

# Determining Center (CC) Capacity

## What to Include When Measuring Spaces

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Capacity for a child care center is defined as: the total number of children allowed in the center at any one time, based on the available indoor and outdoor square footage, the number of toilets/sinks in the center, and the number of qualified staff.

When determining usable square footage, what furniture or equipment is considered usable?

### Applicable Rules

#### 414-305-0650 Diaper Changing and Toileting

- (2) A certified child care center must provide at least one diaper-changing area in or adjacent to each room where children in diapers are part of the group.

#### 414-305-0800 Facility Structure

- (5) A certified child care center must have a minimum of 35 square feet of **activity space** per child.
  - (a) Activity space must be available for use by children and used exclusively for child care during the hours of operation.
  - (b) Shelves or storage for children's materials that are accessible to children may be counted as part of the indoor space.
  - (c) Single-use areas such as kitchens, hallways, restrooms, storage areas, and closets, rooms designated for staff use such as offices and break rooms, and space occupied by furniture not designed for children's use, such as workspaces and cabinets, must be excluded when determining activity space.

### Procedure for Determining Capacity:

1. Review each space to be used for child care and document the applicant's planned usage on the floor plan, if provided.
2. Measure each space to be used for child care.
  - a. When measuring a new or remodeled space to be used for child care, it may be empty or lacking the furniture that will eventually be used in the space.
  - b. Provide the potential capacity and explain that the final capacity will be determined at the initial inspection based on the amount of usable space.
3. Divide the individual room's total square footage by 35 (square feet) to determine the room's capacity and document the results on [CCLD-0099 CC-SC Pre-Certification Consultation \(fillable\).pdf](#) form.
4. **When calculating the square footage, if the total number is anything other than a whole number, you must round down for the correct capacity total.**
5. Determine and document the maximum group size allowed in each room or space to be used for child care.
6. Confirm the location and placement of toilets, handwashing sinks, and diaper changing areas. "Adjacent" means immediately preceding or following within approximately 10 feet.
7. If the potential capacity from CCLD differs from planning/zoning or fire marshal, advise program to have these aligned. Typically, CCLD supports partner agencies limitations on this matter.

### Do Not include:

1. Single use areas such as kitchens, hallways, restrooms, storage areas, closets, rooms designated for staff use, such as offices, and break rooms.
2. Handwashing sinks, refrigerators, and heating units.
3. Teacher and sign-in desks.
4. Large permanent furniture or equipment not used by children.

### Measuring Infant Space for Usable Square Footage

1. When measuring a new or remodeled space to be used for infant care, it may be empty or lacking larger furniture, making it difficult to provide an exact capacity.
  - Provide the capacity calculated and explain that a post-set-up measurement visit may be necessary to determine the final capacity.

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- Once the infant room is set up with furniture, including cribs, diaper changing tables, and other infant equipment, remeasure the space, taking out square footage for any items not usable by infants.
2. The following items or equipment **are** included in the usable square footage for infant and toddler spaces:
- Diaper changing stations - Often, there is storage under them (shelves, drawers) that store necessary items for the children. Additionally, the equipment serves as an opportunity for staff to engage actively with an infant or toddler.
  - Highchairs and child-sized tables.
  - All cubbies- since they are used to store children's personal items.
  - Nap cots and mats.
  - Other large furniture – Bookshelves, lower cabinets that house materials and activities for the children, and adult-sized chairs, if used to feed or hold children.
  - Cribs – Useable space for infants can include cribs, if the space below the crib may be used for storing children's personal belongings, activity items, equipment, or supplies. An example would be storage bins containing either a child's personal belongings, such as extra clothes or diapers, or other items for children in care.

## Rationale

- In addition to meeting the needs of children, caregivers and teachers require space to implement activities and facilitate interactions with children.
- Enough square footage is needed to create an environment that supports program delivery and fosters strong, positive staff-to-child relationships.
- Square footage requirements for infant and toddler spaces ensure there is sufficient room to allow for cribs and diaper changing areas, space for adult seating to care for infants, and space for safe mobility of infants and toddlers.
- Allows programs to make the best use of their infant space, encouraging creativity, promoting appropriate developmental opportunities for infants, and aiding in developing strong, positive staff-to-child relationships.

## Formula for Calculating Square Footage

To calculate the square footage of a rectangular room, measure its length and width in feet, and then multiply the two measurements together using the formula: **length × width = square feet**. For irregular room shapes, divide the space into smaller, simpler shapes like rectangles and triangles, calculate the square footage of each section individually, and then add all the results together for the total. See [FIR-0057 Formulas for Calculating Square Footage.pdf](#) for more details on how to calculate square footage or use an online calculator such as:

Square Footage calculator <https://www.calculator.net/square-footage-calculator.html>