

Instructions and Tips for Creating Compliant Policies and Procedures: Home Child Care Premises Fire Evacuation Procedures (O. Reg. 137/15, ss. 68(3))



Mandatory Information

Licenseses of home child care agencies are required to establish a written procedure with respect to evacuation in the event of fire for each premises where the licensee oversees the provision of home child care to demonstrate compliance with requirements under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* and *O. Reg. 137/15*.

Other Considerations

The following are some tips and other considerations for developing your fire evacuation procedures. These are not mandatory, but they will support the development of more comprehensive and high-quality procedures:

General

- Provide definitions for ambiguous terms used throughout your procedures.
- Include a space to put the date that the procedures were last developed and/or updated.
- Set out your evacuation procedures based on the following topics:
 1. Fire prevention procedures
 2. Procedures to prepare for a fire evacuation, including fire drills; and
 3. Procedures to follow during a fire evacuation
- Be clear about the intent of your fire evaluation procedures and what you are trying to achieve through its implementation.

1. Developing Fire Prevention Procedures:

- Contact the local fire department for guidelines on fire safety precautions and recommendations that can be implemented at each home child care premises, such as:
 - the use of fireplaces;
 - the storage of combustible materials;
 - handling electrical wiring and child safety plugs;
 - best practices for smoke detectors, fire alarms and carbon monoxide detectors;
 - the use of fire extinguishers (note: this may be required by local by-laws);
 - the use of candles, open flame lamps;
 - taking precautions when cooking; and
 - the use of barbeques; etc.

2. Developing Procedures to Prepare for a Fire Evacuation, Including Fire Drills:

- Identify the designated place(s) of shelter for short- and long-term evacuations in the evacuation procedures.
- Describe how families will be advised of evacuations and the designated place(s) of shelter.
- Where home child care premises are located in a high-rise dwelling (e.g. apartment buildings), the building owner should be made aware that child care is provided in the apartment so that the building's fire evacuation procedures can consider any additional risk to children.
- Require that an emergency bag be prepared for every premises that includes essential items (e.g. a first aid kit, gloves, emergency contact information, emergency medication, hand sanitizer, snacks, water, writing materials, blankets, etc.)
- Indicate how frequently batteries for fire alarms, smoke detectors and carbon monoxide devices will be checked and changed.
- Link the procedures to other regulatory requirements in your procedures (e.g. keeping and recording attendance, ensuring supervision of children is maintained at all times, having emergency contact information readily available, etc.).
- Link the procedures to other policies and procedures required under regulation (e.g. serious occurrence reporting, process for monitoring compliance and contraventions, emergency management policies and procedures, etc.).
- Require that practice fire evacuations (fire drills) be regularly conducted for different rooms or spaces (e.g. where the home child care premises is a house) and specify how often they will be conducted.

3. Developing Procedures to Follow During a Fire Evacuation:

- Request the local fire department to visit the premises and provide advice and protocols on evacuation procedures, and include their recommendations in the written procedures.
- Consider the following questions, and ensure your fire evacuation procedures respond to them:
 - Is the procedure clear, so that children, providers and other persons in the home know exactly what to do during a fire evacuation?
 - What are all possible escape routes?
 - How will the local fire department be contacted?
 - Where are safe areas away from the home premises at which children and other occupants may meet and be accounted for?
 - Is there a temporary evacuation site or shelter where the provider, children and other persons in the home can wait until children can be relocated (e.g. a back-up provider) and/or picked up by their parents/guardians?

- Include the following expectations and procedures for provider and other persons in the home premises to follow, where possible and safe to do so:
 - Assisting children with exiting immediately;
 - Taking an emergency bag;
 - Leading children to the designated shelter;
 - Contacting the local fire department;
 - Contacting children's parents/guardians; and
 - Not re-entering a burning building for any reason (smoke and gases from a very small fire may be dangerous and/or fatal).