing to assist potential day care home owners with their understanding and application of fire safety requirements, on-site assistance in the form of inspection of proposed buildings is limited by our personnel and time. Therefore, this document was prepared in an effort to assist potential home day care owners with understanding necessary features that should be looked for when choosing a home day care location.

The OSFM has adopted the 2015 edition of National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) *Life Safety Code* as the fire prevention rules for all Illinois occupancies. This report not only reviews the specific requirements of the LSC particular to a new day care home, but also offers explanation of the OSFM's inspection process as well as useful information on practical application of the LSC and instruction on how owners can obtain assistance. It is important to understand that the contents of this report pertain to "new" day care homes. "New" day care homes are defined as those in buildings that were either constructed or changed occupancy classification on or after January 1, 2020 when the currently enforced edition of the LSC became effective in Illinois.

The contents of this document pertains to both day care homes and group day care homes, as defined by DCFS, with differences in applicable requirements or policies so noted.

## **OFFICE OF THE ILLINOIS STATE FIRE MARSHAL (OSFM)**

The OSFM has the statutory responsibility of protecting the citizens of Illinois against the hazards associated with fire. In an effort to carry out this responsibility the OSFM operates several divisions covering multiple areas of life safety concern. Included among those divisions is the Division of Fire Prevention, which is charged with the writing, adoption and enforcement of statewide fire prevention regulations and the inspection of occupancies for compliance with those same regulations. Since it is beyond the capacity of the Fire Prevention Division to enforce regulations in every building across the entire state, the Division concentrates on inspecting state-owned and state-licensed occupancies as well as specific targeted hazards in an effort to make the best use of its resources.

While the OSFM is willing to assist potential day care home owners or operators with their understanding and application of fire safety requirements, on-site assistance in the form of inspection of proposed buildings not yet being used as licensed day care center is not performed by Fire Prevention. Therefore, this document was prepared in an effort to assist potential day care home owners or operators with understanding the necessary features that should be looked for when deciding to open a day care home.

The OSFM Technical Services Division, working in support of the Fire Prevention Division, often conducts plan review and code interpretation for day care homes occupancies, at no cost to the owners or operators. While this would be a valuable service to take advantage of, there are no state requirements that plans be submitted to the Technical Services Division. See the end of this document for more information on these no-cost reviews.

## **WHAT IS THE *LIFE SAFETY CODE*?**

The regulations that are applied to day care homes are found in 41 Ill. Adm. Code 100. The OSFM has adopted the 2015 edition of NFPA 101, *Life Safety Code* (LSC). The LSC is published by the National Fire Protection Association. It is a consensus code document that is developed by a committee of experts under code-making rules which cover NFPA's standard and code development process. The members of the LSC technical subcommittee that consider changes to the LSC represent not only enforcement authorities, but also the insurance industry, architects, engineers, and representatives of the owners of regulated occupancies.

Formulated in the early part of the 1900's as a code to ensure safe exiting from buildings, the LSC was originally titled the Buildings Exit Code. In 1966, the title was changed to the Code for Safety to Life from Fires in Buildings and Structures. In 1997 the title was officially changed to the Life Safety Code. The LSC is updated on a three-year cycle. The LSC contains separate occupancy chapters to address specific types of building uses. Therefore, the requirements applicable to day care homes are tailored specifically for such occupancies.

## **WHERE DO I GET THE *LIFE SAFETY CODE*?**

The LSC is a copyrighted document and cannot be reproduced by the OSFM. The LSC is available for on-site examination at any of the OSFM's three regional offices. It can also possibly be found at your local library or fire department. If the local library does not have a copy, ask the reference librarian to see if it can be obtained via inter-library loan. NFPA offers a free "read-only" access to all of their codes and standards. Go to [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org) to gain access to this code list. The LSC may also be purchased from the NFPA by calling their toll-free order line at 1-800-344-3555 or going to [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org) and clicking the "catalogue" tab. Remember to request the 2015 edition of the LSC.

## **LOCAL REGULATIONS**

The regulations of the OSFM do not automatically supersede the regulations, ordinances or rules established by other authorities such as counties, local fire departments, or fire protection districts. However, OSFM's authority is not superseded in those jurisdictions that choose to adopt our code as well as those jurisdictions that do not have home rule or approved equivalency pursuant to Title 41 Ill. Adm. Code 100. Local authorities may enforce regulations concerning day care homes that are more stringent than OSFM's regulations. Therefore, the OSFM recommends that owners and operators always make contact with local authorities before finalizing day care home plans.

## INSPECTION PROCEDURES

The OSFM conducts day care home inspections and re-inspections at the written request of DCFS. *Providers must first contact their DCFS representative to initiate the inspection process.* All new day care homes receive an OSFM inspection prior to being allowed to open. Once inspected by the OSFM, day care homes are re-inspected by the OSFM at the request of DCFS for relicensing purposes. The OSFM also responds to fire code complaints received in relation to day care homes.

When a facility is to be inspected by the OSFM, an inspector from the OSFM's Fire Prevention Division will conduct an on-site walk through inspection of the occupancy. OSFM realizes the security concerns of day care home operators relative to the admission of outsiders into their facilities. Day care home operators and staff should know that OSFM Fire Prevention inspectors who conduct on-site fire safety inspections will always:

- Drive state vehicles that are plainly marked as representing the Office of the State Fire Marshal, and
- Carry, and present if asked, an OSFM photo-identification card.

The on-site inspection conducted by the OSFM is a "hands-off" non-destructive process. This means that although the inspector will need to examine all levels and all rooms of the day care home, they will not need to conduct actions such as dismantling equipment, activating fire alarm systems, flowing water through sprinkler systems, poking holes in walls, or other invasive procedures.

Upon completion of the inspection, the inspector will conduct an "exit interview" with the on-site owner/operator or their designee. This exit interview serves to inform the owner of any LSC violations that were witnessed by the inspector, and at the same time offer suggestions of possible corrective actions.

A copy of the inspection findings will be completed by the inspector and left with the facility owner or their representative at the time of the inspection. In addition, following the inspection, the inspector will send his or her inspection findings to the inspector's direct supervisor for review. Following this review, an official written correspondence will be sent to the owner or building representative regarding the findings from the inspection. The OSFM encourages that no action be taken by the owner of the facility relative to an inspection until the official written correspondence is received by the owner. These inspection findings will also be shared with DCFS.

If no violations were noted in the inspection report, OSFM's Fire Prevention Division involvement is finished until the next requested licensing inspection. If violations were noted, the inspector will only conduct re-inspections when such is requested by DCFS to monitor the facility's progress in correcting the violations. The owner shall contact DCFS with any questions regarding the inspection results, the time frame for compliance, or other related questions. OSFM can assist DCFS with technical support regarding correcting the inspection findings. However, OSFM will not negotiate or establish any time frame with the state licensing agency or the facility owners regarding the abatement of the cited violations. Once the owner has corrected all violations, the owner should contact DCFS representative who will then contact OSFM to place on the inspectors schedule for re inspection.

## **RIGHT TO APPEAL**

Regarding appeals of violations found during a Fire Prevention Division inspector's LSC facility inspection, the owner or operator of the day care center contact DCFS. OSFM will provide support to the state licensing agency regarding the interpretation of the violations as written, not the facility owner or operator.

## **LIFE SAFETY CODE CLASSIFICATIONS OF DAY CARE HOMES**

Deciding which section of the LSC chapters apply to a day care home is a matter of determining two factors:

1. Whether the day care home is classified as a "new" or as an "existing" day care home, and
2. How many clients are being served in the home.

### **1. "New" Has a Variety of Meanings Under the LSC**

The provision of home day care services in a residential occupancy does not change the previously existing residential occupancy classification which continues to be the primary function of the structure. Therefore, the definition of "new" vs. "existing" is different for a day care home than for other occupancies. Title 41 Ill. Adm. Code 100.7(c)(3)(C) states that day care homes are defined as being either "new" or "existing" based on the date the original home construction was completed and available for residency. If the house was completed and available for residency before January 1, 2020 the day care home would be classified as "existing." Day care homes that are defined as existing are subject to compliance with the "existing" day care home requirements of the 2015 edition of the LSC. Although similar, the requirements of the "existing" chapter of the LSC do vary from those of the "new" day care home chapter of the LSC. It is for this reason that a potential day care home owner should not assume that because the OSFM has found one day care home to be acceptable as a proposed day care home that another facility will automatically comply with code requirements. Different requirements for "existing day care homes" may have been applied to the home which is already established, while the newly established day care home may need to meet more stringent rules.

If a day care home was constructed on or after January 1, 2002 it was considered a "new" day care home under OSFM's previous adoption of the 2000 edition of the LSC. Under the new 2015 edition of the LSC this same day care home would be considered an existing day care home because it was in existence prior to January 1, 2020. But it is very important to understand that the LCS does not permit the reduction of existing life safety and fire protection systems. Therefore, the day care home is required to maintain their facility, at a minimum, in accordance with Chapter 16 of the 2000 edition of the LSC. The requirements of Chapter 17 of the 2015 edition would also apply, including the requirement to maintain the facility's existing life safety and fire protection system requirements from the 2000 edition.

### **2. Subclassification of Day Care Homes**

The LSC national standard subclassifies day care occupancies as "day care centers", "group day care homes", or "family day care homes" based upon the number of clients being served. However, the DCFS state regulations at Title 41 Ill. Adm. Code 100.7(c)(3)(A)(i) require the OSFM to classify day care occupancies according to the same methods used by DCFS. DCFS classifies day care occupancies

as “group day care homes”, and “day care homes”. Therefore, if DCFS classifies a day care home as a “group day care home” the OSFM applies the “group day care home” section of the LSC. If DCFS classifies a day care home as a “day care home” the OSFM applies the “family day care home” section of the LSC.

Additionally, it is important to note that DCFS requires the owner of the day care home facility to live in the same building that houses that day care home facility. If this is not the case, then the classification will be a “day care center” no matter the number of clients identified in the license. Comparison of the subclassifications of day care homes (LSC vs. DCFS) are provided in the table below:

<b>LSC</b>	<b>DCFS</b>
Family Day Care Homes >3 but < 7 clients	Day Care Homes 1-12* clients
Group Day Care Homes ≥7 but ≤ 12 clients	Group Day Care Homes 12 to ≤ 16 clients
Day Care Center > 12 clients	Day Care Center > 16 clients

\*Double check with DCFS to determine classification if the license will be for up to 12 clients

## **CODE REQUIREMENTS**

The remaining pages of this document offer a review of the major requirements of the LSC for a new day care home.

### **1. Primary Means of Escape**

The term “means of escape” refers to a way to exit a building or structure that does not conform to the strict definition of means of egress but does provide an actual alternate way out of the building or structure. The escape paths need not be the true exit access, exit, and exit discharge.

- Every sleeping room, living area or dining area shall have access to a primary means of escape located so as to provide occupants an unobstructed path of travel to the outside of the building. The primary method must be a door or door/stairway combination that qualifies under the LSC’s primary means of escape requirements
- Where spaces on the story above the level of exit discharge are used by clients, at least one means of egress shall be an exit discharging directly to the outside. This requires either an outside stairway from the second floor to ground level, or an interior stairway that is “protected.” In life safety codes, “protected” means that the stairway is separated from the rest of the structure by 1-hour fire-rated walls so as not to be immediately exposed to a fire on the first floor. Such an arrangement allows clients on upper floors additional time to exit the home.

When a day care homes classification facility is located in the basement of the building or structure housing the facility, additional safety features are required. The fact that many day care home owners desire to use the basement level of their home for client services, but must meet the LSC’s requirements applicable to proper basement exiting, has been challenging for many of these home owners. In consideration of this problem, this section attempts to offer a detailed explanation of proper basement exiting in accordance with Title 41 Ill. Adm. Code 100.7(c)(3)(A)(iii):

- Method #1-Direct Exit from Basement (complies with the LSC)
  - i. This method requires that there is a door at the basement level that leads directly to the outside without traversing another level within the home.
  - ii. Once outside, occupants walk up a flight of outside stairs a maximum of 8 ft to grade level.
  - iii. Windows cannot serve as direct exits.
  - iv. Occupants may travel through other rooms of the basement but not through other floors of the home.
- Method #2-Protected Travel Through the Home
  - i. This method requires the presence of an interior stairway that leads up to an enclosed “protected” path through the home.
  - ii. The path through the home must be separated from all other areas on the grade level of the home by 1-hour fire-rated construction all the way through the home to the exterior egress door. The exterior door itself, however, does not have to be rated.
- Method #3-Smoke Detection and Sprinkler Protection
  - i. This method requires that multi-station smoke detection is provided on all levels of home, and
  - ii. Automatic sprinklers are installed to protect the path of egress through the grade level of the home. Domestic water can supply sprinklers, but this limited-area system must be installed and designed in accordance with NFPA 13D, *Standard for the Installation of Sprinkler Systems in One- and Two-Family Dwellings*
- Further explanation on Method #3 is as follows:
  - i. Method #3 does not require the entire home to be sprinklered.
  - ii. Method #3 does not require sprinklers to be installed in the basement level.
  - iii. Method #3 does not require the entire first floor of the home to be sprinklered.
  - iv. Method #3 does not require any of the rooms along the path to be protected by a 1-hour fire resistance-rated enclosure.

## 2. Secondary Means of Escape

In addition to the primary route, each sleeping room shall have a secondary means of escape or protection as follows:

- A door, stairway, passage or hallway providing a way, independent of and remote from the primary means of escape, for unobstructed travel to the outside of the dwelling at street or ground level, or
- A passage through adjacent non-lockable spaces independent of and remote from the primary means of escape to any approved means of escape, or
- A properly sized window

- i. The first of the three size criteria is the width of the window shall be of not less than 20 in.
- ii. The second size criteria requires the window to be not less than 24 in. in height.
- iii. The third size criteria requires the window to be at least 5.7 ft<sup>2</sup> in area.
- iv. Also, the bottom of the opening shall be not more than 44 in. above the floor.

Please note that both the minimum dimensions of 20 in. x 24 in. as well as the requirement for 5.7 ft<sup>2</sup> must be met. A 20 in. x 24 in. window will not result in 5.7 ft<sup>2</sup> but rather only 3.3 ft<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, the minimum dimensions must be increased to comply.

Windows located below the adjacent ground level and provided with window wells must meet the following criteria:

- i. The window well should have horizontal dimensions that allow the window to be fully opened.
  - ii. The window well should have an accessible net clear opening of not less than 9 ft<sup>2</sup> with a length and width of not less than 36 in. in each direction.
  - iii. A window well with a vertical depth of more than 44 in. should be equipped with an approved permanently-affixed ladder or with steps meeting the following criteria:
  - iv. The ladder or steps should not encroach more than 6 in. into the required dimensions of the window well.
  - v. The ladder or steps should not be obstructed by the window.
- Amendments to the OSFM's adoption of the *Life Safety Code* permits the construction of a permanent ramp or staircase so the window sill will be within 44 in. of grade. The stair or ramp shall be at least the width of the window or a minimum of 36 in. in width, whichever is greater.

A secondary means of escape is not required if the building is protected throughout with sprinklers.

Amendments to the OSFM's adoption of the *Life Safety Code* permits the construction of a permanent ramp or staircase so the window sill will be within 44 in. of grade. The stair or ramp shall be at least the width of the window or a minimum of 36 in. in width, whichever is greater.

A secondary means of escape is not necessary if the bedroom or living area has a door leading directly to the outside of the building (at or leading to grade level), *or* if the building is protected throughout by an automatic sprinkler system installed in accordance with LSC requirements.

### 3. Doors

Below are some of the major requirements related to doors found within a day care home:

- Every door latch to closets, storage areas, kitchens, and other similar spaces or areas shall be such that clients can open the door from the inside of the space or area.
- Every bathroom door lock shall be designed to permit opening of the locked door from the outside by an opening device that shall be readily accessible to the staff.



- No day care home room shall be occupied for living or sleeping purposes that is accessible only by a ladder or folding stairs or through a trap door.
- Normally no more than one motion is permitted to unlock and unlatch doors. But for purposes of security to prevent unwanted entry, the OSFM amended their adoption of the Life Safety Code to permit (in certain circumstances) an additional code compliant locking device that would permit up to two motions to unlock and unlatch the door. This amendment applies only to existing buildings. See Title 41 Ill. Adm. Code 100.7(c)(10).

#### **4. Means of Escape Design**

- Dead-End Corridors. Dead-end corridors are not permitted to exceed 20 ft. in length in either new or existing day care homes. In existing day care homes home protected by an automatic sprinkler system, the dead end corridor may be 50 ft. in length.
- Travel Distance. Travel distance from any point in a room to an exit shall not exceed 150 feet. The travel distance may be increased by another 50 ft. if the home is protected throughout by an automatic sprinkler system.
- Emergency Lighting. There are no requirements for provision of “battery packs” or other methods of emergency lighting during power failures.
- Exit Signs. There are no requirements for lighted exit signs above exit doors or stairways.

#### **5. Heating Equipment and Utilities**

Utilities and electrical installation must comply with codes and standards identified in the LSC.

- Protective Covers for Electrical Outlets. Special protective covers for all electrical receptacles shall be installed in areas occupied by clients. Examples include the simple plastic plugs or inserts found at a hardware store or tamper-proof outlets.
- Unvented Fuel-Fired Heaters. Unvented fuel-fired heaters shall not be permitted unless they comply with NFPA 54, *National Fuel Gas Code*.
- Protection from Heating Equipment. Any heating equipment in spaces occupied by clients shall be provided with partitions, screens, or other means to protect clients from hot surfaces and open flames. (Also see 16.3.2 above for requirements pertaining to protection of hazardous areas).

#### **6. Minimum Building Construction Requirements**

The day care home may be of any type of construction including wood frame construction.

#### **7. Location within a Building and Defining a Story Within a Building**

Day care homes are not permitted to be more than one level below the level of exit discharge.

See Title 41 Ill. Adm. Code 100.7(c)(7) to see options for defining the Level of Exit Discharge (first floor of a building) or to define a story within a building.

## 8. Protection of Vertical Openings

Fire and smoke travel upward in a fire building via vertical paths (primarily stairwells). The purpose of requiring a fire-rated door, with a self-closing device, is to provide time for occupants, alerted by required smoke detection, to exit the home before a fire in the basement area jeopardizes escape paths on the first floor by allowing them to fill with smoke.

Vertical protection requirements for day care homes are as follows. These are in addition to the requirements described above for primary means of escape:

- In group day care homes *only*, the doorway between the level of exit discharge and any floor below shall be equipped with a door assembly having a 20-minute fire protection rating. Where the floor above the floor of exit discharge is used for sleeping purposes, there shall be a door assembly having a 20-minute fire-rating at the top or bottom of each stairway.
- In group day care homes *only*, when clients are located in basements any stairway to the story above shall be cut off by a fire barrier containing a door of at least a 20-minute fire protection rating, equipped with a self-closing device.

## 9. Interior Finish

Interior finish refers to the treatments and coverings applied to interior wall and ceiling surfaces in an occupancy. Interior finish pertains to such items as paneling, suspended ceiling tiles, multiple layers of wall paper, and plasticized sheet goods that may be installed in an occupancy. Such materials contribute to the spread of fire and generation of deadly smoke in fire incidents. The classification of an interior finish material as Class A, B, or C identifies different degrees of flame spread and smoke developed ratings as determined by standardized tests. Materials such as paneling and ceiling tile are usually labeled by the manufacturer relative to their interior finish rating. Normal thickness of paint and wallpaper are not considered interior finish and not subject to restriction.

Requirements for interior finish are important to guard against conditions such as untreated wood paneling in stairways, plasticized ceiling and wall material, and other questionable interior finish products that would rapidly spread fire throughout a home.

If carpeting is applied to vertical surfaces (walls and/or ceilings) it then becomes subject to interior finish requirements but has separate testing requirements to be permitted to be installed on walls or ceilings. Carpeting that is designed, tested and approved for floor application may not qualify for application to walls and ceilings. The application of carpeting on interior walls and ceilings is therefore not recommended and often will present a code violation.

Interior finish shall be as follows below:

- In group day-care homes, interior wall and ceiling finish materials complying with Section 10.2 shall be Class A or Class B in corridors, hallways, stairways, foyers, and lobbies.
- In family day-care homes, the interior wall and ceiling finish materials complying with Section 10.2 shall be Class A or Class B in stairways.
- Interior wall and ceiling finish materials complying with Section 10.2 shall be Class A, Class B, or Class C in occupied spaces.

## 10. Separation of Hallways or Corridors

There are no requirements for fire-rated separation for corridors or hallways in day care homes.

## 11. Hazardous Areas

There are no requirements regarding separation of hazardous areas such as storage rooms or mechanical or furnace rooms.

## 12. Fire Alarm Systems and Smoke Detection

There are no requirements for a fire alarm system, except for when the day care home is located within a building of another occupancy, such as in an apartment building. This discussion is located later in this document under the section “Day Care Homes Within in Apartment Building.”

Smoke alarms shall be installed as prescribed below:

- Smoke alarms shall be installed within day-care homes on all levels of the building. Smoke alarms shall be interconnected so that the activation of one will activate the others. Smoke alarms are required to be powered by the building’s electrical system.
- Single-station or multiple-station smoke alarms or smoke detectors shall be provided in all rooms used for sleeping.

*Heat detectors are not recognized by the LSC or the OSFM as suitable replacements for smoke detectors, except when specifically permitted by the LSC.*

## 13. Carbon Monoxide Detection

The LSC requires carbon monoxide detection in new day care homes when client sleeping occurs and fuel-fired equipment is present, or when an enclosed parking structure is attached to the day-care home. Owners are encouraged to check with DCFS and local authorities concerning any additional requirements pertaining to the installation of carbon monoxide detection.

## 14. Automatic Sprinkler Systems

Day care homes are not required to be protected with sprinklers.

## OPERATING FEATURES

Operating Features are requirements found in each LSC occupancy chapter that provides requirements for ongoing fire safety operations, such as fire drills, emergency planning, furnishings, and decorations. Operating features for a day care home are as follows:

- The facility shall have a comprehensive written fire emergency response plan. Copies of the plan shall be made available to employees. All employees shall be periodically instructed on the plan and kept informed with respect to the duties of their position under the plan.
- Emergency egress and relocation drills shall be conducted. These shall be done at least monthly and all occupants shall participate. If the facility is not open year-round, then an additional drill shall be conducted during the first 30 days of operation each year to familiarize occupants with drill procedures.

- Fire prevention inspections shall be conducted monthly by a trained senior member of the staff. A copy of the latest inspection report shall be posted in a conspicuous place in the day care facility.
- It shall be the duty of administrators and staff members to inspect all facility exits daily to ensure that all stairways, doors, and other exits are in proper condition.
- Clothing and personal effects shall not be stored in corridors.
- Artwork and teaching materials shall be permitted to be attached directly to the walls but shall not exceed 20 percent of the wall area. This can be increased to 50 percent if the building is protected throughout with sprinklers.
- Adequate adult staff shall be on duty, alert, awake and in the facility at all times when the clients are present.
- Title 41 Ill. Adm. Code 100.7(c)(3)(A)(ii) requires the OSFM to defer to DCFS licensing standard requirements for staff-to-client ratios.
- Alcohol-based hand-rub dispensers are required to comply with Section 16.4.4.

## DAY CARE HOMES WITHIN AN APARTMENT BUILDING

In addition to the requirements reviewed above, when a dwelling unit in an apartment building or complex is used as a day care home, the following also applies:

- In *group* day care homes only, if the two exit accesses from the home enter the same corridor as the other apartments, exit accesses shall be separated in the corridor by a smoke barrier having not less than a 1-hour fire resistance rating. The smoke barrier shall be so located that there is an exit on each side of it. The door in the smoke barrier shall not be less than 36 inches wide and the door assembly shall have a fire protection rating of at least 20-minutes and shall be self-closing.
- When a *group* day care home is located within a building of another occupancy, such as in an apartment building, any corridors serving the group day care home shall be provided with a smoke detection system in accordance with Chapter 7 of the LSC, with placement of detectors at a spacing of no greater than 30 ft. If the day care home is located in an apartment building that is not required to have a fire alarm system, this requirement would necessitate the installation of a fire alarm control panel, system smoke detection, and horn/strobes. Title 41 Ill. Adm. Code 100.7(c)(3)(D) an alternative smoke alarm system is permitted as follows:
  - i. A smoke alarm system installed as prescribed in this subsection 100.7(c)(3)(D) shall be permitted to be used in day care homes located within a building of another occupancy in lieu of a smoke detection system connected to a fire alarm system as required by *Life Safety Code* (2015), Sections 16.6.3.4.2 and 17.6.3.4.2. This is only permitted to be used if the other occupancy is not required to have a fire alarm system pursuant to the applicable chapter in the *Life Safety Code*.
  - ii. Smoke alarms connected to the building's electrical system shall be installed in accordance with proper coverage standards in the corridor serving the day care home.
  - iii. Smoke alarms connected to the building's electrical system shall be installed in accordance with proper coverage standards within the day care home (see NFPA 101, *Life Safety Code* (2015)), Section 16.6.3.4 for new day care homes and Section 17.6.3.4

for existing day care homes) as well as within 15 ft of all sleeping rooms. NFPA 101, *Life Safety Code* (2015), Section 17.6.3.4.4 shall not be permitted to be used.

- iv. All smoke alarms regulated by subsections 100.7(c)(3)(D)(i) and (ii) will be arranged so that operation of any smoke alarm shall cause all smoke alarms within the corridor and the day care home to sound.

## **PLAN REVIEW SERVICES**

The Technical Services Division of the Office of the State Fire Marshal will conduct a plan review of a proposed day care center at no charge to the owner, contractor, architect, or the local fire department. The plans are reviewed for compliance with applicable requirements of the LSC, its referenced standards, and any other applicable state fire prevention requirements. OSFM plan review does not ensure compliance with either the licensing agency standards or local regulations which may differ from the rules and policies of the OSFM. OSFM plan review is not mandatory for construction, renovation, or additions to a day care center, but it is strongly recommended. As OSFM does not issue construction permits, our plan review should be considered as guidance for the owner, contractor, or design professional toward compliance and successful final inspection by our Fire Prevention Division.

If you have questions about available plan review services of the OSFM, please contact the OSFM's Technical Services Division in the Chicago Office.

Office of the State Fire Marshal Technical Services  
555 W. Monroe Street, Suite 1300N  
Chicago, IL 60661  
312-814-8960  
[SFM.Techservices@illinois.gov](mailto:SFM.Techservices@illinois.gov)

## **CONTACTS AND QUESTIONS**

If you have questions pertaining to day care homes contact your DCFS representative or one of the regional offices of the OSFM Fire Prevention Division at [SFM.FirePrevention@illinois.gov](mailto:SFM.FirePrevention@illinois.gov) or use the contact information below:

**Chicago Office**  
555 W. Monroe Street  
Suite 1300N  
Chicago, IL 60661  
312-814-2693

**Springfield Office**  
1035 Stevenson Drive  
Springfield, IL 62703  
217-524-2174