

**15A NCAC 18A .2810 SPECIFICATIONS FOR KITCHENS, FOOD PREPARATION AREAS AND FOOD SERVICE AREAS**

(a) Each child care center shall have at least a two-compartment sink, drainboards or countertop space of adequate size, adequate refrigeration equipment and, when needed, adequate cooking equipment, except that this requirement shall not apply to child care centers located in a school that receives food supplies that are pre-prepared and ready to serve from a food service establishment permitted by a local health department, which is located at the same school campus and provides food during all hours of the child care center's operation. Child care centers shall be permitted to use domestic kitchen equipment. A child care center may use and wash multi-use articles and highchair feeding trays in a two-compartment sink, but shall not use or wash multi-service articles other than highchair feeding trays unless equipped with either:

- (1) a dishwasher and two-compartment sink, or
- (2) a three-compartment sink of sufficient size and depth to submerge, wash, rinse and sanitize utensils.

(b) A separate lavatory for handwashing is required in food preparation areas and kitchens. If the dishwashing area is separate from the food preparation area, an additional handwashing lavatory shall be required in the dishwashing area.

(c) A separate food preparation sink with drainboards or countertop space of adequate size shall be required when a review of construction plans, modifications, or change in child care procedures indicates that separate facilities are needed based on volume and preparation frequency.

(d) Except in child care centers licensed for fewer than 13 children and located in a residence, when domestic refrigeration equipment is used the following shall apply:

- (1) except for thawing in a refrigerator, potentially hazardous foods shall not be prepared prior to the day that such foods are to be served;
- (2) potentially hazardous foods that have been heated shall not be reheated or placed in refrigeration to be used in whole or in part on another day; and
- (3) salads containing potentially hazardous food shall not be prepared on site. Prohibited salads include chicken, egg, tuna, crab, and other salads containing meat.

(e) A commercial hood shall be installed in accordance with G.S. 110-91 when frying is used for food preparation on-site at the child care center.

(f) If food is prepared in a child care center classroom, then the classroom shall be equipped with a food preparation area. Water from a handwash lavatory shall not be used for bottle warming or to prepare formula, mix dry cereals, or other foods. Toy cleaning and sanitizing may be conducted in the food preparation area. This food preparation area shall contain a countertop that is kept clean and in good repair, a handwash lavatory, and refrigeration when items are stored that require refrigeration in accordance with Rules .2804 and .2806 of this Section. The food preparation counters, food, and food-contact surfaces shall be out of reach of children and the following shall apply to food preparation counters, food, food-contact surfaces, and equipment used in food preparation:

- (1) all equipment shall be kept clean. Bottle warming equipment shall be cleaned and sanitized as required in Rule .2812 of this Section and the manufacturer's instructions;
- (2) if bottles are warmed, bottles shall be warmed in the child care center's kitchen or food preparation area. Bottle warming equipment shall be kept out of reach of children. Microwaves and slow cookers shall not be used to thaw or warm human milk, baby food, formula, or other bottled beverages meant for consumption by children. Bottles shall be warmed by placing bottles under running potable water or in containers of potable water or by using bottle warming equipment that is used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Temperature restrictions listed in Rule .2815(e) of this Section do not apply to equipment manufactured specifically for bottle warming. If other bottle warming methods are used in food preparation areas, compliance with temperature restrictions listed in Rule .2815(e) of this Section is required; and
- (3) after each use, multi-service articles provided by the child care center shall be cleaned and sanitized in the child care center kitchen.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 110-91;  
Eff. July 1, 1991;  
Amended Eff. March 1, 1995;  
Temporary Amendment Eff. April 15, 1998;  
Amended Eff. April 1, 1999;  
Temporary Amendment Eff. December 1, 1999;*

*Amended Eff. July 1, 2006; January 1, 2006; April 1, 2001;  
Readopted Eff. July 1, 2023.*