

NORTH COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
Policy and Procedure Manual

FIRE PREVENTION
PLANS AND PERMITS

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Large Family Day Care Homes

PURPOSE: It is the intent of this guideline to provide minimum requirements for large family day care homes within single family dwellings.

POLICY: Large Family Day Care Homes shall be governed by NCFPD personnel via utilization of the guidelines contained herein.

SCOPE: This guideline shall apply to all licensed large family day care homes within the jurisdiction of the North County Fire Protection District. It is intended to provide children in a Family Day Care Home the same environment that is provided in a traditional home setting. Refer to the [Residential Day Care](#) policy for multiple use residential occupancies not meeting the definition of a large family day care.

DEFINITION: A Large Family Day Care Home is a providers' own home licensed to provide family day care for seven to fourteen 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 Group R-3 occupancies by the State Fire Marshal.

I. REQUIREMENTS:

A. CONSTRUCTION

1. Non-rated construction shall be limited to one story in height.
2. Fire-resistive requirements for exterior walls shall be the same as for R-3 occupancies.
3. 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, tightfitting, solid wood door 1 3/8" thick 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 metal and having no openings into the garage.

B. EXITS

1. 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

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not less than 32 inches and the clear height is not less than 6 feet 8 inches. A manually-operated, horizontal sliding door may be used as one of the two required exits. Exits may pass through kitchens. If special egress control devices are proposed, refer to the [Special Egress Control Device](#) policy.

Currently, such devices are not permitted in such R-3 occupancies.

2. Every required exit door shall be operable 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.
3. Yard gates blocking egress to the public way shall also be operable from the inside without the use of a key or any special knowledge or effort.

C. ALARMS

1. Large Family Day Care shall be equipped with single station, residential-type smoke detectors that are approved by the State Fire Marshal. Smoke detectors should be installed according to manufacturer's instructions and should be tested monthly.
2. Large Family Day Care 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, spot smoke detector is required at a minimum.

II. MISCELLANEOUS

- A. A portable fire extinguisher with a minimum rating of 2A10BC shall be provided. Extinguishers should be conspicuously located where they are readily visible; preferable located along normal paths of travel. Extinguishers shall be mounted so that 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.
- B. Fire drills are required at frequency of once per year.
- C. 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.

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- D. Storage and handling of gasoline, fuel oil and other flammable liquids shall be in accordance with Article 79 of the 1998 Edition of the California Fire Code.