



# Pittsburgh Department of City Planning

## CHILD CARE & ZONING PROCESS

### WHAT IS ZONING'S DEFINITION OF CHILD CARE?

In the Zoning Code, Child Care is defined as "an establishment that provides care, protection and supervision for children on a regular basis away from their primary residence for less than 24 hours per day. The term does not include the following: public or private elementary or secondary schools or facilities operated in conjunction with an employment use, shopping center or other principal activity, where children are cared for while parents or custodians are occupied on the premises or in the immediate vicinity."

**Note:** This definition is for Zoning Code purposes only. Building Code, PA Department of Human Services, and any other regulating codes and agencies have their own definitions which may or may not match the Zoning Code definition.

### WHAT PERMITS ARE REQUIRED?

A Certificate of Occupancy (aka Occupancy Permit) is required for any property to be used for Child Care services. A Certificate of Occupancy is a document issued by the City of Pittsburgh to verify that all Zoning and Building Code requirements have been met.

If renovations are proposed to prepare the space for use as a Child Care service, additional permits, such as a Building Permit or HVAC permit, may also be required depending on the scope of work.

The State may have additional licensing requirements and procedures that apply. The applicant is responsible for acquiring all the appropriate permits, licenses and approvals from the appropriate entities prior to opening or expanding a Child Care service.

### WHAT IS THE APPLICATION PROCESS FOR A CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY?

Applications begin at the Division of Zoning and Development Review, 200 Ross St, 3rd floor. The office hours are weekdays 8 am-3 pm, excluding City Holidays. Applications must be made in person.

The Zoning Division will review the application against the Zoning Code requirements. If the proposal complies with all Zoning Code requirements, the applicant will be given a Zoning Voucher to take to the Department of

Permits, Licenses and Inspections where the proposal will be reviewed against Building Code requirements.

**Note:** Building Code requirements are different than Zoning Code requirements. A proposal that complies with Zoning Code requirements is not guaranteed to comply with Building Code requirements. Visit the Department of Permits, Licenses and Inspections website [pittsburghpa.gov/pli/FAQ](http://pittsburghpa.gov/pli/FAQ) to learn more about their requirements and process.

### HOW DOES ZONING REVIEW CHILD CARE USES?

The Zoning Code further divides the Child Care definition into three categories, which are used to help determine compliance with the Zoning Code Requirements:

**"Child Care (Limited)"** is a "Child Care center that provides care, protection and supervision for 4 to 6 children at any one time, including those under the supervision or custody of the child care provider and those under the supervision or custody of employees."

**"Child Care (General)"** is a "Child Care center that provides care, protection and supervision for 7 or more children at any one time, including those under the supervision or custody of the child care provider and those under the supervision or custody of employees."

**Child Care for 3 or fewer children** is not given a specific definition in the Zoning Code, but is also regulated. This includes children under the supervision or custody of the child care provider and those under the supervision or custody of employees.

### WHAT ARE THE ZONING CODE REQUIREMENTS?

**Use** - The Use Table in the Zoning Code (Section 911.02) determines whether or not a use is permitted in each Zoning District and what type of approval process is required. The table will identify whether the approval process is approval by right, through an Administrator Exception (see Administrator Exception handout), or through a Special Exception (see Zoning Board of Adjustment handout). A Use Variance from the Zoning Board of Adjustments would be required in Zoning Districts where the table does not identify Child Care as a permitted use (see Zoning Board of Adjustment handout).

[zoning requirements continued](#) →



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# CHILD CARE & ZONING PROCESS CONTINUED

**Parking** - Regardless of the approval process determined by the Use Table, off-street parking is required to be provided on-site for Child Care uses at the rate of 1 parking space per 800 square feet of floor area for the use.

**Additional Requirements** - Depending on the location and scope of the proposal, additional requirements may apply. These may include, but are not limited to, landscaping and screening requirements and Residential Compatibility. Zoning staff will help determine what, if any, additional requirements apply.

### HOW IS CHILD CARE OFFERED IN THE PROVIDER'S HOME REVIEWED?

If the child care service falls into the category of Child Care (Limited) or Child Care (General) as described above, it will be reviewed by Zoning staff in the same way as any other Child Care (Limited) or Child Care (General).

If the child care service is for 3 or fewer children and is offered out of the primary residence of the child care provider, it may be approved as a Home Occupation provided the Home Occupation requirements are met (Section 912.05). These requirements include, but are not limited to, only individuals who reside in the residence may be employed in the home occupation, no more than 6 one-way vehicle trips a day may be generated by the home occupation, and no exterior alteration for or visible evidence of the home occupation is permitted.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact the Division of Zoning and Development Review at 412-255-2241 or [zoning@pittsburghpa.gov](mailto:zoning@pittsburghpa.gov) regarding Zoning Code and Zoning application process questions.

Visit the Department of Permits, Licenses and Inspections website [pittsburghpa.gov/pli/FAQ](http://pittsburghpa.gov/pli/FAQ) to learn more about their requirements and process.

Visit the PA Department of Human Services website regarding State regulations and requirements.