

## Weather Permitting Definition

The guidelines for “weather permitting” assure safe and regular active outdoor play for children.

In Illinois, the term “weather permitting” means temperatures between 25 and 90 degrees, taking into consideration the wind chill. For example, if the temperature is 30 degrees, but only 18 degrees with wind chill, it is not expected that children will have outdoor play time. In cold weather, and especially between 25 and 30 degrees, children should be monitored to ensure they are well-dressed. In warm temperatures, and especially at 90 degrees, adults should monitor children carefully to ensure that they have appropriate sun protection and hydration.

“Weather permitting” is also defined by the Environment Rating Scales Institute. These guidelines are followed, **even when** these are not stated in school code and/or licensing regulations.

The description of “weather permitting” is found in the Explanation of Terms Used Throughout the Scale in the ECERS-3 book:

“Weather permitting” means **almost every day, unless there is active precipitation, public warnings of extremely hot or cold conditions, or public announcements that advise people to remain indoors due to high levels of pollution that might cause health problems.** Children should be dressed properly and taken outdoors on most days. This might require that the schedule be changed to allow children outdoor play in the early morning if it will be very hot later in the day. Or it might require that the program ensure that children have boots and a change of clothes for a day when the grass is wet. After bad weather, staff should check the outdoor area, dry off equipment, sweep away water, or block off puddles as needed, before children go out. Programs with protected outdoor areas, such as a deck or patio, are more likely to be able to meet the requirements for allowing outdoor activity daily, weather permitting.

The description of “weather permitting” is also found in the Explanation of Terms Used Throughout the Scale in the ITERS-3 book:

“Weather permitting” means that there is no public health warning due to temperatures that are too high or too low, or active precipitation such as rain or snow. However, scheduled outdoor times should be modified so children can go out if weather allows. For example, it might be raining in the early morning, but clear up later during the observation. In this case children should have some opportunity for outdoor play. If the weather permits outdoor play, but unavoidable health hazards are present outdoors, such as high levels of pollution or uncontrollable mosquitoes, outdoor play is not required.

Check the Explanation of Terms Used Throughout the Scale section toward the front of all Scales for information on “Weather Permitting.”

During program visits, the current temperature is checked using *Weather Underground* at arrival and again when an assessor leaves a program. There is a two-degree margin permitted for programs.