

Things to Consider when Opening a Child Care Program

Business and municipalities have a unique opportunity to increase access to high-quality child care in their communities, and they have a stake in developing solutions for their employees' child care needs.

Here are some items to consider when thinking about opening an onsite/near-site child care program.*

Location

Child care programs are required to have a certain number of square feet available to every child both indoors and outdoors. Make sure any space you are considering for your child care program can meet the square footage requirements for the maximum number of children you plan to serve. For in-depth information on these requirements, visit:

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=170-297-4925>

and

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=170-295-0080>

Insurance

Child care programs are required to be insured, either through commercial insurance or self-insurance. For in-depth information on these requirements, visit:

<http://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=43.215.535>

Staffing

Child care programs are required to adhere to specified ratios of staff to children. These ratios vary with the age of the children served. There are also limits on how many children of each age can be served. For example, for infants (ages 0 – 11 months) the staff to infant ratio is 1:4, and the maximum number of infants that can be served is 8. For in-depth information on these requirements, visit:

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=170-295-2090>

Tuition and Fees

How much do you plan to charge employees? Do you plan to subsidize any of the tuition costs for any employees' children? Child Care Aware of Washington regularly publishes average child care rates by region across Washington. Visit:

<http://wa.childcareaware.org/families/family-resources-1/need-help-paying-for-child-care>



** This is not a comprehensive list of all legal and financial considerations. Please refer to the Washington State Department of Children, Youth and Families for complete licensing requirements and regulations. Please also consult with your local city and county for local regulations.*