

Resource: Evaluate Your Space

The following questions can be used as a guide to help you think about the space you are considering for your child care business. Check with your [state licensing agency](#) and your local [Child Care Resource & Referral \(CCR&R\)](#) agency regarding specific requirements for your state. Those requirements are the ones you need to follow.

Structural Questions

	Yes	No
Have you reviewed your state's licensing requirements regarding structural requirements needed to operate a child care business in your state?		
If you are renovating an existing space, have you checked with your state licensing requirements regarding needed updates?		
Have you checked with your state licensing agency to make sure you can legally operate the child care program on the level of the building you wish to operate? (Some states may have restrictions on whether the child care can be located on an upper or lower level of a building.)		
Are there at least two exits on your ground floor that lead to the outside?		
Does the space have hand-washing and toileting areas in the rooms occupied by the children?		
Is there sufficient storage and janitorial space that are not accessible to children?		
Does the center have space for staff to take a break away from the children?		
Is there adequate parking for parents and staff?		
Are parents easily able to enter and exit the parking lot?		
Does the space have an adequate kitchen to meet the size of the program planned and does the kitchen meet required licensing and health standards?		
Does the kitchen meet fire safety standards?		

Evaluate Your Space *continued*

Physical Space

	Yes	No
Have you reviewed your state's licensing requirements to learn about the indoor and outdoor space requirements that are required for child care centers?		
Review your state's child care licensing requirements to learn how many square feet are required per child indoors and outdoors. Does your space meet these requirements?		
Is there enough space for each child to move freely?		
Will you have a space for each child's personal belongings?		
Can you maintain adequate air flow and comfortable room temperature?		
Are you able to keep your hot water heater at no more than 120 degrees Fahrenheit so that children are safe from scalding?		
Is the physical layout arranged so caregivers can view all areas at all times?		
Will you have places for children to play, rest, and eat?		
Is there room for storage of cleaning supplies, staff belongings and additional items where they are not accessible to children?		
Do you have a safe outdoor play space, or is there a playground nearby that you will be allowed to use? Check with your state's licensing agency to determine what constitutes an outdoor play area for child care centers.		
Is the surface under outdoor play equipment soft and free from dangerous objects to prevent injury?		
Is there a fence or natural barrier around your outdoor play space?		
If you have a swimming pool, is there a locked fence around it that meets the height required by your state?		
Have you checked the area surrounding your child care center for other potential water safety hazards (lakes, ponds, creeks, fountains, etc.) and consulted your state licensing agency regarding safety protocols?		

Evaluate Your Space *continued*

Health and Safety

	Yes	No
If you rent or purchase an older building (built before 1975), has it been tested for lead, asbestos, or other toxic materials? (Your community health department or child care licensing agency can refer you to experts who can take samples of paint and other materials for testing.)		
Is the air quality in and around the child care center adequate?		
Is the source for drinking water regularly tested, and does it meet required health standards?		
Is the child care center located in an area away from gas stations where there are underground or above ground gas/oil storage tanks?		
Is the child care center located away from other known environmental hazards?		
Have you been in contact with your local fire station or other state fire officials to learn about local fire safety rules ?		
Have you reviewed the Americans with Disabilities Act to make sure you understand how to plan an accessible design?		