



Setting Up a New Licensed Centre-based Early Learning and Child Care Facility:

What You Need to Know

August 2025

K'áhshó got'jne xədə k'é hederi ɔedjhtl'é yerinıwə nı dé dúle.
Dene Kədə

ɔerihł'is Dēne Sųlıné yatı t'a huts'elkēr xa beyáyatı theɔɔ ɔat'e, nuwe ts'ēn yóftı.
Dēne Sųlıné

Edı gondı dehgáh got'je zhaté k'éé edat'éh enahddhə nıde naxets'é edahlı.
Dene Zhaté

Jii gwandak izhii ginjik vat'atr'ijahch'uu zhit yinohtan ji', diits'at ginohkhii.
Dinjii Zhu' Ginjik

Uvanittuaq ilitchurisukupku Inuvialuktun, ququaqluta.
Inuvialuktun

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Inuktitut

Hapkua titiqqat pijumagupkit Inuinnaqtun, uvaptinnut hivajarlutit.
Inuinnaqtun

kıspin ki nitawihtın ē nıhıyawihk ōma ācimōwin, tipwāsinān.
nēhiyawēwin

Tłıchq yatı k'èè. Dı wegodi newq dè, gots'o gonede.
Tłıchq

Indigenous Languages
request_indigenous_languages@gov.nt.ca

Une version française de ce document est disponible.

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Quick-Reference: Setting Up a New Licensed Centre-based Early Learning and Child Care Facility

1. Pre-Planning

- ☐ Confirm child care needs in the community.
- ☐ Identify potential sites and assess for suitability.
- ☐ Understand licensing, health, fire, zoning, and building code requirements.
- ☐ Estimate number/type of spaces and staffing needs.
- ☐ Secure initial project funding or confirm eligibility.

2. Facility Design

- ☐ Hire a licensed architect (required for larger projects).
- ☐ Complete schematic design, floor layout, and development of a site plan.
- ☐ Refine designs and prepare technical specifications.
- ☐ Develop a preliminary budget and timeline.

3. Permits and Approvals

- ☐ Consult with local authorities about zoning and permits.
- ☐ Apply for a Zoning Permit, if the development requires a zoning amendment.
- ☐ Apply for Development Permit.
- ☐ Apply for Building Permit (construction code compliance).
- ☐ Submit plans to Office of the Fire Marshal (at the same time with Building Permit application)
- ☐ Submit plans to Public Health (facility licensing requirement).

4. Construction and Inspections

- ☐ Start construction after building permit approval.
- ☐ Coordinate required inspections: building, fire, health, electrical.
- ☐ Ensure final approval for occupancy before licensing.

5. Preparing for Licensing (ECE Requirements)

- ☐ Submit floor plan, zoning approval, health and fire reports.
- ☐ Prepare written program goals and emergency plan.
- ☐ Obtain insurance, register with WSCC, and submit application.
- ☐ Schedule facility inspection by Early Childhood Consultant before license approval.

This resource complements the *Design Guidelines for Centre-based Child Care Facilities* and is intended for prospective applicants to the Early Childhood Infrastructure Fund.

Introduction

Setting Up a New Licensed Centre-based Early Learning and Child Care Facility: What You Need to Know provides an overview of the key steps in planning a new child care facility, with a focus on construction and renovation projects.

This resource is to be used in conjunction with [Design Guidelines for Centre-based Child Care Facilities](#). Both documents are intended for use by prospective applicants of the Early Childhood Infrastructure Fund or those wishing to build new centre-based facilities or renovate existing building for early learning and child care programs.

The document covers various project stages, starting with the pre-planning work, design, permitting, construction, and preparing for licensing. The document also contains contact information of the various agencies involved in the construction development and approval process, and regulatory requirements related to centre-based early learning and child care facilities, and financing considerations.

If you have any questions about the information contained in this document, please contact the Early Learning and Child Care Division via e-mail: elcc_operations@gov.nt.ca.

1: Pre-planning

Pre-planning for a new centre-based early learning and child care facility occurs in the early idea stages. Before firming up your idea, you will need to gather information that can help you determine the type of facility, understand regulations and licensing requirements, understand the process and tasks required, and confirm child care needs in your community.

During the pre-planning phase, individuals need to understand regulations and requirements for centre-based early learning and child care facilities, identify possible locations and determine whether chosen locations are suitable (see Appendix 1: Determining ELCC Facility Site Suitability) and if their centre-based early learning and child care facility project plans are feasible.

Where to find information

Setting up a new centre-based early learning and child care facility requires written approval from many different authorities, each with its own application and approval process.

Information on requirements for early learning and child care facilities are found in the *Early Learning and Child Care Act* and *Early Learning and Child Care Regulations* and the *Public Health Act*.

Requirements related to the design and construction of new buildings and the alteration, change of use, and demolition of existing building are found in the National Building Code of Canada, the National Fire Code of Canada and local bylaws.

You can get this information from your project consultant /contractor, the community government, Office of the Fire Marshall, Environment and Public Health, and Education, Culture and Employment.

This section covers who to contact and what you need during the pre-planning phase of the early learning and child care facility project.

1. Licensed centre-based early learning and child care space requirements

During pre- planning, consider licensing requirements of a centre-based early learning and child care facility, such as the design of the space, minimum space requirements, operating capacity, child care program requirements, use of space and program sustainability.

The Early Childhood Consultant in your Region can provide support with pre-planning information, for example: space types, maximum children per room, staff ratios, and space calculations.

Expectations

- discuss your facility plans to ensure you understand requirements based on planned licensed spaces (i.e. maximum children per room, staff ratios, space calculations for indoor play space, and other child care spaces like bathrooms and sleeping room)
- discuss your plan for outdoor space to ensure the right amount of outdoor space needed based on the anticipated licensed spaces.
- assess potential facility, determine its suitability for licensing and assist in creating a plan to reach the required standard.
- discuss licensing requirements and procedures.

The Early Childhood Consultant can also provide information on:

- early learning and child care program operations.
- what is needed to start a new child care program.
- funding available for centre-based early learning and child care facilities, and
- supports available during the licensing application processes.

The applicant should determine the anticipated number and type of child care spaces before meeting with the consultant. This is an essential step to ensure the facility plan is done correctly.

Early Childhood Consultant Contact: <https://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/en/early-childhood-consultants>

Additional Information

- Early Learning and Child Care Act - [RSNWT 1988, c C-5 | Child Day Care Act | CanLII](#)
- Early Learning and Child Care Regulations - <https://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/en/files/legislation/early-learning-and-childcare/early-learning-and-childcare.r4.pdf>
- [Child Day Care – Licensed vs Unlicensed](#)

2. Setting project goals

Getting ready for a Pre-Design meeting with a consulting team (Architect, engineer, contractor, and others as suggested by the architect).

Prior to and/or during the pre-design meeting:

- decide on the type of facility, location, and types of licensed spaces you want to create
- establish the facility project goal, vision for the centre, and possible sites/locations.
- review early learning and child care space requirements (minimum space per child and the maximum group sizes for each age group. (describe each room and space, their approximate sizes and any special features).

What to expect from Consultants/Architects

- receive advise on project design and project feasibility.
- help you determine the project's boundaries, including budget, timeline, and any specific requirements or limitations.
- site analysis (may engage with Civil Engineer and Geotechnical for preliminary site investigations)
- document site conditions, property line locations and/or measure existing structures.
- code analysis (identify regulations, codes, and local by-laws that affect the project), and
- preliminary scope of work.

NOTES

- Professional design consultants must have the appropriate professional designation. For example, an architect should be licensed to practice by the Northwest Territories Association of Architects (a self-regulating organization governed by the Architects Act).
- Northwest Territories Association of Architects (NWTAA) maintains a list of registered architects and architectural firms - <https://www.nwtaa.ca/directory>

***Check Contacts and Useful Resources Section.**

New construction or renovation/addition projects for buildings that are over 600 square meters or over three storeys high require an NWTAA Registered Architect for the project's design.

To confirm the registration status of an individual or firm that is not on the list, please contact the Association at ed@nwtaa.ca or call 867-766-4216.

3. Fire Safety Requirements

The Office of the Fire Marshall (OFM) is available to meet with consultants, owners and contractors before they submit their plan for review to discuss building code and fire protection issues/requirements.

Expectations

- discuss code issues and any other requirements before Plan Review submission
- gather information on plan submission to ensure compliance with electrical and fire codes & standards.
- Ask other questions, such as if an environmental site assessment is required.

Contact Information

Plan Review: Email: plan_review@gov.nt.ca /Phone (867) 767-9161 ext. 21028

Office of the Fire Marshal - (867) 767-9161 ext. 21030 for inquiries.

Additional Information

- Fire Prevention Act (gov.nt.ca) - <https://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/en/files/legislation/fire-prevention/fire-prevention.a.pdf>
- National Building Code of Canada - <https://nrc-publications.canada.ca/eng/view/ft/?id=515340b5-f4e0-4798-be69-692e4ec423e8>

4. Public Health Requirements

The Environmental Health Officer (EHO) is available for consultations* prior to construction/renovation of the facilities. However, EHO is not involved in facility designs.

Expectations

- gather information about EHO inspection process and requirements.
- gather information regarding general requirements and what is expected during EHO's post-construction inspection.
- get answers to specific questions about building specifications for construction or alteration needed, based on the ELCC facility's occupancy as well as their plans related to food preparation and handling.

Contact Information

Phone: 867-767-9066 ext. 49262

Email: environmental_health@gov.nt.ca

** It may take up to six months to get an appointment in communities without EHOs.*

Additional Information

- Public Health Act - <https://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/en/files/legislation/public-health/public-health.a.pdf>

5. Zoning and Permit Requirements

Each community government (Indigenous or town/city) has its own bylaws, processes, and requirements; including those related to zoning approval, development permits, building permits, and parking restrictions.

During pre-consultation meeting (with the City of Yellowknife for example, may include teams from planning, engineering, and building inspection departments), the applicant can get information regarding requirements before starting to renovate or build a new facility. Contact your local government to inquire if they offer this service.

Expectations (may vary by community)

- find out about the type of permit(s) needed for your project
- find out about timelines for permit approvals and fees
- find out information to be submitted with the application and the type of permit
- advice based on occupancy, project plan, and/or help determine occupancy based on the facility being considered.
- advice if a traffic impact analysis or if other studies are needed before approval.

Contact Information: Varies by community. See Appendix 2: Useful Contacts

Additional Information

- National Building Code of Canada - <https://nrc-publications.canada.ca/eng/view/ft/?id=515340b5-f4e0-4798-be69-692e4ec423e8>
- The Community Planning and Development Act - [Community Planning and Development Act](#)

Project Financing

You should identify project funding sources and secure funding before you start the project, unless the project will receive 100% funding from your organization.

One funding source in the NWT is the Early Childhood Infrastructure Fund (ECIF). This fund supports projects by Indigenous and community governments, non-profit organizations, public bodies, and education bodies that preserve or expand existing infrastructure of licensed centre-based child care spaces and/or projects that create new licensed centre-based child care spaces in NWT communities.

ECIF features three distinct funding streams, *Minor Projects*, *Major Projects*, and *Developmental (Needs Assessment)* Funds. Each fund has its own simplified application process and an easy-to-follow application guide with information on who can apply, how to apply, eligible project expenses, the documents to be submitted, and application processing.

The ECIF *Developmental (Needs Assessment) Fund* provides a one-time funding up to a maximum of \$15,000 to eligible entities to undertake child care needs assessment in select NWT communities. Communities eligible for needs assessment funding are listed on the [ECE website](#), along with the rationale for their eligibility.

The ECIF *Minor Projects Fund* provides up to \$250,000 in funding for accessibility upgrades, space preservation projects, and renovations and retrofits that create new child care spaces.

The *Major Projects Fund* funds projects that cost over \$250,000 in total value for new builds, renovations and retrofits that create new early learning and child care spaces in NWT.

ECIF Funding Priorities

- communities with limited or non-existent early learning and child care programming.
- underserved communities where the licensed early learning and child care programs available do not meet expressed demand.
- programs for families who identify as vulnerable or equity seeking families, including those with children with specific developmental needs, and
- existing licensed programs that have extensive waitlists and wish to expand their capacity.

Early learning and child care programs and/or proposed projects **must be viable and sustainable** to receive ECIF funding and to be licensed. For additional ECIF information and application, visit <https://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/en/ECIF>.

If you have any questions about the Early Childhood Infrastructure Fund (ECIF), please contact the Early Learning and Child Care Division via e-mail: elcc_operations@gov.nt.ca

Prior to moving to the facility design phase, you need to identify and/or secure project funding, develop a preliminary budget, and have governance approval to proceed with the project.

2. Facility design phases¹

Schematic design

The purpose of the schematic design phase is to transform the results of the pre-design into “**what will be built**” or “**what will be renovated**”. The consultant team or architect will create a schematic design of the site, interior spaces and exterior spaces that meets your early learning and child care facility objectives.

¹ Phases of the Design Project - <https://chop.raic.ca/>

Typical activities during schematic design phase include:

- Review design ideas with the architect (you can bring images of other projects, sketches, and models to help visualize the size, shape, and relationship of spaces)
- Finalize project concept based on information from pre-design phase.
- Identify regulatory requirements that must be met before construction or renovation begins
- Identify any potential issues with the site that can affect construction, such as zoning restrictions, fire regulations, or environmental concerns
- Identify potential construction materials or type of structures, i.e. modular buildings
- Develop a preliminary project schedule
- Develop a preliminary project budget

Deliverable(s): Schematic design, including drawings of preliminary Site and Floor Plans, Preliminary Exterior Concept (if applicable) and a preliminary cost estimate. based on schematic/conceptual design phase of a project. The cost estimate should provide a rough budget and baseline for project costs, often used to obtain preliminary approvals and guide further project development.

Design development

During design development, the architect focuses on the design of the facility interior spaces based on the floor plan and exterior concept approved during the schematic design phase. The plan is also refined and developed in more detail to include information on how the child care centre will be built or renovated and how it will operate.

Typical activities during this phase by the architect/consultant may include:

1. prepare and coordinate of all architectural, structural, mechanical and electrical designs.
2. prepare outline specifications.
3. develop regulatory compliance strategy including reviews with authorities having jurisdiction to test the assumptions made in schematic design and to make any adjustments.
4. prepare relevant documents (such as drawings, models, and computer renderings).
5. update the construction cost estimate based on design changes.
6. update the schedules for design, preparation of construction documents, and construction.
7. prepare technical specifications, which include detailed information on materials, equipment, installation methods, quality and control measures.

Deliverable(s): Drawing Set and Outline Specification document

Construction documents

The drafting of Construction Documents should start AFTER approval of Development Permit(s) and Zoning Permits (if applicable).

During the Construction Documents phase, the architect/consultant prepares detailed drawings of the final design along with notes and construction specifications.

Construction Documents are submitted to authorities having jurisdiction to obtain a building permit and demonstrate compliance with building codes, by-laws and regulations.

At the end of the construction documents phase, a final cost estimate for construction can be prepared based on completed construction drawings and specifications.

Deliverables of the construction documents phase include:

1. **Final Drawings:** These are detailed, scaled drawings which illustrate the arrangement of building elements and their interconnections, outline the design intent, and help contractors understand how to construct the building..
2. **Specifications:** Describe the material, quality and workmanship, requirements, and the criteria and methods to be used to validate acceptance of the work upon completion in written form.
3. **Schedules** in table form: Provide detailed information about systems and elements, such as:
 - building code compliance.
 - door and frame design, dimensions and materials.
 - floor, wall and ceiling finishes.
 - electrical panel configuration; or
 - air handling unit capacity and configuration details.
4. **Construction Set:** Documents that provide the level of detail necessary to direct builders in the execution of construction work, so that the completed building conforms to design intents and technical performance requirements.

A second set of construction documents, the ***Issue for Construction*** set are required/must be submitted for review before permits can be approved.

3: Permits and approvals

- *Development and Zoning Permits are required prior to Building Permits, applicants may need all three permits for their project.*
- *A Building Permit is required before construction can begin.*
- *Additional permits such as gas, mechanical, and electrical permits may be required depending on the scope of the project. Ask you project consultant about additional requirements.*

What is the difference between a Zoning Permit, a Development Permit, and a Building Permit?

A ***zoning permit*** deals with land use changes and ensures compliance with the local government's Zoning By-law. This by-law outlines the rules for development, including the location and size of buildings, and permitted activities on private property.

A zoning permit is required when a development project involves activities or changes to the land that are not permitted by the zoning regulations or when a variance (deviation from the zoning regulations) is required.

A ***development permit*** deals with bylaw requirements and any restrictions on what type of building you may be able to construct. A development permit ensures compliance with local land use by-laws and is the written approval that the proposed development meets the requirements of the Zoning By-law.

A development permit is needed for some new constructions, renovations of any existing buildings, when relocating a building structure, and when changing the use or intensity of use of the land or a building.

A ***building permit*** ensures the construction project complies with the requirements of the National Building Code or the municipal Building By-law. Meaning, all work regulated by the City Building By-law requires a building permit. Inspections during construction are also part of the building permit process.

A building permit is needed for all work to be performed. Work is defined as any design, construction, and occupancy of all new buildings, and the alteration, repair, demolition, remodel, reconstruction, relocation and change in occupancy for all existing buildings, structures and excavations..

Permit Applications

- ✚ *Before submitting a permit application, (1) you should meet with the local government, (2) review the By-laws (local By-laws outline development and permitting requirements) to determine if your project requires a Zoning Permit, Development Permit and a Building Permit and (3) know which other agencies need to be involved. For example, the Office of the Fire Marshall and Public Health.*
- ✚ *It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the proposed development complies with any easements, caveats, condominium agreements, or contracts which affect the development of the site prior to submitting an application.*

What is Required with the Zoning Permit Application (Subject to Local Bylaws)

- a. Completed application form and fees.
- b. A site plan in duplicate showing the building outlines; the legal description; front, rear and side yard set-backs; provisions for off-street loading and vehicle parking, access and egress points to the site and provision for landscaping and drainage.
- c. Floor plans, elevation drawings, a grading plan, a landscaping plan, and any other drawings/documents required by the Development Office.
- d. The Development Officer or Building Inspector may request additional documents or information to support your application, which may include surveys, owner permissions if the land is not owned by the applicant, or a feasibility study report.

What is Required with the Development Permit Application (Subject to Local Bylaws)

- a. Completed application form and fees.
- b. A site plan in duplicate showing the building outlines; the legal description; front, rear and side yard set-backs; provisions for off-street loading and vehicle parking, access and egress points to the site and provision for landscaping and drainage.
- c. Floor plans, elevation drawings, a grading plan, a landscaping plan, and any other drawings/documents required by the Development Office.
- d. Proof that notification has been given to all utility providers and/or confirmation that services can be provided at the new development.
- e. The estimated commencement and completion dates,
- f. The estimated cost of the project (include material and labour) or contract price.
- g. Proof of ownership or lease in the name of the applicant

In addition,

- *A Building Inspector/Development Officer/Issuing Authority* will contact the operator when the building permit is approved or if further information is needed.
- The contractor/architect can apply for permits on behalf of the operator. However, the operator is responsible for complying with all development/building requirements.
- The contractor/architect may be required to update the drawings or provide additional information to show the project complies with the applicable land use, building, and energy codes, and other applicable guidelines and regulations to get a building permit.
- The contractor/architect submits construction drawings along with the various forms to the local plan reviewer, monitors the progress during the review period, and provides additional information or clarifications.

Deliverable(s): Permit Application (with construction documents included).

What is Required with a Building Permit Application

- a. Completed application form and fees
- b. Site Plan, Floor Plans, and Elevation Drawings, and
- c. All applicable Structural drawings (refer to list of construction drawings on p. 12).

This process is led by the Architect/Consultant and may vary by community.

Steps in permitting process

Contact your local government for a Pre-consultation meeting with the planning and development department to discuss your project prior to submitting your permit application. These meetings can be held virtually (this service may not be offered by all local governments).

Development Permits

1. **Submit Application:** If the project requires permit approval, submit a complete application with applicable fee(s).
2. **Application Review:** The Development Officer reviews the complete application and supporting information. The review includes notification to departments, agencies and the public.
3. **Decision:** The approval authority may be Council or the Development Officer, as outlined in the zoning By-law. An application may be approved, approved with conditions or refused.
4. **Notice of Decision and Appeal Period:** A 14-day appeal and public notice period is required for all Development Permit decisions. The decision is not in effect and other permits cannot be issued until after this appeal/public notice period. If the decision is appealed, the decision is not in effect until a decision is issued by the Appeal Board.

Building Permits

1. Applicant **submits Building Permit** application(s) with application fee(s).
2. **Review/Issue Building Permit:** The Building Inspector reviews the application(s). Additional information may be requested, or the Permit is issued and a Plan Examination specifying requested inspections is sent to the applicant by email.
3. Once the permit is issued, **construction begins**. Inspections are performed at different stages of the construction project.
4. **Inspections/Occupancy (Building Services)** - Occupancy Certificate is granted when all life safety equipment and devices are installed, functioning, have been tested approved, the work meets the requirements of the Building By-law, and the work has achieved substantial completion.

Source: <https://www.yellowknife.ca/en/living-here/i-want-to-build.aspx#PERMITTING-PROCESS>

Other Permits

Electrical Permit

Valid electrical permits are required before any electrical work can start. The following applications for Electrical Permits are to be submitted by the electrical contractor:

- (1) Permit Application for Wiring Installation: This is required for certified electric workers and property owners in the NWT, whether undertaking a new installation, rewiring, or addition to an existing installation.

- (2) Permit Application to Supply Electric Energy/Conceal Rough Wiring to ensure that work done follows the permit, code, and is safe for the supply of electric energy and safe to make roughed-in work inaccessible.

For more information: <https://www.inf.gov.nt.ca/en/services/electrical-systems/permits>

Mechanical and Water/Sewer Permit

Your local Building By-law regulates the minimum standards for all mechanical systems, including HVAC, plumbing, and sprinkler systems.

- The Building Permit application will include sections for mechanical permit, as well as water and sewer permit.

For information specific to your project, please contact your local/community government.

Community specific processes and information

For information on your community government's processes, timelines and requirements, contact the development officer in your region or town. The information may also be available on their websites. For example,

Yellowknife: <https://www.yellowknife.ca/en/city-government/departments-planning-and-development.aspx>

Inuvik: <https://www.inuvik.ca/en/doing-business/Building-and-Development-Permits.asp>

Hay River: <https://hayriver.com/licenses-permits/permits/>

Fort Smith: <https://www.fortsmith.ca/protective-services/land-and-development>

Plan Review by the Office of the Fire Marshall

The legislation requires that all structures in the NWT be constructed, altered and repaired in accordance with the applicable codes and standards adopted under the Fire Prevention Act (FPA) and Fire Prevention Regulations (the Regulations).

Section 3(d) of the FPA specifies that a duty of the Fire Marshal is to review plans and specifications for the construction, alteration or repair of buildings with a view to determining that proper precautions are taken against fire and the spread of fire.

Section 2(a) of the Regulations adopts the NBC, making compliance with the National Building Code (NBC) a statutory requirement for precautions against fire and the spread of fire. The NBC is used as a model and apply to all construction projects (new buildings or renovations) in Canada.

What happens during Plan Review?

The Office of the Fire Marshal (OFM) reviews construction plans and specifications to determine that the submission meets the requirements of the Fire Protection Act and its Regulations.

Documents required for a Plan Review includes, but are not limited to:

1. A site plan showing the proposed building with respect to property lines, all proposed and existing buildings, parking, fencing, fire lanes, hydrants, standpipe and sprinkler connections.
2. Architectural drawings showing the building plans; all room designations/use; fire separations including fire resistance ratings; building elevations including wall openings; wall and floor details; and door schedules including size, fire-protection ratings and hardware details.
3. Structural drawings: foundation and structural frame, all design loads, and all materials standard references.
4. Mechanical drawings: HVAC, fire dampers, make-up air and exhaust, and fire suppression systems, special hazardous processes such as cooking equipment, and dust collection systems.
5. Electrical drawings: service and distribution, power and lighting, fire alarm system, smoke detectors, heat detectors, exit signs, emergency lighting, high voltage wiring, and transformers.
6. Complete building code analysis.

Depending on the situation, the consultant, developer, or professional may request a full review for the entire construction or may request reviews for various stages of construction:

- **Partial building foundation review**, to permit construction of the foundation.
- **Partial building structural frame review**, to permit construction to the structural frame.
- **Building shell review**, to permit construction to the shell only, and
- **Full Building or superstructure review**, to permit construction to completion of project.

For design and build projects (new construction), the OFM recommends that the design-builder engage the OFM at the conceptual/schematic design stage.

After OFM review, the contractor can provide a final quote for the work to be done. This quote will replace any preliminary quotes submitted.

4: Construction and inspections

Construction and construction administration

During the construction phase - typically from the Notice to Proceed to when the client occupies the building - the architect provides construction oversight to ensure the building is constructed to the design specifications.

After construction is completed, the architect will perform a final walk-through and if everything is completed based on the project scope of work, they will issue a Certificate of Substantial Completion. This essentially declares the project completed.

Deliverable(s): Certificate of Substantial Completion

Inspections

Before a building is occupied an Occupancy Permit must be issued by the architect/construction engineer. Before issuing an Occupancy Permit, the following requirements must/have to be met:

- Final Electrical Inspection (Gas Inspector, GNWT)
- Final Gas Inspection (Gas Inspector, GNWT)
- Fire Safety Inspection (can be delegated to local authority)
- Mechanical Certificate (can be delegated to local authority)
- Public Health Inspection (Environment and Public Health)

The Inspectors role is to review the building to ensure it conforms to applicable codes and regulations and the Public Health Act. It is the Owner's responsibility (through the architect/consultant) to ensure compliance with all applicable regulations.

1. Fire Safety Inspection

Fire safety inspections will be carried out by an authority delegated by the OFM to ensure precautions against fire and the spread of fire, and to enforce the requirements of the National Fire Code and the National Building Code. Fire safety inspections may include:

- Fire Safety Plan to ensure that the facility's plan follows the guidelines of the Fire Prevention Regs, are posted in visible places and in all rooms occupied by children
- Fire alarm and sprinkler system, where applicable.
 - Fire alarm system is operational, meets standards and has a verification certificate.
- Required Emergency Lighting is provided, and lighting illuminates exits and access to exits
- Smoke Alarms are operational and children sleeping areas are equipped with smoke alarms
- Emergency service vehicle access
- Bathroom and closet doors
- Electrical equipment is in good repair, electrical service panel is inaccessible to children, and electrical outlets are child-proofed".
- Heating systems
- Combustible materials on walls do not exceed 20%, waste receptacles are made of non-combustible materials, flammable materials are stored properly and are inaccessible to children.
- Portable fire extinguishers with a minimum rating of 2-A 10-BC are installed near access to exits; extinguishers are identified and tagged; and extinguishers are provided to protect commercial cooking equipment and are readily available for use in an emergency.
- Means of Egress/ Exits conform with NWT Fire Prevention Regs, exit doors open in the direction of travel, exist doors do not require special knowledge or keys, and clear signage.

See sample Fire Safety Inspection Checklist Form from the City of Yellowknife – <https://www.templateroller.com/template/18734/fire-prevention-inspection-checklist-form-yellowknife-canada.html>

2. Electrical Inspection

Inspection of Electrical Systems (application submitted by the Contractor) is required on all types of electrical equipment and work to ensure compliance with the Electrical Protection Act and Regulations in order to reduce loss of life, injury, and property damage due to electrical hazards.

- Electrical permit is required for certified electric workers and property owners in the NWT, whether undertaking a new installation, rewiring, or adding to an existing installation.
- In communities with Electrical Inspectors, up to three inspections may be performed:
 - Permission to Make Roughed in Electrical Work Inaccessible
 - Authorization for Power Connection
 - Final Inspection
- In communities where a physical inspection cannot be done within 14 days of notification—and the installation was done by a Qualified Electrical Worker—the first two inspections may be approved if the Qualified Electrical Worker forwards a completed Statutory Declaration by fax, followed by a phone call to the Regional Electrical Inspector.

3. Environment and Public Health Inspection

EHO must inspect the facility to ensure that it meets public health requirements. For example:

- a) Physical structure and operations, including:
 - i. the water supply system
 - ii. the sewage disposal system,
 - iii. adequate lighting,
 - iv. adequate mechanical ventilation, and
 - v. adequate toilet and washing facilities.
- b) Facility sanitation
 - i. Proper garbage/waste storage and removal
 - ii. Sewage disposal
- c) Food Safety
 - i. Valid Food Establishment Permit
 - ii. Food storage designed to protect food from contamination and food safety temperatures maintained
 - iii. Adequate hand washing stations that can be conveniently accessed by food handlers
 - iv. Food contact surfaces and non-food contact surfaces are properly designed, constructed, installed and located in places suitable for their intended purpose. Surfaces must be smooth, non-absorbent and easy to clean.
- d) Adequate and safe separation, storage and labelling of food items.

For the full public health checklist/requirements, contact Public Health at 867-767-9066 ext. 49262 or via email at environmental_health@gov.nt.ca

5: Preparing for ECE licensing

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment's Regional Early Childhood Consultants will assess that building is appropriate for a licensed centre-based program and meet requirements set out in the Early Learning and Child Care Act and Regulations before licensing.

In addition, ECE will require proof that the facility,

- meets general health/sanitation standards and or requirements under the Public Health Act from Environment and Public Health.
- complies with fire safety regulations, which includes the National Building Code of Canada (NBC) and National Fire Code of Canada (NFC), as well as specific NWT Fire Prevention Regulations.
- complies with the *NWT Food Establishment Safety Regulations* under the [Public Health Act](#), if handling food on site.
- is licensed by Public Health (if preparing food onsite) and complies with the Food Premises Standard Operating Procedures.

Required Information for Licensing Application

- a) a copy of the floor plan of the centre-based early learning and child care facility showing room dimensions and the location of doors, windows and fixed equipment,
- b) a report from the Office of the Fire Marshal confirming compliance with the National Fire Code (Note this role may be delegated to development officers or the local fire department)
- c) a report from a public health officer in respect to compliance with the Public Health Act
- d) evidence of compliance with applicable zoning bylaws
- e) an emergency plan
- f) a written statement of the early learning and child care program goals and objectives,
- g) evidence of a minimum of \$2,000,000 public liability insurance coverage,
- h) a written statement describing the proposed means of involving the parents of children attending the early learning and child care facility,
- i) Business license or Society Registration, if applicable, and
- j) WSCC registration/clearance certificate

In addition, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment will inspect the child care facility, including indoor and outdoor space, toys, furniture, equipment, emergency equipment, procedures, storage, environmental requirements, and sanitary standards.

A new child care facility cannot be licensed by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment if it does not meet early learning and child care requirements, regulatory requirements and pass facility inspections.

For more information about licensing, please contact the Regional Early Childhood Consultant.

Appendix 1: Determining ELCC Facility Site Suitability

Evaluation of the proposed child care facility site can help avoid major project challenges, including incomplete projects due to expenses, inability to be licensed, or inability to get permit approvals.

SITE SUITABILITY FACTORS	Yes/No
Environmental Factors 1. Is the proposed ELCC facility site and environment healthy, safe, and secure for children, families, and early childhood staff? Considerations: • Environmental factors on site that cannot be mitigated such as industrial noise, fumes, water quality issues, and hazardous materials • Soil conditions, access and drainage, and proximity to municipal services. • Other nearby activities that are not suitable for co-location of child care, such as in waste facilities or transportation projects. In addition, ask the consultant/architect to find out if an environmental site assessment is required and/or if an environmental assessment has been done on the property.	
<u>If renovating an existing building.</u> 2. Is the building structurally sound, with no hazardous substances, or that the removal of hazardous substances is feasible within the planned/allotted time frame for construction/renovation?	
3. Does the building have adequate and suitable space for outdoor components, such as the outdoor play space, outdoor storage, a drop-off zone and parking for parents and staff?	
Accessibility Factors 4. Is the site of the proposed ELCC facility site accessible to the general public? Site/location must be easily accessible for parents and staff or is conveniently located for parents, such as near residential neighborhoods, employment centers, and schools. For example, • Site or building is accessible to people who walk. • There is access from the property to a road in compliance with the Roads Act • The facility is located in a building that has a publicly accessible entrance. • There is adequate parking with safe drop off and pick up. • There are no significant security or safety concerns.	
5. Does the proposed site have access to adequate/basic services? Considerations • power, water, sewers, gas, telephones, snow removal, fire service and garbage collection, as well as the adequacy of septic systems or wells, where applicable.	
6. Is the proposed project site and facility accessible, or possible to be modified to accommodate, those with physical accessibility requirements? Considerations: • Accessibility measures such as ramps, elevators, clear floor space, doors, door hardware, barrier-free auto door operator buttons, grab bars, faucets and accessible plumbing features, including measures to access the outdoor learning environment.	

• Egress measures to allow all individuals to leave the building to get to an area of safety. • Site has ability to incorporate safe drop off and pick up	
Zoning And By-Laws 7. Are there local government bylaws or other legislative requirements that may prohibit opening up an early learning and child care facility at the location? Considerations: • The property must be zoned for operation of an early learning and child care facility in accordance with any applicable municipal/local bylaws • The property has parking in accordance with any applicable municipal/local bylaws. • The property conforms to the local Planning Act and Development Regulations if not located within a municipality with an official plan and bylaws. Note: Change of zoning may require a traffic and parking impact assessment prior to getting a development permit. Your architect will advise on this requirement.	
Licensing 8. Can the proposed ELCC facility be developed and constructed to meet licensing requirements for indoor activity space? Considerations: • There must be 2.75 square metres of indoor activity space per child • Indoor activity space must not include hallways, closets, entryways, kitchens, washrooms, storage or dedicated sleep space for infants • Layout must be conducive to the effective supervision of children • Adequate space in compliance with the Fire Prevention Act and regulations • Locked enclosures to store hazardous or poisonous materials • Sanitary food preparation area in compliance with Public Health Act and regulations.	
Outdoor Space 9. Will the project site have an adjacent outdoor space that could meet licensing requirements for usable and available outside space? Considerations: • There must be 5 square metres of outdoor activity space per child • Outdoor space is adjacent to the licensed centre and designed to support all children's autonomy, social emotional well-being, culture and diversity, movement, and learning* • Outdoor space is securely enclosed on all sides • Separate outdoor learning environment for infants *ideally, the outdoor space will be adjacent to the licensed early learning and child care facility. Exemptions may be considered in accordance with the Early Learning and Child Care Act and Regulations	

Adapted from the Government of PEI's *Early Years Centre Location Suitability Tool*
https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/forms/early_years_centre_location_suitability_tool_0.pdf

Appendix 2: Useful Contacts

Building and Development Permits		
Fort Smith	Town of Fort Smith	Tel: (867) 872-8400 Fax: (867) 872-8401
Hay River	Development Officer	Tel: 867-874-6522
Inuvik	Planning and Development Dept	Tel: 867-777-8614 Fax: 867-777-8601
Yellowknife	Planning and Development Dept	Email: planningandenvironment@yellowknife.ca Phone: 867-920-5600 Fax: (867) 920-5649
	General information for applicants: https://www.yellowknife.ca/en/doing-business/resources/Planning-and-Development-Department-Forms/GENERAL-INFORMATION-FOR-APPLICANTS.pdf	
Communities not listed	Please contact your community government for direction.	
Office of the Fire Marshall		
Territory-wide	OFM Plan Review	Email: plan_review@gov.nt.ca Tel: (867) 767-9161 ext. 21028
	Territorial Fire Marshal - (867) 767-9161 ext. 21030 for inquiries.	
Environment and Public Health		
Territory-wide	Environmental Health Officers serve all 33 communities out of offices in Yellowknife, Hay River, and Inuvik.	Tel: 867-767-9066 ext. 49262 Email: Environmental_Health@gov.nt.ca
Infrastructure		
Territory-wide	Permits and Inspections	Email: elecmechsafety@gov.nt.ca
Yellowknife	Chief Electrical Inspector	Tel: 867-767-9043 ext. 32034
	Electrical Inspector	Tel: 867-767-9043 ext. 32037
	Boiler/Gas Inspector - Yellowknife	Tel: 867-767-9043 ext.32032
Inuvik	Electrical Inspector	Tel: 867-678-8096 ext. 33671 Fax: 867-777-4351
	Boiler/Gas Inspector - Inuvik	Tel: 867-678-8094 ext. 33670
Hay River	Electrical Inspector	Tel: 867-875-7484 Fax:867-874-5700
	Boiler/Gas Inspector – Hay River	Tel: 867-875-7360
Northwest Territories Association of Architects List of architects and firms - Member & Firm Directory NWTAA		Email: ed@nwtaa.ca ; Tel: 867-766-4216
The Department of Education, Culture and Employment Early Childhood Consultants		Link to ECC in your region - Early Childhood Consultant

Resources/Additional information

City of Yellowknife (nd.). Planning and Development Division – Permitting Process
<https://www.yellowknife.ca/en/living-here/i-want-to-build.aspx#PERMITTING-PROCESS>

Government of Northwest Territories (2024). Early Learning and Child Care Regulations, R-098-2024. <https://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/en/files/legislation/early-learning-and-childcare/early-learning-and-childcare.r4.pdf>

Government of Northwest Territories (2023). Good Building Practice for Northern Facilities. https://www.inf.gov.nt.ca/sites/inf/files/resources/3789-gnwt_infrastructure-good_practises_manual_april07_web.pdf

Government of Northwest Territories (2023). Early Learning and Child Care Act, RSNWT 1988,c.C-5. Retrieved from [RSNWT 1988, c C-5 | Child Day Care Act | CanLII](#)

Government of Northwest Territories (2023). Fire Prevention Act. <https://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/en/files/legislation/fire-prevention/fire-prevention.a.pdf>

Government of Canada (2020). National Building Code of Canada. <https://nrc-publications.canada.ca/eng/view/ft/?id=515340b5-f4e0-4798-be69-692e4ec423e8>

Government of Northwest Territories (2020). The Public Health Act: Food Establishment Safety Regulations. <https://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/en/files/legislation/public-health/public-health.r8.pdf>

Government of Northwest Territories (2018). Electrical Protection Act, RSNWT 1988, c E-3. <https://www.canlii.org/en/nt/laws/stat/rsnwt-1988-c-e-3/latest/rsnwt-1988-c-e-3.html>

Government of Northwest Territories (2016). Plan Review Guidelines- Office of the Fire Marshall. https://www.maca.gov.nt.ca/sites/maca/files/industry_guidelines_-_plan_review.pdf

Government of Northwest Territories (2009). Public Health Act. <https://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/en/files/legislation/public-health/public-health.a.pdf>

Government of Northwest Territories (nd.). Electrical Systems: Codes and Standards. <https://www.inf.gov.nt.ca/en/services/electrical-systems/codes-and-standards>

Hay River (nd.). Building Permitting - <https://hayriver.com/licenses-permits/permits/>

Inuvik (nd.). Building and Development Permits - <https://www.inuvik.ca/en/doing-business/Building-and-Development-Permits.asp>

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