



Johnson County, Kansas

Home Daycare

Handbook



2013 Edition



INTRODUCTION

The Fire Departments of Johnson County have had the responsibility to ensure the places where we live, work and congregate are safe and free of fire and life safety hazards. This enforcement does not usually include one- and two-family dwellings. When a citizen decides to operate a home daycare operation in the dwelling, this change of use requires us to ensure your home is free of fire and life safety hazards.

To assist in ensuring your home meets our level of safety; we have created the Fire & Life Safety Checklist – Annual Fire Inspection form.

We have created a standardized form that will be used by all the fire departments in Johnson County participating in this program. This form was created for consistency and to provide a level playing field for home daycares across the County. We will work with providers to ensure they

are in compliance; however, the fire departments believe that these are the minimum standards needed to ensure a safe daycare environment.

This handbook was developed for home daycare providers in Johnson County for the purpose of meeting the safety requirements developed by the fire prevention staff of the County's fire departments. ***Please contact your local fire department for any questions about the information and requirements in this document.***

PROVIDER RESPONSIBILITIES

In an effort to standardize the home daycare requirements in Johnson County, we continue to work with County and State Health Department personnel on initial applications and annual renewals. We work as representatives on the Office of the Kansas State Fire Marshal (OKSFM). If it is found a home daycare requires a fire inspection, the OKSFM is notified that an inspection is needed. They then work with local fire departments in completing the needed fire inspection.

- Providers are responsible for contacting their local fire department to notify them of the intention to open their operation.
- Providers are responsible for making sure a fire inspection is conducted prior to the expiration of any temporary or issued license.
- Providers are responsible for keeping copies of all their fire inspections.
- Providers are responsible for scheduling their annual fire inspection with their local fire department. ***Please contact your local fire department for more information on this requirement.***
- Providers are ALWAYS responsible for ensuring the fire and life safety of their home.

FIRE DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITY

The OKSFM works with fire departments across the state for conducting fire inspections for home daycares. Further, the OKSFM does not require annual inspections. This is a requirement of the fire departments of Johnson County.

- Inspections are required by the State for initial licenses or complaint received by their office.
- Local fire departments are not required to conduct annual fire inspections. However, Johnson County chooses to conduct these inspections annually.

FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY CODE REQUIREMENTS

It is the responsibility of the provider to ensure these requirements are followed in their home daycares to ensure a fire safe environment.

Home Daycares can only be in one- or two-family dwellings.

Any occupancy other than a home shall follow the requirements for commercial centers/preschools.

Home daycares on main levels shall have two remote exits.

These escape routes must lead to a place of safety outside your home. The exits must allow you and your occupants to safely get out of your home within 4 minutes. Remote exits are typically determined by ½ the distance of the space.

EXAMPLE – If the level is 100’ long, the exits would need to be at least 50’ apart.

Primary or secondary means of egress cannot exit through a hazardous space.

The escape route leading to the exits must not lead through garages, storage rooms or other hazardous areas. A kitchen is usually not considered a hazardous area unless it contained large amounts of combustibles.

Main floor exiting.

Using one exit, you should be able to walk or crawl to and lead directly to the outside. Your second exit may be a compliant rescue/ventilation window or door that provides an exit path to ground level. If a window is used, the provider shall show the inspector that they know how to operate the window and work all mechanisms required to make the appropriate opening.

Basement exiting.

If you use your basement for home daycare, two separate exit paths shall be provided. One exit will be the stairs leading back to the main floor. The second exit can be a compliant rescue/ventilation window to the outside, or a door that leads to the outside and continues to ground level. If the second exit is a window, the home shall be equipped with an approved, inter-connected smoke alarm system (hard-wired or wireless) and shall show the inspector that they know how to operate the window and work all mechanisms required to make the appropriate opening. The inspector can also require you to perform a fire drill using the egress window. Existing home daycares prior to 2013 can continue to use battery operated detectors as long as they are maintained per the manufacturer and replaced every 10 years. Note- It is highly recommended to change out to an approved interconnected smoke alarm system with battery back-up.

Second floor exiting.

If you use your second floor for home daycare, two separate exit paths shall be provided. One exit will be the stairs leading back to the main level. The second exit can be a compliant rescue/ventilation window or door leading to the outside. Existing providers using approved egress windows do not require you to continue to ground level and the use of ladders are not acceptable. The provider shall show the inspector that they know how to operate the window and work all mechanisms required to make the appropriate opening. Windows can be required to lead to a

deck or platforms. If the second exit is a window, the home shall be equipped with an approved, inter-connected smoke alarm system (hard-wired or wireless). Existing home daycares prior to 2013 can continue to use battery operated detectors as long as they are maintained per the manufacture and replaced every 10 years. **Note** - It is highly recommended to change out to an approved interconnected smoke alarm system with battery back-up. ***Please contact your local fire department for more information on this requirement.***

A second floor is any floor that is more than 12 feet above ground level or more than 6 feet above the floor below.

- **Home daycares cannot be located above a second floor.**

Every required exit door can be easily opened from the inside during the hours of operation.

All required exit doors must be easily opened. Any locks or latches that would restrict the ability to open the door with one motion are prohibited.

Children must be able to open every closet and bathroom door from the inside at all times.

Children can easily be trapped in a closet or bathroom. If there is a lock on the door, the key or tool required to unlock the door must be easily accessible or hung next to the door. For closets containing items that could be hazardous to the children, a lock can be attached to the top of the door as long as the children are unable to reach it.

Every exit is clear of obstacles and all doors are in proper operating condition.

All hallways and egress paths need to be clear of obstacles that can include furnishings, lamps, decorations, etc. take a look at your exit paths and make sure they are free of tripping hazards or other objects that could cause issues in an emergency.

Smoke alarms must be installed and maintained on every level of your home.

The smoke alarms are to be powered by your homes electrical system or be battery powered. Battery powered smoke alarms are to have their batteries replaced at least once a year. They are to be installed in every exit pathway and in each sleeping room used by the children under your care. All smoke alarms are to be tested monthly. These monthly tests and any battery replacements shall be recorded and documented. The fire inspector will ask you for these files for review.

If your home is required to have inter-connected smoke alarms, they may be hard-wired, wireless or battery powered. If one goes off, they all must go off. Older homes are allowed to take advantage of wireless technology in lieu of inter-connecting the devices with hard wiring. ***Please contact your local fire department for more information on this requirement.***

Emergency procedures must be written down and practiced.

Fire drills are to be conducted each month and documented. Your evacuation times must be less than 4 minutes. Tornado drills are to be conducted during the months of April through September and documented. Practice your drills at different times and weather condition so you can be ready in the event of an emergency. At your annual inspection, you may be required to perform an actual fire drill for the inspector. This drill can be conducted from any part of your home that is approved for daycare use. ***Be prepared to conduct a fire drill during your inspection.***

How to conduct a drill:

- Use the test button on your smoke alarm to sound the alarm.
- Account for your children at all times.
- Prevent anyone from re-entering your home or being injured from outside hazards.
- Once everyone is out, record the time for the drill on your drill documents.

In a real emergency, always call 911 from a neighbor's house once all the occupants are out and accounted for. The Fire Department will respond and extinguish any fires. Never reenter a burning home for pets or to try to extinguish any fire.

All unused electrical outlets in the daycare area must be tamper-resistant or have child-resistant protective covers.

These protective requirements help protect the children from electric shock. This protection is required throughout the area used by the daycare. This includes outlets located higher up on a wall or those located above countertops.

All natural gas, kerosene, wood or propane heaters are properly vented to the outside.

Unvented heaters are prohibited. If the heater is listed and required by the manufacturer to be vented to the outside, it shall be properly vented.

Any home containing a fuel-fired device that can produce carbon monoxide, a carbon monoxide alarm shall be installed that can be audible from any part of the home or multiple alarms installed. Existing home daycares not meeting this requirement will have 1 year to comply. Failure to comply can result in revocation of your home daycare license.

Barriers from all heating devices.

Barriers must prevent the children from getting too close or being burned. This includes fireplaces, furnaces, floor heaters and water heaters. The barrier is required even if the device is not in use. The barrier shall be made of non-combustible materials.

If you have any questions, please contact your local fire department.

Fire Department Contacts

Olathe Fire Department

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