

HEALTH INSPECTION STANDARDS

For EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE CENTRES

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INTRODUCTION

Early Learning and Childcare Facilities are required to be licensed and inspected in order to operate in the Province of New Brunswick. These facilities are issued an operating license by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD). Facilities that are licensed include Early Learning and Childcare Homes and Early Learning and Childcare Centres. The Department of Health is mandated to inspect, and recommend for licensing, Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) centres. EECD will ensure that Regional Health Protection Services regularly receive updated lists of the licensed ELC centres in their regions.

Part of the licensing process requires approval in writing from a Regional Medical Health Officer. Specifically, Section 5(a) of *Licensing Regulation 2018-11 under the Early Childhood Services Act* states:

Before issuing a licence to provide services at a full-time or part-time early learning and childcare centre, the Minister shall require...a statement of compliance from a medical officer of health appointed under the Public Health Act stating that the facility meets lighting, ventilation and other general health standards under the Public Health Act.

For licence renewal, Section 6(2)(b)(i) states that:

If the facility is a full-time or part-time early learning and childcare centre, (i) a statement of compliance from a medical officer of health appointed under the Public Health Act stating that the facility meets lighting, ventilation and other general health standards under the Public Health Act. The Minister of Health is responsible for the administration of the *Public Health Act* for the Province of New Brunswick. He/she may designate persons to act on his/her behalf to apply regulations or policies. This includes issuing of orders for compliance, as may be deemed necessary for the prevention, treatment, and suppression of disease, and the preservation of human health. **Under the authority of Section 6 under the *Public Health Act*, a regional medical officer of health believing, upon reasonable grounds, that a health hazard exists, may issue an order for removal, repair, cleaning/disinfecting and/or closure of a premises to ensure elimination of the health hazard.**

The following standards have been drafted to provide guidance to public health inspectors and ensure consistency of application across the province. This standard is intended to replace any and all previous guidelines used for public health inspection of early learning and childcare (ELC) centres.

The standards are outcome or performance based. They are intended to capture the public health objective while allowing an operator some flexibility in the means of meeting the standard. In some situations, where the means of compliance is important, the standards will be more prescriptive in nature. Each standard has "Assessment Criteria" which can be used by the operator and public health inspector to determine compliance. **These criteria are not standards but are examples of factors the inspector could look at to make a determination on**

compliance with the standard. They may not be applicable to all centres at all times, recognizing that an inspection is a slice-in-time event and observations are relevant to the time and place.

Public health inspectors, under Health Protection Services(HPS), will continue to make recommendations to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) with respect to licensing. This does not imply that all standards need to be met before Health Protection Services makes a positive recommendation. For facilities with non-compliance, HPS will make its recommendation based on risk. Most will be recommended for licensing with the deficiencies noted and a timeframe indicated for compliance. Follow-up is a responsibility of, and at the discretion of, the public health inspector, and is based on risk. Should the health risk be considered unacceptable, the public health inspector will make a recommendation that the facility not be licensed. In this situation, no further inspections will be conducted until the operator and/or EECD informs the public health inspector that remediation has been carried out. **Should there be reasonable grounds to believe that a health hazard exists in the centre, in addition to the inspection report, the medical officer of health may issue an order under the *Public Health Act*.** Should a PHI note a violation that is clearly regulated by EECD staff, and not a health and safety issue, they will not write it on their inspection report, but will advise the appropriate coordinator after the inspection for their awareness and decision regarding follow up.

If early learning and childcare centres are preparing food at their facility, they are required to have their kitchen licensed by the Department of Health as a Food Premise and all sections of the Food Premises Standard Operating Procedures would apply to these kitchens. Should a food premise license of an ELC centre be revoked, then all food served to the children would have to be provided by the parents of each child or purchased from a licensed food premise. Where a centre is simply warming up foods brought in by individual parents for their child (children), using a microwave, licensing under the *Food Premises Regulation* is not required.

Enforcement activities carried out by HPS-DPS inspection staff must include consultation with the Regional Medical Officer of Health (RMOH) where food premises license suspensions or revocations are required, or health hazard orders are considered necessary.

Note: The operational requirements of the Department of Early Childhood and Education have been added in the separate column in this inspection standard to show that EECD departmental staff already inspects early learning and childcare centres for these items during their routine inspections. The requirements indicated by “Section” are taken from their *Licensing Regulation* and the requirements with a bolded number reference are taken from the operator manual. Many areas where inspection duplication occurred in the previous public health inspection standard have been removed, but the reference in the EECD operator manual given so HPS staff are aware that these items are covered. Some items are still evaluated by both departments as they impact on health and safety and are clearly noted.

1.0 General Requirements

Health Inspection Standard	EECD Requirement
<p>1.1 New and Renovated Facilities/Plans Site and floor plans must be submitted for review and approved by Health Protection Services (HPS) before any physical changes are made to the centre. See plan review checklist. Prior to a new operator taking ownership of an existing centre, even if the physical structure has not changed, HPS are also to be contacted for approval for the new operator licence.</p>	<p>Plans must be submitted and approved by EECD and other inspection agencies, including Health Protection Services) before any physical changes are made to the centre. This also includes changes in the operator licence.</p>
<p>1.2 Location Note: Moved to the ELC centre inspection checklist</p>	
<p>1.3 Water and Ice Supply</p> <p>Hot and cold potable water is supplied in sufficient quantity and pressure to meet the needs of the operation. Ice is made on-site from potable water or bought from an approved source.</p> <p><u>Assessment Criteria</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is the water from a regulated public water supply? - Is ice made from a potable/approved water source? - Are records of water testing results being maintained? Are they available? - Are there any apparent cross-connections? - Are there any on-site water treatment systems in place or use? - Has there been a noticeable change in the water quality? <p>For ELC centres with no food preparation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are they sampling at least twice per year for bacteria?(recommend spring and fall) - Has it been tested at least once every 5 years for inorganics? Is there an inorganic risk that requires further monitoring? Is there an organic threat for which the supply should be tested? <p>For ELC centres with food preparation-refer to the Food SOP</p>	
<p>1.4 Sewage Disposal Sewage and other waste water must be discharged to an approved communal system or on-site sewage disposal system.</p> <p><u>Assessment Criteria</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is the on-site system creating a health hazard? 	
<p>Health Inspection Standard</p>	<p>EECD Requirement</p>

<p>1.5 Solid Waste Disposal Solid waste must be handled and disposed of in a manner that will not create a health hazard.</p> <p><u>Assessment Criteria</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are the containers leak proof and rodent proof? - Do the containers have secure covers? - Are the containers cleaned when necessary? - Is the on-site storage adequate in space and security? - Is the collection often enough? 	
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2.0 Physical Facility

Health Inspection Standard	EECD Requirement
<p>2.1 Construction Premises must be of sound construction and maintained in a good state of repair. Carpets are not acceptable in food preparation and washroom areas. Equipment, materials and furnishings must be of safe construction, easy to clean and free of hazards.</p> <p><u>Assessment Criteria</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are the floors (except carpet/rugs, where acceptable) composed of tight, smooth and non-absorbent material, readily cleanable, and maintained in a clean and sanitary condition? - Are the walls and ceilings easily cleanable? - Is carpet/rug securely placed, maintained, clean and in a good state of repair? Maintained as per Appendix D located in the Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Communicable Disease in Early Learning and Childcare Centres? - Are there any suspected safety hazards that may require more detailed evaluation by other agencies (i.e., EECD, Public Safety)? 	<p>Section 30(3)-An operator shall maintain the indoor play area of a licensed facility to ensure the safety of the children.</p>
<p>2.2 Indoor Play Areas/Equipment Indoor play areas must be clean and in a good state of repair.</p> <p><u>Assessment Criteria</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are rugs and carpeting clean? Are carpets vacuumed daily? Cleaned as per Appendix D located in the Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Communicable Disease in Early Learning and Childcare Facilities? - Are there areas of wear or lack of maintenance that interfere with good sanitation? - Are rugs and carpeting placed and maintained so as to not pose a tripping hazard? 	<p>Section 32(1)(d)-An operator of a licensed facility shall provide indoor play area materials and equipment that are clean and in good repair.</p>
Health Inspection Standard	EECD Requirement

<p>2.3 Outdoor Play Area/Equipment The outdoor play area and its equipment must be safe and sanitary. Portable wading pools are not permitted.</p> <p><u>Assessment Criteria</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does the area accumulate water? - Are sand boxes equipped with tight-fitting covers and kept covered when not in use - Are outside sandboxes protected from contamination from animals? - Are trees pruned, grass mowed and yard brush-free in order to prevent tick harborage? Are activity areas and play equipment placed away from the woods and bushes to prevent tick exposure? 	<p>Section 22- The daily routine of a licensed facility shall include (a) outdoor play for at least one hour in each four-hour block of time when the majority of children receiving services are in attendance except in the following circumstances: (i) the wind chill is below -20 °C; (ii) the temperature is below -20 °C; or (iii) the temperature is 33 °C with humidity or above</p> <p>Section 31-Outdoor play area –covers shade, area.and fencing (if required). Section 33- Outdoor play area materials and equipment-refers to all objects/structures (falling within the parameters of the CSA standard) in a play area that are provided to be used for play by children, whether or not they were produced for that purpose. Includes protective surfacing-material to be used as a ground cover within the safety zone of play area equipment as specified by the CSA standard. Section 35- Access to trampolines not permitted</p>
<p>2.4 Sanitary Facilities Sanitary facilities must be maintained in a hygienic manner. Lavatories are to be provided with hot and cold running water under pressure. Hot water at point of use should not exceed 49°C (120°F) when children under 5 are present.</p> <p><u>Assessment Criteria</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are paper towels and dispensed soap provided for every hand washing sink? - Is there adequate ventilation so as to prevent odor accumulation (ie:bathroom exhaust fans, windows that open, etc.)? - Are floors, walls, ceilings, fixtures and all hand contact surfaces maintained in a clean and sanitary manner? 	<p>Section 38-Washroom-includes ratio of fixtures to children, use and cleaning of potty-chairs. 9.2.4-washroom-privacy(partitions)</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is there a mixing valve or other method of adjusting temperature used in the washrooms in ELCC's with children under 5 present- to ensure that hot water is at a temperature (below 49°C) to prevent scalding? <i>Note: As per national standards and Codes, hot water heaters must be maintained at factory settings of minimum 60°C¹</i> 	
Health Inspection Standard	EECD Requirement
<p>2.5 Heating/Ventilation Heating and ventilation must maintain the air at an appropriate comfort level and prevent the accumulation of undesirable substances.</p> <p><u>Assessment Criteria</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are room temperatures being maintained at a comfortable level (around 21-22°C)? (including floor areas where used for seating). - Are there any indications of indoor air quality problems? - Is there a concern about relative humidity? <p>Note: Information on the recommended levels of relative humidity may be found in the footnote link below.²</p>	
<p>2.6 Lighting Lighting provided by natural and/or artificial means must provide adequate illumination for the activities/functions being performed.</p> <p><u>Assessment Criteria</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are there concerns regarding inadequate/unsafe lighting? 	
<p>2.7 Sleeping Area and Equipment The sleeping area and equipment must be kept clean and sanitary.</p> <p><u>Assessment Criteria</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are cots, beds, cribs or mats maintained in a clean and sanitary manner? 	Section 36 Rest area-covers area, separation of rest equipment, type of cot/mats, storage, and surfaces, of mats, washing schedule of bedding(min. once weekly)

3.0 General Health Standards

Health Inspection Standard	EECD Requirement
3.1 Health Hazards	

¹ The National Plumbing Code, CSA and the World Health Organization have set a mandate that water heaters used in Canada come factory set at 60°C (140°F) to reduce the risk of bacterial growth and potentially legionella in electric water heaters. Source: NB Power website, 2019 <https://www.nbpower.com/en/products-services/water-heaters/water-quality/>

² Health Canada recommended relative humidity levels http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2013/rncan-nrcan/M144-59-2007-eng.pdf

<p>Situations that are unhygienic, physically hazardous or expose children to contagious illness or toxic substance are to be avoided.</p> <p>Assessment Criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is there an understanding that all ELC centre staff are responsible for identifying, correcting and preventing health and/or safety hazards? - Are there any apparent environmental hazards? - Is there compliance with the <i>Smoke-Free Places Act</i>? - Exposure to ticks?³ Exposure to toxic plants? (ie: poison ivy, giant hogweed, etc.) - Are there adequate steps taken to protect children from insect bites or stings? Are insect repellants used only according to Health Canada guidelines?⁴ - If there is a private swimming pool as part of the ELC license, does it pose a health hazard? 	<p>Section 39(2)- separate locked space for medications, toxic products, chemical products, cleaning supplies</p> <p>Section 39(3)- exemption are medications used in cases of anaphylactic shock(do not have to be locked)</p> <p>Section 43- Hot beverages</p> <p>Section 42- Prohibition of smoking-covers Smoke Free Places Act requirements for exposure of children to smoking or vaping.</p> <p>Section 34- Privately operated swimming pools-covers lifeguard, filtration and chlorination system, fencing, safety equipment and signage, staff-child ratio.</p> <p>Section 37- An operator of a licensed facility shall not permit a child receiving services at the licensed facility access to the kitchen unless the child is supervised.</p>
<p>3.2 Hand Washing</p> <p>Assessment Criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are there signs posted to encourage hand washing? - Is staff appropriately trained? - Are they following handwashing and respiratory etiquette as per the Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Communicable Disease in Early Learning and Childcare Facilities? 	
<p>Health Inspection Standard</p>	<p>EECD Requirement</p>
<p>3.3 Diaper Changing</p> <p>The diaper changing area shall be separate from areas where food is prepared, stored or served</p>	<p>Section 41- Staff shall follow the standard method for diaper changing as</p>

³ NB DOH Tick Advice: https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/ocmoh/cdc/content/vectorborne_andzoonotic/Tick-Borne_Diseases/how_to_be_protected.html

⁴ HC Insect Repellants: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/about-pesticides/insect-repellents.html>

<p>Assessment Criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is the diaper changing area separate from areas where food is prepared, stored or served? If diaper changing occurs in the same room where food is served, is the area located as to minimize risk of cross contamination. - Is there a handwashing sink available for use that is not used for food preparation or clean up? - Is the hand washing station properly equipped and maintained? - Is the changing area cleaned and disinfected after each use? Are staff trained on the diaper changing procedures and do they follow them? - Are waste baskets used to dispose of diapers located outside of the kitchen or children's play areas? Are they tightly covered and lined with a disposable trash bag? 	<p>outlined in their manual and posted procedures. Covers surface, posting of diaper changing procedures, distance from sink (1metre), materials to be used, safety and supervision. Exemptions, if applicable Appendix 22- Diaper Changing Procedures covers how, what to use and cloth diapers, if used.</p>
<p>3.4 Toys Toys and learning materials shall be cleaned and sanitized/disinfected or discarded as often as is necessary to prevent the spread of disease. Some materials should not be used within the ELC centre. These include used meat trays, used egg cartons, toilet tissue rolls, sand obtained from outdoor locations.</p> <p>Assessment Criteria See Appendix D in the Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Communicable Disease in Early Learning and Childcare(ELC)Facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do toys have cracks or broken parts that may compromise cleaning? - Are sand or sensory tables covered when not in use to prevent contamination? - Are children with respiratory and skin infection restricted from using water tables? 	
<p>3.5 Grooming Materials if a child has their own personal care materials, these are to be stored so as to prevent cross-contamination.</p> <p>Assessment Criteria Are individual personal care materials available, adequately identified and stored separately?</p>	<p>Section 40- separate storage of toothbrushes, individual use of toothpaste, and use and storage of pacifiers</p>
<p>Health Inspection Standard</p>	<p>EECD Requirement</p>
<p>3.6 Maintenance of the Facility The building, grounds, and equipment shall be maintained in a clean and orderly manner and kept in a good state of repair.</p> <p>Assessment Criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is there a written cleaning and sanitizing/disinfecting schedule that contains adequate detail with respect to area/item to be cleaned, cleaning frequency, materials used and who is responsible? - Are only disinfectants that have PCP or DIN numbers or chlorine bleach used? 	<p>Section 32(1)(d)-An operator of a licensed facility shall provide indoor play area materials and equipment that are clean and in good repair.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are sanitizers approved for use on food contact surfaces used? - Are there visible signs of disrepair that could present a safety hazard or interfere with sanitary maintenance? - Is staff aware of and do they follow universal precautions when in contact with blood or other bodily fluids? - Can staff demonstrate proper use of sanitizers/disinfectants? - Are staff able to test sanitizers and disinfectant strength using appropriate test strips? 	
<p>3.7 Insect and Rodent Control All areas must be free of insects and rodents. Note: Professional pest control companies should be consulted to eliminate problematic pest infestations</p> <p><u>Assessment Criteria</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are there any signs of insects and/or rodents? - Are openings to the outside screened? - Are outside play areas and equipment kept from accumulating standing water? - Are pesticides used on the premises? If so, is there a concern?(ie: way they are used? Type of chemical (powder, spray), location of traps and access to children, etc.) - For areas contaminated with rodent urine or feces, does the operator demonstrate knowledge on appropriate cleaning and disinfection? 	
<p>3.8 Field Trips Staff must be aware of and protect children from health hazards while on field trips outside of the centre</p> <p><u>Assessment Criteria</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are appropriate control/protection measures put in place to prevent/reduce risks? 	<p>10.9-planning outings, transportation to be considered and risks, if age and development appropriate, child safety during outing. Section 34-outings to public beach or public pool-only if lifeguard on duty and reduced child to staff ratio maintained.</p>
<p>3.9 Pets/Animals <u>Assessment Criteria</u> Follow recommendations as per the Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Communicable Disease in Early Learning and Childcare(ELC) Facilities</p>	

4.0 Staff Health

Communicable Disease Control

<p><u>4.1 Communicable Diseases</u> <u>Disease Control</u> For communicable disease control, every ELC centre operator shall follow the Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Communicable Disease in Early Learning and Childcare(ELC) Facilities, most recent advice from the Office of Chief Medical Officer of Health and other accepted sources.</p> <p><u>Assessment Criteria</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is the ELC centre operated to prevent and control communicable disease using methods that are that are consistent with the Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Communicable Disease in Early Learning and Childcare(ELC) Facilities most recent advice from Office of Chief Medical Officer of Health, and other accepted sources? - Are they appropriately tracking illness and disease? 	<p>11-Management of illness Appendix 9- Daily information sheet(5 day and 7 day) Appendix 10- Attendance record(5 day and 7 day) Appendix 11- Potential illness report form; Appendix 12- Return after exclusion form Appendix 13- Notice of illness form Appendix 14- Managing illness in ELC facilities- parent/Guardian's role</p>
<p><u>4.2 Staff Health Policies</u> Every ELC centre shall have health policies that offer appropriate guidance for the protection of workers as well as children.</p> <p><u>Assessment Criteria</u> Follow recommendations as per the Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Communicable Disease in Early learning and Childcare(ELC) Facilities ELCC's</p>	<p>6.4 Staff handbook</p>
<p><u>4.3 Outbreak Response</u> Every ELC centre shall have a plan regarding communicable disease outbreak management as per the Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Communicable Disease in Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Facilities.</p> <p><u>Assessment Criteria</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is there a plan in place? Are staff familiar with it? - Does it contain the elements as listed in the Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Communicable Disease in Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Facilities? - Exclusion of staff/children? 	