



Delta

# GUIDE TO CREATING CHILD CARE SPACE IN DELTA

Updated March 2024

# ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This guide was created with the input and support of the Child Care Task Force of Delta's Child & Youth Committee which includes representation from:

- Fraser Health
- Delta School District
- City of Delta
- Childcare Options
- REACH
- The Centre for Child Development

# DISCLAIMER

The information in this guide has been prepared to provide information only. It is not a legal document. If any contradiction exists between this document and the relevant bylaws, codes, regulations or policies, the text of the bylaws, codes, regulations or policies shall be the legal authority.

# CONTACT US



**CITY OF DELTA**  
Application Centre, Development Department  
4500 Clarence Taylor Crescent, Delta BC V4K 3E2



604.946.3380



[cpd@delta.ca](mailto:cpd@delta.ca)



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Regulatory Framework .....	1
Planning Ahead.....	2
Types of Child Care Facilities.....	4
Community Need for Child Care Programs.....	5
City Zoning .....	5
Licensing Requirements .....	5
Child Care Provided In-home.....	5
Important Considerations.....	5
Approval Steps .....	6
Child Care Provided Outside of Home .....	7
Important Considerations.....	7
Approval Steps .....	8
Starting a Business.....	9
Designing Quality Safe Child Care Spaces.....	10
Contact Information and Additional Resources.....	11



# REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

This guide will provide an overview of the provincial and local regulations and requirements related to child care facilities and includes information about how to get started on opening a new facility.

## PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

In BC, child care facilities providing care to three or more children (who are not related to the operator by blood or marriage) need to be licensed by the local health authority and meet the requirements of provincial legislation, including:

- *Community Care and Assisted Living Act*
- Child Care Licensing Regulation
- BC Building Code



## FRASER HEALTH AUTHORITY

Fraser Health's Licensing Office is responsible for ensuring that prospective child care facilities meet the provincial health, safety and care standards. Fraser Health issues licences to child care operators and routinely monitors facilities for compliance with legislative standards.



## CITY OF DELTA

Child care facilities are considered businesses in Delta and are subject to a number of City regulations, including:

- Zoning requirements
- Business licencing
- Building and plumbing permits may be required for building modifications



# PLANNING AHEAD

Before signing a lease, applying for a licence or a permit for a child care facility, it is important to do the appropriate research and planning.

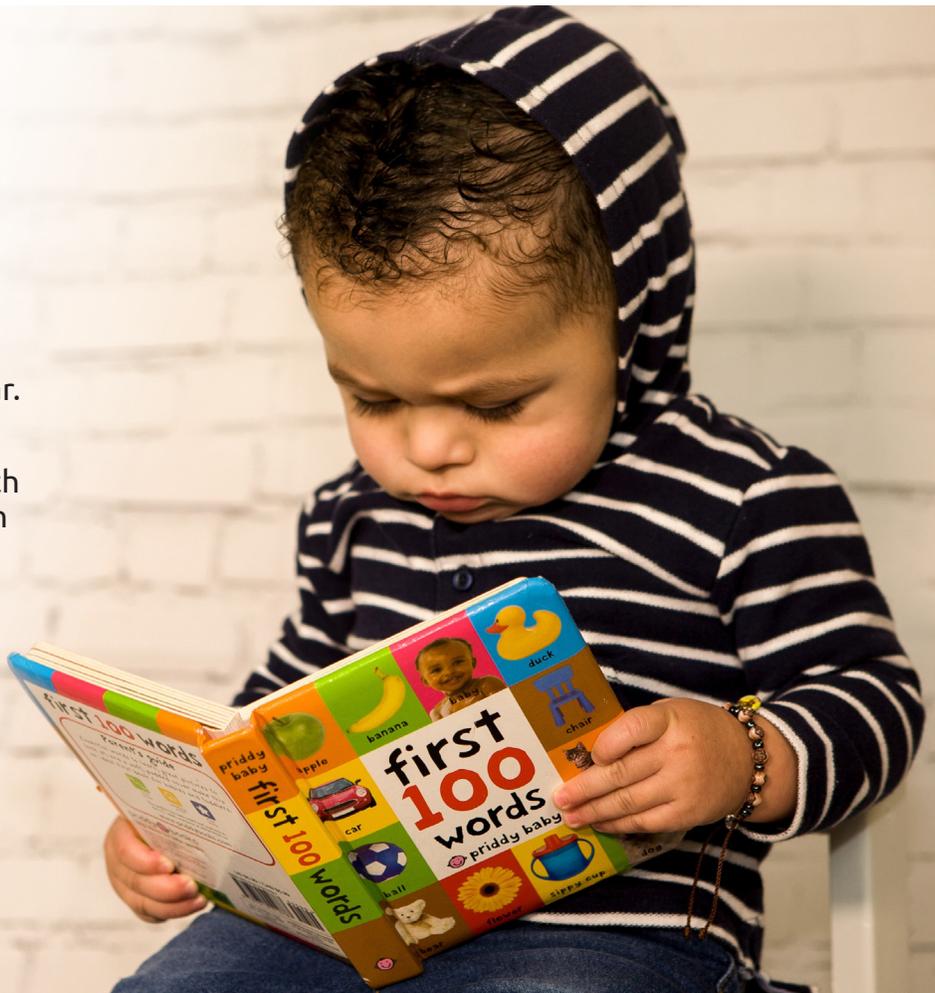
- What types of child care programs currently exist and which ones are needed in the area?
- Does the property zoning allow a child care facility?
- Do you need to build or do renovations? If yes, who will prepare the plans, what permits will you need, and who will conduct the renovations?
- Do you need to hire any professionals (e.g. architect or engineer)?
- What are the timelines and fees associated with building or renovations?
- What documents will you need to provide to a Fraser Health Licensing Officer?
- Will you be able to obtain written landlord permission?
- Are there strata implications?

## Did you know...?

Delta will need to add 1,051 childcare spaces from 2019 to 2029 to reach the Canadian average of 27.2 child care spaces per 100 children.

It equates to approximately 100 child care spaces per year.

The highest need is in child care for various ages in North Delta, for infants/toddlers in Ladner and North Delta and school-aged spaces in all three Delta's communities.





## Community Need for Child Care Programs

A [Child Care Needs Analysis](#) was undertaken by the City of Delta in 2019 and [2023](#). The analysis identifies the types of child care programs that are needed in Delta's communities. It can be used as a resource to help you understand the possibility for program expansion.

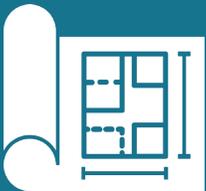
## Looking for Licensed Child Care in Delta?

Visit [DeltaMap](#) to access the new Licensed Childcare Facilities layer (under Planning and Development). The Child Care locator was developed in partnership with Fraser Health Authority and displays all licensed child care programs in Delta, including related contact information.

The [Delta Child Care Locator](#), developed by Options Child Care Resource & Referral, is another map that can be used to find child care in Delta.

See page 11 of this guide for contact information for resources listed below. More information and online resources can be found at [www.delta.ca/childcare](http://www.delta.ca/childcare)

Check out a new Child Care zoning layer created on [DeltaMap](#)



## City Zoning

Child care facilities are permitted in a range of zones including residential, commercial, institutional (including schools and community centres), and mixed use zones. These zones are subject to parking requirements and other regulations.

In 2023, Council adopted changes to zoning bylaw that permitted use of childcare in all zones, while in residential and agricultural zones spaces are limited to a home occupation use.

[DeltaMap](#) allows users to search a geographic information system (GIS) for various informational layers such as zoning and community amenities. This tool can be used to understand if the land you want to use for your business is zoned for child care.

To confirm a property is zoned for child care and to learn about zoning requirements, **contact Delta's Development Department.**

## Licensing Requirements

In order to prepare information for a Fraser Health Licensing Officer, it is recommended that you read and understand relevant legislation, including the [Community Care and Assisted Living Act](#) and the [Child Care Licensing Regulation](#). In order to apply for a licence you will need to contact Fraser Health. A Licensing Officer will assist you with your application and review the plans for your child care facility. **Contact the Fraser Health Licensing Office for more information.**





# TYPES OF CHILD CARE FACILITIES

Fraser Health’s licensed child care programs are outlined below, as set out in Schedule E of the [Child Care Licensing Regulation](#). For further details on program classifications, please contact the Fraser Health Licensing Office (see page 11 for contact information).

CLASSIFICATION	MAXIMUM NUMBER OF CHILDREN & OTHER SPECIFICATIONS
<b>Child Care Provided In-home*</b>	
Family Child Care	Maximum of seven children.
In-home Multi-age Child Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The licensee must be an early childhood educator.</li> <li>Maximum of 8 children (infants to 12 years old).</li> </ul>
<b>Child Care Provided Outside of Home**</b>	
<b>Group Child Care</b>	
Under 36 months	Maximum of 12 children.
30 Months to School Age	Maximum of 25 children (with no more than 2 children younger than 36 months).
School Age (5-12 years) before and/or after school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maximum of 30 children if all children are in grade 2 or higher.</li> <li>Maximum of 24 children if any children younger than grade 2.</li> </ul>
<b>Multi-Age</b>	Maximum 8 children (with no more than 3 children younger than 36 months old and, of those 3, no more than one child younger than 12 months old).
<b>Preschool</b> 30 Months to School Age	Maximum of 20 children* and care provided for a maximum of four hours per day. <i>*Children must be 30 months old upon their entrance into the program and 36 months old by December 31 of the year of their entrance.</i>
<b>Recreational Care</b>	Care is provided after school hours or on a day of school closure on a drop-in basis to children who attend school, including kindergarten.
<b>School Age on School Grounds</b> (before and/or after school)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maximum of 30 children if all children are in grade 2 or higher.</li> <li>Maximum of 24 children if any children younger than grade 2.</li> </ul>
<b>Occasional Care</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Care is provided to preschool children who are at least 18 months old, on an occasional or short-term basis.</li> <li>Maximum of 20 children (dependent on the ages of children).</li> </ul>
<b>Child Minding</b>	Maximum of 20 children (dependent on the ages of children).

\* See page 5 for further information about child care provided in a dwelling unit.

\*\* See page 7 for further information about child care provided: to more than 8 children; and/or in a building other than a dwelling unit.



# CHILD CARE PROVIDED IN-HOME

Child care facilities providing care to no more than eight children can be located in a residential dwelling unit (as per section 20 of the Community Care and Assisted Living Act). Please note that any children of the operator (up to age 12) count towards the maximum number of children.

## Important Considerations

### Operator:

The child care operator must reside within the dwelling unit.

### Zoning:

In 2023, Council adopted changes to the zoning bylaw. As a result, child care facilities of up to 8 children are permitted as a home-based business in all zones. Confirm the property zoning on DeltaMap and if applicable, consider whether you would be able to retain written authorization from the landlord or strata.

### Building Code:

Child care facilities of up to 8 children are permitted to operate within a dwelling unit under Group C in the BC Building Code. No building permit is required.

### Fire Code:

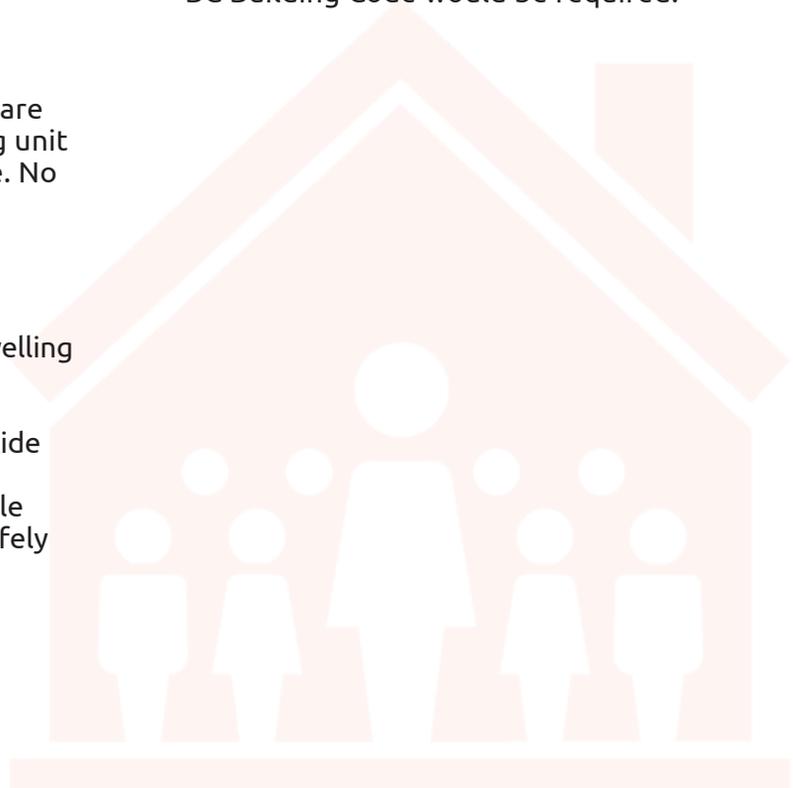
The Fire Department will inspect the dwelling unit for fire safety standards as well as the proposed emergency escape plan. Additional smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms and fire extinguishers may be required. Flammable and combustible liquids and materials must be stored safely and appropriately.

### Business Licence:

A business licence is required. Please note that child care facilities are not permitted in buildings containing secondary suites.

### More than 8 Children:

Child care facilities with over 8 children operated within a dwelling unit are not permitted by zoning and are not classified under Group C in the BC Building Code (subject to all the requirements for an assembly occupancy). Rezoning application and major renovations to meet the current BC Building Code would be required.





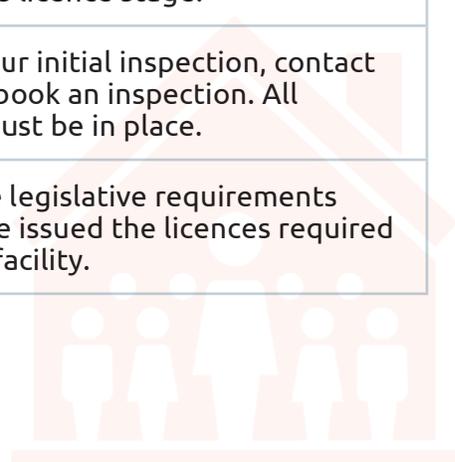
# APPROVAL STEPS

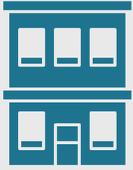
## CHILD CARE PROVIDED IN-HOME

Before getting started, it is recommended that you read and understand relevant legislation, including the Community Care and Assisted Living Act and the Child Care Licensing Regulation.

Municipal approval and licensing can take an extended period of time, please account for this in your planning.

1	<b>Apply for a license with Fraser Health</b>	Purchase (\$75) and complete a Fraser Health Child Care Facility Licensing Application package.
2	<b>Begin application process with Fraser Health</b>	<p>Schedule a “Getting Started Meeting” with a Fraser Health Licensing Officer. Meet with a Licensing Officer to review plans for the proposed child care space and to coordinate an assessment of your space. Provide the Licensing Officer with documents including an employee plan, and site and floor plan drawings to scale.</p> <p>When all application requirements are met, the Licensing Officer will provide the stamped and approved plans to you. You must send those plans to Delta’s business licencing office.</p>
3	<b>Apply for a City business licence</b> <i>See page 9 for more information about business licencing.</i>	<p>If no renovations are planned, the next step is to apply for a business licence to the City of Delta. Inspections related to fire will be required.</p> <p>If renovations are planned, the building and/or plumbing permit must be submitted and completed in advance of the business licence stage.</p>
4	<b>Inspection with Fraser Health</b>	Once you are ready for your initial inspection, contact your Licensing Officer to book an inspection. All furnishings and fencing must be in place.
5	<b>Licence issuance</b>	Once compliance with the legislative requirements have been met, you will be issued the licences required to operate the child care facility.





# CHILD CARE PROVIDED OUTSIDE OF HOME

Child care facilities located in commercial or institutional spaces are considered an assembly occupancy under Division 2 of the BC Building Code (this requirement applies regardless of the ages of the children).

The steps for licencing a child care facility provided outside of home are outlined on [page 9](#) of this guide. Considerations for this type of facility are set out below.

## Important Considerations

### Zoning:

Properties that allow child care facilities for more than 8 children are identified on DeltaMap. See the “Child Care Facility Zoned Lots” layer under the Planning and Development tab. Review the property zoning to confirm your proposed facility would be permitted.

### Parking Requirements:

Child care facilities must provide adequate parking in accordance with the requirements in Delta’s Zoning Bylaw. Review the bylaw to confirm your proposed facility would have sufficient parking.

### Indoor and Outdoor Space:

Space requirements for indoor usable floor area and outdoor play area are regulated by the Province and administered by Fraser Health. Review the provincial requirements to confirm there is sufficient indoor and outdoor space proposed. Please note that conversion of outdoor landscaped areas or parking requires consultation with the Development Department.

### Building, Plumbing and Fire Code:

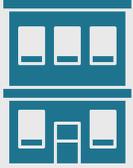
Building and/or plumbing permits are likely to be required. Notable code requirements include:

- The building must be sprinklered throughout or the child care facility must have exterior exits at ground level.
- The building must have a fire alarm system if building contains one or more other units, or the child care facility shares an interior common egress with other units.
- The relaxation in the current BC Building Code to classify an assembly occupancy (Group A Division 2) with occupant load not exceeding 30 as a personal services occupancy (Group D) does not apply to child care facilities.

Refer to the current BC Building Code and Fire Code for all requirements.

### Business Licence:

A business licence is required (including for not-for-profit organizations) and inspections will be undertaken. If any Building Code, Fire Code, and/or bylaw infractions are identified during an inspection, they may require correction under appropriate building and plumbing permits.



# APPROVAL STEPS

## CHILD CARE PROVIDED OUTSIDE OF HOME

Before getting started, it is recommended that you read and understand relevant legislation, including the Community Care and Assisted Living Act and the Child Care Licensing Regulation.

Municipal approval and licensing can take an extended period of time, please account for this in your planning.

1	<b>Decide the location and type of child care program you want</b>	Research the community need for child care, including the types of licensed child care programs and the zoning areas where child care spaces are permitted in Delta. <b>You can contact <a href="#">Child Care Resource and Referral</a> for support.</b>
2	<b>Apply for a license with Fraser Health</b>	Schedule a “Getting Started Meeting” with a Fraser Health Licensing Purchase (\$75) and complete a Child Care Facility Licensing Application package.
3	<b>Begin application process with Fraser Health</b>	Schedule a “Getting Started Meeting” with a Fraser Health Licensing Officer. Meet with a Licensing Officer to review plans for the proposed child care space and to coordinate an assessment of your space. Provide the Licensing Officer with documents including an employee plan, and site and floor plan drawings to scale.  When all application requirements are met, the Licensing Officer will provide the stamped and approved plans to you. You must send those plans to Delta’s business licencing office.
4	<b>Apply for a building and/or plumbing permit through the City</b>	Apply for applicable permits through the Development Department. If the plans comply with the requirements contained in the BC Building Code and Fire Code, a permit will be issued.
5	<b>Begin construction on your child care space and coordinate necessary building, plumbing, and fire inspections</b>	Coordinate inspections with the Building Division and Delta Fire Department. During the inspection process, the inspector will advise you of any issues requiring your attention. If your inspections are successful, you will be provided with an occupancy permit.
6	<b>Apply for a City business licence</b> <i>See page 9 for more information about business licencing</i>	Submit your business licence application.
7	<b>Inspection with Fraser Health</b>	Once you are ready for your initial inspection, contact your Licensing Officer to book an inspection. All furnishings and fencing must be in place.
8	<b>Licence issuance</b>	Once compliance with the legislative requirements have been met, you will be issued the licences required to operate the child care facility.



# STARTING A BUSINESS

Use [BizPal](#) or [OneStop Business Registry](#) as a convenient one-stop shop for resources and help with navigating permit and licencing processes. For more information, contact Delta's Business Licencing Division (see page 11 for contact information).

There are a number of resources available to assist you with starting a business. Buying or leasing a building or premises and getting a business licence are just two of the steps to complete. This information includes details of the important things to consider and review when you are starting a business in Delta and prior to completing a purchase of sale or lease agreement.

## 1 Zones - Confirm that your business will be located in the correct zone

Before you begin looking for a site, contact the Development Department to determine which zone or zones are appropriate for your business. Be specific about the nature of your business. Be sure to verify that your business is allowed to operate in the zone it is located before you sign a lease or purchase a property.

## 2 Meeting Provincial Codes - Ensure that any building improvements and renovations were completed with permits where required

Modifications to a structure, including electrical, plumbing or heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) work must meet the BC Building Code, Plumbing Code and Fire Code. You should confirm with your leasing or real estate agent that any renovations were completed to meet these code requirements and within required building and/or plumbing permits. If not, building improvements to formalize the work may be required.

## 3 Permits - Confirm whether you need a Building, Plumbing or Fire Sprinkler Permit

Permits are required for the removal, installation and/ or relocation of interior walls, doorways and windows. As mentioned above, please note that any previous work completed without permits will require a subsequent permit and may require alterations to meet appropriate Building and Plumbing Code requirements. A fire sprinkler permit is also required if you are making alterations to an existing system.

## 4 Signage - Confirm what type of sign(s) you can install and if a sign permits is required

Before designing, purchasing or installing any signs, check with the Development Department to ensure that they will be permitted. There are limitations on the size and types of signs you can install. A sign permit is required for any sign placed on a property or installed on a building exterior. You will also be required to remove any previously installed signs that do not meet the City's Sign Bylaw requirements or obtain additional sign permit(s) for signs which do meet the Bylaw requirements but were installed without a sign permit.



# DESIGNING

## QUALITY, SAFE CHILD CARE SPACES

Resources with design and early childhood education information is available on page 11.

Child care facilities are relatively complex building types with specific sets of building requirements.

Aside from technical requirements, an understanding of the activities and routines that organize the daily life in the child care facility are central to the design of successful child care facilities. The optimal child care environment is specific age groups and sets the stage for interactions and engagement with families; caregiving routines; play and learning. It is essential that consideration be given to the overall experience and feel of the space to create a welcoming and inclusive setting that promotes socialization, nurturing care and learning.

Consideration should be given to:

- Location in the community
- Adjacent uses and security considerations
- Relationship between indoor and outdoor spaces
- Architectural and landscape features and availability of natural light
- Environmental considerations such as wind protection, sun exposure, covered play areas, and protection from car traffic and fumes
- Interior design consideration such as circulation, sight lines, windows or openings, ceiling heights, acoustics, etc.
- Age-appropriate furnishings and toys





# RESOURCES & CONTACT INFORMATION



Fraser Health - Packages, regulations, standards of practice and other information for child care facilities  
[www.fraserhealth.ca](http://www.fraserhealth.ca)

Information for creating a child care spaces in the Fraser Health Authority in a variety of settings and contexts.

BC Early Learning Framework  
[www.gov.bc.ca/childcare](http://www.gov.bc.ca/childcare)

Framework guides and supports early childhood educators including child care providers on rich early learning experiences for children.

Consortium for Health, Intervention, Learning and Development (CHILD),  
7 C's: An Informational Guide to Young Children's Outdoor Play Spaces  
[www.outdoorplaycanada.ca](http://www.outdoorplaycanada.ca)

Guidance on designing outdoor play spaces that support the development of young children and integrate the unique qualities of playing outdoors.

Provincial Government, Standard of Practice:  
[www.gov.bc.ca/childcare](http://www.gov.bc.ca/childcare)

Standards for:  
• Active Play • Safe Play Space  
• Family Child Care • Water Safety

Fire and Life Safety for Home Based Child Care Settings in British Columbia  
[www.health.gov.bc.ca](http://www.health.gov.bc.ca)

Tips for making your home based child care space fire safe.

BC Early Years Professional Development Hub, Administration & Management for Child Care Knowledge Base  
[bcearlyyearshub.ca/wccrc-knowledge-base](http://bcearlyyearshub.ca/wccrc-knowledge-base)

Online database with information, tools and links for resources on early childcare education.

## Helpful Contacts

City of Delta – [www.delta.ca](http://www.delta.ca)

Development Department  
tel: 604-946-3380  
email: [cpd@delta.ca](mailto:cpd@delta.ca)

Business Licencing  
tel: 604-946-3314  
email: [businesslicences@delta.ca](mailto:businesslicences@delta.ca)

Child Care Resource and Referral Centre (CCRR)  
[www.childcareoptions.ca](http://www.childcareoptions.ca)  
tel: 604-572-8032  
email: [childcareoptions@options.bc.ca](mailto:childcareoptions@options.bc.ca)

Fraser Health –  
Community Care Facilities Licencing – Delta  
[www.fraserhealth.ca](http://www.fraserhealth.ca)  
tel: 604-507-5472

BC Ministry of Children and Family Development  
[www.gov.bc.ca/childcare](http://www.gov.bc.ca/childcare)  
tel: 1-800-663-7867 (Service BC)

