

Childcare Center Operations Checklist

82 Essential Tasks Across 6 Frequency Levels

Center Name:

Date:

82

Total Items

6

Frequency Levels

27

Daily Tasks

55

Periodic Tasks

1. Daily Opening Checklist

15 items

- 1. Unlock facility and disarm security system
- 2. Walk through all rooms: check for hazards, verify temperature (68-75°F), check for pests or rodents, ensure nothing was disturbed overnight
- 3. Check that all emergency exits are accessible and unobstructed
- 4. Inspect outdoor play area for hazards (broken equipment, standing water, animal waste, debris, loose gate latches)
- 5. Verify staffing schedule: confirm all staff are accounted for, arrange substitutes if needed to maintain ratios
- 6. Review daily attendance roster and check for any pre-reported absences
- 7. Ensure sign-in/sign-out sheets are in place at entry
- 8. Check that allergy lists are current and posted in all classrooms and kitchen
- 9. Verify first aid kit supplies are adequate in each classroom
- 10. Turn on all necessary equipment and lights
- 11. Ensure cleaning supplies are stocked and accessible to staff (locked from children)
- 12. Review today's menu and verify food is prepared/thawing safely
- 13. Check that all diaper changing stations are stocked (gloves, wipes, cream, bags)

- 14. Review any parent communications or special instructions from the previous day
- 15. Verify emergency binder (printed contacts, attendance, medications) is accessible

2. Daily Closing Checklist

12 items

- 16. Confirm all children have been picked up and signed out (cross-reference attendance records)
- 17. Complete and submit daily CACFP meal count records (if participating)
- 18. File any incident, accident, or medication administration reports from the day
- 19. Sanitize all tables, countertops, and high chair trays
- 20. Sanitize toys that were mouthed (infant/toddler rooms)
- 21. Wash all dishes, bottles, and sippy cups; run dishwasher
- 22. Empty all trash cans and diaper pails; take garbage to outdoor receptacle
- 23. Wipe down bathroom surfaces, restock toilet paper and paper towels
- 24. Sweep/vacuum all classroom floors; mop hard surfaces
- 25. Check refrigerator: discard any expired food, note items to restock
- 26. Secure all doors and windows, set alarm system
- 27. Turn off lights, check that all appliances are off (except refrigerator/freezer)

3. Weekly Checklist

15 items

- 28. Review and publish next week's staff schedule (confirm coverage for all hours, adjust for time-off requests)
- 29. Review enrollment status: new children starting, children withdrawing, waitlist updates
- 30. Follow up on any outstanding tuition/payment balances
- 31. Review and respond to parent communications and feedback
- 32. Inventory classroom supplies and place orders as needed (diapers, wipes, art supplies, paper products)
- 33. Inventory food/kitchen supplies and place grocery orders
- 34. Wash all crib sheets, nap mat covers, and classroom blankets
- 35. Deep clean one classroom per week on rotating schedule (walls, baseboards, shelving, inside cubbies)

- 36. Sanitize all toys thoroughly (beyond daily quick wipe)
- 37. Review curriculum plans with lead teachers for the following week
- 38. Check outdoor equipment for loose bolts, splinters, cracks, or wear
- 39. Test all smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors (if not on monthly schedule)
- 40. Review staff training logs: any certifications expiring soon?
- 41. Back up digital records (attendance, billing, enrollment data)
- 42. Send weekly parent newsletter or communication update

4. Monthly Checklist

18 items

- 43. Conduct fire drill and document: date, time, number of children, time to evacuate, notes
- 44. Review and update staff schedule for the coming month (account for PTO, holidays)
- 45. Review monthly budget vs. actuals: revenue, expenses, cash flow
- 46. Reconcile tuition payments: identify outstanding balances, send reminders
- 47. Submit CACFP monthly claim (if participating) by state deadline
- 48. Conduct classroom observations and provide feedback to teachers
- 49. Hold staff meeting: review policies, address concerns, professional development topic
- 50. Review child enrollment files for completeness (immunizations current, emergency contacts updated)
- 51. Review staff files for completeness (certifications current, training hours logged)
- 52. Plan and publish next month's menus (ensuring CACFP meal pattern compliance)
- 53. Inspect and restock emergency supply kits
- 54. Test all safety equipment (fire extinguishers accessible, first aid kits complete)
- 55. Review incident/accident reports from the month: identify patterns, address recurring issues
- 56. Deep clean kitchen: appliances, behind equipment, range hood/filters
- 57. Check HVAC filters and replace if needed
- 58. Review pest control: inspect for signs, schedule treatment if needed (document all applications)
- 59. Update social media and website with photos (with parent permission), events, announcements

- 60. Review and update waitlist: contact families, update projected start dates

5. Quarterly Checklist

10 items

- 61. Conduct severe weather/tornado drill and document
- 62. Conduct comprehensive playground safety inspection (CPSC checklist)
- 63. Review and update emergency preparedness plan
- 64. Conduct parent satisfaction survey
- 65. Review staff performance: informal check-ins, address any concerns early
- 66. Review and adjust tuition rates if needed (based on market, costs, enrollment)
- 67. Conduct self-assessment against state licensing requirements (use our Inspection Checklist Template)
- 68. Review insurance coverage: adequate for current enrollment and staff count?
- 69. Audit food storage areas: expiration dates, proper temperatures, organization
- 70. Review and update classroom materials: rotate toys, remove broken items, add age-appropriate materials

6. Annual Checklist

12 items

- 71. Conduct lockdown drill and document
- 72. Renew childcare license (submit application and fees before expiration)
- 73. Renew liability insurance, workers' compensation, and property insurance
- 74. Renew all staff CPR and First Aid certifications (before they expire)
- 75. Verify all staff have completed required annual training hours (most states: 15-24 hours)
- 76. Conduct formal staff performance evaluations and set goals for the coming year
- 77. Review and update Family Handbook: adjust policies, rates, hours as needed
- 78. Review and update Staff Handbook: adjust policies, benefits, procedures
- 79. Review and update tuition rates for the coming year (communicate changes 30+ days before effective)
- 80. File taxes and review financial performance for the year with accountant
- 81. Update emergency contacts for all children and staff (send annual verification forms to families)

82. Plan major facility maintenance or improvements (painting, flooring, equipment replacement)

Sources: Based on state licensing compliance requirements, Child Care Aware of America quality standards, Early Learning Ventures operational guidelines, Daily Connect best practices, and common state licensing requirements from multiple jurisdictions. Last updated March 2026.