

Licensing Inspection Checklist

113 Items | 8 Categories | 50 States

CENTER NAME

[Center Name]

INSPECTION DATE

____ / ____ / ____

INSPECTOR / PREPARED BY

Based on requirements from:

TX HHS, AZ ADHS, NC DCDEE, MO DSS, NY OCFS, CA CCL, FL DCF, WA DEL

USDA CACFP guidelines, CPSC safety standards, AAP Safe Sleep guidelines,
and federal Childcare.gov monitoring standards

This checklist is a comprehensive starting point. Cross-reference with your specific state's licensing inspection form for additional requirements.

1. Facility & Building Safety

18 items

- 1. Current fire inspection certificate on file and not expired
- 2. Fire extinguishers inspected annually (check tags for dates)
- 3. Smoke detectors installed and tested monthly (document test dates)
- 4. Carbon monoxide detectors installed on every level (5 feet above floor per manufacturer specs)
- 5. Emergency exits clearly marked and unobstructed
- 6. Evacuation routes posted in every classroom and common area
- 7. Electrical outlets covered or tamper-resistant in all child-accessible areas
- 8. Cleaning supplies, chemicals, and medications stored in locked cabinets out of children's reach
- 9. No peeling paint, exposed wiring, or structural hazards
- 10. Water temperature at faucets accessible to children does not exceed 120°F
- 11. Outdoor play area fully enclosed with fence in good repair (most states require minimum 4-foot height)
- 12. Outdoor equipment age-appropriate and free of rust, splinters, sharp edges, entrapment hazards
- 13. Protective surfacing under and around outdoor equipment (rubber mulch, engineered wood fiber, or rubber mats per CPSC guidelines)
- 14. No standing water, poisonous plants, or animal waste in outdoor area
- 15. Swimming pools/water features (if any) fully fenced with self-latching gate, compliant with local pool safety codes
- 16. Furniture, cribs, and equipment meet current CPSC safety standards (check for recalls)
- 17. Interior rooms maintain temperature between 68-75°F with adequate ventilation
- 18. Stairways have gates at top and bottom in areas accessible to toddlers

2. Required Postings & Displays

12 items

- 19. Current childcare license posted in a conspicuous location visible to parents
- 20. Evacuation plan/route posted near exit in every room
- 21. Emergency contact numbers posted by every phone (911, poison control 1-800-222-1222, licensing agency)
- 22. Current allergy list posted in every classroom and in the kitchen/food prep area
- 23. Current week's menu posted where parents can see it (required for CACFP)
- 24. Handwashing procedure poster posted at every sink used by children
- 25. Diaper changing procedure posted at every changing station
- 26. Parent notification of pesticide application (where required by state)
- 27. "No Smoking" signs posted (as required)
- 28. Mandated reporter notice posted for staff (as required by state)
- 29. Staff-to-child ratio chart posted in each classroom
- 30. Daily attendance sign-in/sign-out sheet accessible to parents at entry

3. Staff Personnel Files

15 items

15 items per employee

- 31. Completed application and/or resume on file
- 32. Background check clearance (state criminal, FBI fingerprint, sex offender registry) - verify not expired
- 33. Child abuse/neglect registry clearance
- 34. Current CPR certification (American Heart Association or American Red Cross, infant/child/adult)
- 35. Current First Aid certification
- 36. Proof of age (must meet state minimum age requirement, typically 18 for lead teachers)
- 37. Health clearance/physical exam results (TB test or risk assessment, as required by state)

- 38. Proof of required education or credentials (CDA, associate degree, state-specific qualifications)
- 39. Documentation of pre-service training hours completed before working with children
- 40. Documentation of annual in-service training hours (most states require 15-24 hours annually)
- 41. Signed acknowledgment of behavior guidance/discipline policy
- 42. Signed acknowledgment of mandated reporter obligations
- 43. Signed confidentiality agreement
- 44. Emergency contact information for the employee
- 45. Proof of orientation completion (facility policies, emergency procedures, job responsibilities)

4. Child Records & Enrollment Files

14 items

14 items per child

- 46. Completed enrollment/registration form with all required fields
- 47. Current immunization record on file (or valid exemption documentation)
- 48. Emergency contact form with minimum 2 contacts beyond parents, including phone numbers
- 49. Authorized pickup list with names, relationships, and signatures (photo ID noted)
- 50. Signed parent/guardian consent for emergency medical treatment
- 51. Medical action plan for any child with allergies, asthma, seizures, or other conditions (signed by physician)
- 52. Medication administration authorization form (if applicable) with dosage, schedule, physician signature
- 53. Special dietary needs or food allergies documented and communicated to kitchen staff
- 54. Custody documentation (if applicable) - court orders, custody agreements on file
- 55. Photo/media release consent form (signed)
- 56. Signed acknowledgment of receipt of family handbook
- 57. Tuition/fee agreement signed by parent
- 58. Child's physician name, address, and phone number on file

59. Transportation authorization (if center provides transportation)

5. Classroom Environment & Supervision

14 items

60. Staff-to-child ratios maintained at all times including transitions, outdoor play, and nap time
61. Group size limits not exceeded per state regulations
62. Children within sight and sound of a caregiver at all times (direct supervision)
63. Age-appropriate materials and equipment in each classroom
64. Hazardous items (scissors, small objects, cords) stored out of children's reach
65. Cribs/rest mats meet CPSC standards, placed at least 3 feet apart during nap time
66. Each child has individual bedding that is washed weekly (or more frequently)
67. Infants placed on backs to sleep (per AAP Safe Sleep guidelines)
68. Classroom has natural or adequate artificial lighting
69. Quiet and active areas separated within classroom
70. Children's work and daily schedule displayed at child's eye level
71. Transition activities planned to minimize wait times
72. Mixed-age groupings (if used) comply with the ratio for the youngest child in the group
73. Volunteers and visitors are never left alone with children

6. Health, Sanitation & Hygiene

16 items

74. Handwashing occurs before and after: meals, diapering, toileting, handling bodily fluids, outdoor play
75. Handwashing posters at every sink describe proper technique (wet, soap, scrub 20 seconds, rinse, dry)
76. Diaper changing follows posted 6-step procedure (including gloves, sanitizing surface between changes)
77. Diaper changing surface is non-porous and sanitized after each use

- 78. Soiled diapers disposed of in hands-free, lidded container and emptied at least daily
- 79. Toileting areas clean and supplied (toilet paper, soap, paper towels or air dryers)
- 80. Bleach/sanitizer solution mixed fresh daily at correct concentration (1 tbsp bleach per 1 gallon water for sanitizing, or EPA-registered sanitizer)
- 81. Tables and high chair trays sanitized before and after each meal
- 82. Toys mouthed by infants/toddlers sanitized between uses by different children
- 83. Classroom deep-cleaned on a posted schedule (weekly at minimum)
- 84. Ill child exclusion policy enforced (children with fever 100.4°F+, vomiting, diarrhea, or contagious conditions sent home)
- 85. Illness log maintained (date, child name, symptoms, parent notification time, pickup time)
- 86. Medication administration log kept with: child name, medication, dosage, time given, staff initials
- 87. Staff wear gloves when handling bodily fluids, blood, or open wounds
- 88. No sharing of personal items (combs, toothbrushes, cups) between children
- 89. Clean and soiled items separated (dirty laundry in closed containers)

7. Kitchen & Food Service

12 items

- 90. Food handler permits current for all staff who prepare or serve food (as required by state/county)
- 91. Refrigerator temperature at or below 40°F (temperature log maintained daily)
- 92. Freezer temperature at or below 0°F (temperature log maintained daily)
- 93. Food stored properly: covered, dated, labeled; raw meats stored below ready-to-eat foods
- 94. No expired food items in refrigerator or pantry
- 95. CACFP meal count records completed daily (if participating): date, meal type, number present, number served
- 96. CACFP menus meet meal pattern requirements for each age group served
- 97. Infant feeding plans on file from parents (breast milk/formula, solid food introduction)

- 98. Breast milk labeled with child's name, date, stored properly (separate from formula)
- 99. Known food allergies posted in kitchen and verified before serving each meal
- 100. Kitchen area inaccessible to children unless supervised during cooking activities
- 101. Dishwashing follows proper sanitization procedure (wash, rinse, sanitize, air dry)

8. Emergency Preparedness & Drills

12 items

- 102. Written emergency plan on file covering: fire, severe weather, lockdown, medical emergency, missing child, utility failure
- 103. Emergency plan reviewed and updated at least annually (date of last review documented)
- 104. All staff trained on emergency procedures (training documented in personnel files)
- 105. Fire drills conducted monthly (log with date, time of day, time to evacuate, number of children, notes)
- 106. Severe weather/tornado drills conducted per state requirements (typically quarterly)
- 107. Lockdown drill conducted at least annually (some states require semi-annually)
- 108. Primary and secondary evacuation sites identified with addresses and walking routes
- 109. Emergency supply kit stocked and checked quarterly (first aid supplies, flashlight, battery radio, water, emergency contact lists, medications, special needs supplies)
- 110. Portable attendance records/emergency contact cards ready for evacuation (grab-and-go binder)
- 111. Parent reunification procedures documented and communicated to families
- 112. Emergency plan addresses accommodations for infants, toddlers, children with disabilities, and children with chronic medical conditions
- 113. Communication plan for notifying parents during emergencies (phone tree, text/app notification, backup methods)

