
SENATE BILL 5655

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Senators Krishnadasan, Nobles, Slatter, and Wellman

Read first time 02/04/25. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to child care centers operated in existing
2 buildings; amending RCW 43.216.265; adding a new section to chapter
3 19.27 RCW; and creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that there is a need
6 for more child care services for working people. There is a public
7 benefit when communities can use existing buildings rather than
8 permitting new buildings to be built on open land. Churches are one
9 type of building that often have rooms designed for education or care
10 of children that are separate from the main sanctuary or
11 congregational room. The legislature intends to clarify statutes so
12 that building owners, and especially churches, are more likely to
13 offer existing spaces for child care services.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 19.27
15 RCW to read as follows:

16 When a child care center is operated in an existing building that
17 has more than one use, the building official must calculate the
18 occupancy load based only on the areas in the building where the
19 child care services are provided. This requirement applies when

1 administering and enforcing any of the building codes adopted in
2 accordance with and pursuant to the authority in this chapter.

3 **Sec. 3.** RCW 43.216.265 and 2018 c 58 s 42 are each amended to
4 read as follows:

5 The chief of the Washington state patrol, through the director of
6 fire protection, shall have the power and it shall be his or her
7 duty:

8 (1) In consultation with the secretary and with the advice and
9 assistance of persons representative of the various type agencies to
10 be licensed, to adopt recognized minimum standard requirements
11 pertaining to each category of agency established pursuant to this
12 chapter necessary to protect all persons residing therein from fire
13 hazards;

14 (2) To adopt licensing minimum standard requirements to allow
15 children who attend classes in a school building during school hours
16 to remain in the same building to participate in before-school or
17 after-school programs and to allow participation in such before-
18 school and after-school programs by children who attend other schools
19 and are transported to attend such before-school and after-school
20 programs;

21 (3) To make or cause to be made such inspections and
22 investigations of agencies as he or she deems necessary;

23 (4) To make a periodic review of requirements under RCW
24 43.216.250(8) and to adopt necessary changes after consultation as
25 required in subsection (1) of this section;

26 (5) To issue to applicants for licenses under this chapter who
27 comply with the requirements, a certificate of compliance, a copy of
28 which shall be presented to the department before a license shall be
29 issued, except that an initial license may be issued as provided in
30 RCW 43.216.315;

31 (6) When a child care center is operated in an existing building
32 that has more than one use, to calculate the occupancy load based
33 only on the area in the building where the child care services are
34 provided.

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