



City of Poway

Fire Department

Fire Prevention Policy and Procedures

Residential Care Facilities 2010 CBC/CFC

These policies and procedures are guidelines intended to provide the minimum requirements necessary for review and approval for *new* licensed care facilities housing six or less ambulatory and nonambulatory clients (R-3.1) in single-family residences, as well as those facilities housing more than six ambulatory clients and a maximum of six nonambulatory or bedridden clients (R-4) located in the City of Poway.

Existing residential care facilities shall remain under the previous code that they were licensed under as long as there are no changes to their license relative to nonambulatory or bedridden status. All existing facilities adding nonambulatory and/or bedridden clients shall meet the requirements of the 2010 *California Building Code*. Whenever a facility will accommodate nonambulatory clients or bedridden clients, plans must be submitted and approved by the City of Poway Development Services Department (Building Department) for any construction to be completed at the residence (e.g. new doors, doors widened, ramps installed, miscellaneous electrical work performed).

Requirements are based on resident ambulatory, nonambulatory, or bedridden status. The Director of Social Services determines the status of persons in such facilities.

Occupancy Classification per the California Building Code:

R-3.1: Include facilities licensed by a governmental agency for a residentially based, 24-hour care facility providing accommodations for six or fewer clients of any age. Clients may be classified as ambulatory, nonambulatory, or bedridden. Group R-3.1 occupancy shall meet the requirements for construction as defined for Group R-3

R-4: Residential occupancies shall include buildings arranged for occupancy as residential care/assisted living facilities including more than six ambulatory clients, excluding staff. Group R-4 occupancies shall meet the requirements for construction as defined for Group R-3. This occupancy classification may include a maximum of six nonambulatory or bedridden clients.

DEFINITIONS:

Bedridden Person: A person, requiring assistance in turning and repositioning in bed, or being unable to independently transfer to and from a bed.

Nonambulatory Person: A person unable to leave a building unassisted under emergency conditions. It includes, but is not limited to, persons who depend on mechanical aids such as crutches, walkers, and wheelchairs as well as any person who is unable to physically and mentally respond to a sensory signal (fire alarm device/smoke detector) approved by the State Fire Marshal or an oral instruction relating to fire danger.

Residential Care Facility for the Elderly (RCFE): A facility with a housing arrangement chosen voluntarily by persons 60 years of age or over, or their authorized representative, where varying levels and intensities of care are provided. Persons under 60 years of age with compatible needs, as determined by the Department of Social Services, may be allowed to be admitted or retained as well.

The R3.1 occupancy group may also include the following:

- Adult Residential Facilities
- Congregate Living Health Facilities
- Foster Family Homes
- Group Homes
- Intermediate Care Facilities for the Developmentally Disabled
- Small Family Homes and Residential Care for the Chronically Ill
- Nurseries for the Full-Time Care of Children Under the Age of Six, not including “infants”

PLAN REVIEW:

Prior to requesting a fire safety inspection, two sets of dimensioned site and floor plans shall be submitted to the Fire Department for review and approval. All dimensions must be included. A floor plan showing furniture layout shall be provided for each client bedroom. Aisle widths shall be indicated in the plan even through furniture does not need to be drawn to scale. Furniture shall be in place for inspection. Please submit these drawings two weeks prior to requesting an inspection. The plans must include the following:

- The address of the building
- The occupancy classification as described above
- Smoke detector locations
- Locations of exit doors
- Locations of landings, ramps, stairways, steps, sidewalks, and gates

Submittal Requirements

Prior to requesting a fire safety inspection, two (2) sets of site and floor plans, drawn to scale or including all pertinent dimensions, shall be submitted to the local fire authority for review and approval. Submit these drawings at least two (2) weeks prior to requesting an inspection. Depending on the specific project, it may be necessary to provide information beyond what is described in this document.

General Requirements

1. Address Numbers – Address numbers shall be provided for all new and existing buildings in such a position as to be plainly visible and legible from the street or road fronting the property.

2. Garages – If a garage is attached to the residence, the door between the residence and the garage shall be maintained to be self-closing and self-latching. *The fire door assembly shall be of an approved type and rated at not less than 20 minutes.* The garage shall not be used for sleeping purposes. There shall be no openings or penetrations in the wall separating the garage from the residence. Maintain the garage in a neat, orderly fashion with minimal combustible storage. Clearance between the water heater and any combustible material shall be maintained in accordance with the manufacturer’s specifications and the heater’s listing.

3. Stairway Doors – A non-rated door may be used to provide the required floor separation to prevent smoke migration between floors. The door shall have the equivalent construction of ½ inch of gypsum wallboard on one side of the wall studs (e.g. 20 minute-rated assembly or 1¾ inch solid core door). The door shall be tight fitting, positive latching, smoke gasketed, and automatic closing upon activation of the smoke detector. This requirement will be waived if the building is provided with fire sprinklers or has at least one exterior exit from each floor occupied by clients.

4. Decorative Materials – Decorative materials in all residential care occupancies, including drapes, wall hangings, curtains, and seasonal decorations, (e. g. Christmas trees) located in the common areas of the residence shall be inherently nonflammable or made flame-retardant by a process approved by the State Fire Marshal in accordance with Title 19 §3.08.

Exception: Decorative materials inside clients' bedrooms need not comply with this section.

Corridors and hallways on floors serving clients shall be a minimum of 36 inch in width. No bed, chair, equipment, storage materials, or any other item shall be placed in any manner that would block or obstruct the required width of any corridor, hallway, door, or exit path. This shall include the exterior sidewalks leading from the exit to the public way.

Automatic Sprinkler Systems - CBC 903.2.8

An automatic fire sprinkler system installed in accordance with Section 903.3 shall be provided throughout all buildings with a Group R fire area.

Exception #3

Group R3.1 occupancies not housing bedridden clients, not housing nonambulatory clients above the first floor and not housing clients above the second floor.

Exception #4

Group R3.1 occupancies housing only one bedridden client and complying with CBC Section 425.8.3.3

Occupancies not meeting Exception #3 or #4 shall install a NFPA 13D fire sprinkler system in accordance with CBC 903.3.1.2.

Facilities *without* an interior fire sprinkler system are permitted to have one bedridden client and shall meet all egress requirements listed in the California Building Code Section 425.8.3.3.

Smoke Alarms - CBC 907.2.11

Smoke Detectors – A smoke detector/alarm shall be installed in each sleeping room and at a point centrally located in the corridor or area giving access to the sleeping areas. Additional detectors/alarms may be required for vaulted ceilings adjacent to the corridor. Detectors/alarms shall sound an alarm audible in all sleeping areas of the unit in which they are located.

New construction or newly classified R-3.1 occupancies require smoke detectors to be interconnected (when one smoke detector sounds, all other smoke detectors sound) and wired directly into the home's electrical system and shall be wired without a disconnecting switch other than as required for overcurrent protection. Detectors shall be equipped with battery back-up.

Group R-3.1 Protective Social Care Facilities which house persons who are hearing impaired shall be provided with notification appliances for the hearing impaired installed in accordance with NFPA 72 and shall activate upon initiation of the fire alarm system or the smoke detectors.

New construction or newly classified R-3.1 occupancies that have an attached garage or fuel-burning appliances shall install an approved *carbon monoxide alarm*. Alarms shall be wired directly into the home's electrical system and shall be wired without a disconnecting switch other than as required for overcurrent protection. Alarms shall be equipped with battery back-up. Alarms shall be located outside of or in the immediate area of each bedroom and on every level of the dwelling unit. A multi-purpose alarm (carbon monoxide alarm combined with a smoke detector) is acceptable. (CRC 315)

Bedridden Clients - CBC 425

Clients who become temporarily bedridden may continue to be housed on any story in homes classified as a Residential Care Facility for the Elderly (RCFE). Every RCFE admitting or retaining a bedridden resident shall, within 48 hours of the resident's admission or retention in the facility, notify the local fire department of the estimated length of time the resident will retain his or her bedridden status in the facility.

Facilities housing a bedridden client and not provided with an approved automatic fire sprinkler system shall comply with all of the following: CBC 425.8.3.3

- 1) A direct exit to the exterior of the residence shall be provided from the clients sleeping room.
- 2) Doors to a bedridden client's sleeping room shall be a self-closing, positive latching 1 $\frac{3}{8}$ inch solid wood door. The door shall be provided with a gasket so installed as to provide a seal where the door meets the jam on both sides and across the top.
- 3) Shall not have a night latch, dead bolt, security chain or any similar locking device installed on any interior door leading from a bedridden client's sleeping room to any interior area such as a corridor, hallway, or general use areas of the residence.
- 4) The exterior door to a bedridden client's sleeping room shall be operable from both the interior and exterior of the residence.
- 5) Every required exit doorway from a bedridden client's sleeping room shall be of a size as to permit the installation of a door not less than three feet in width and not less than six feet eight inches in height. When installed in the exit doorways, exit doors shall be capable of opening at least 90 degrees and shall be so mounted that the clear width of the exit way is not less than 32 inches.

Exit Doors and Locking Devices

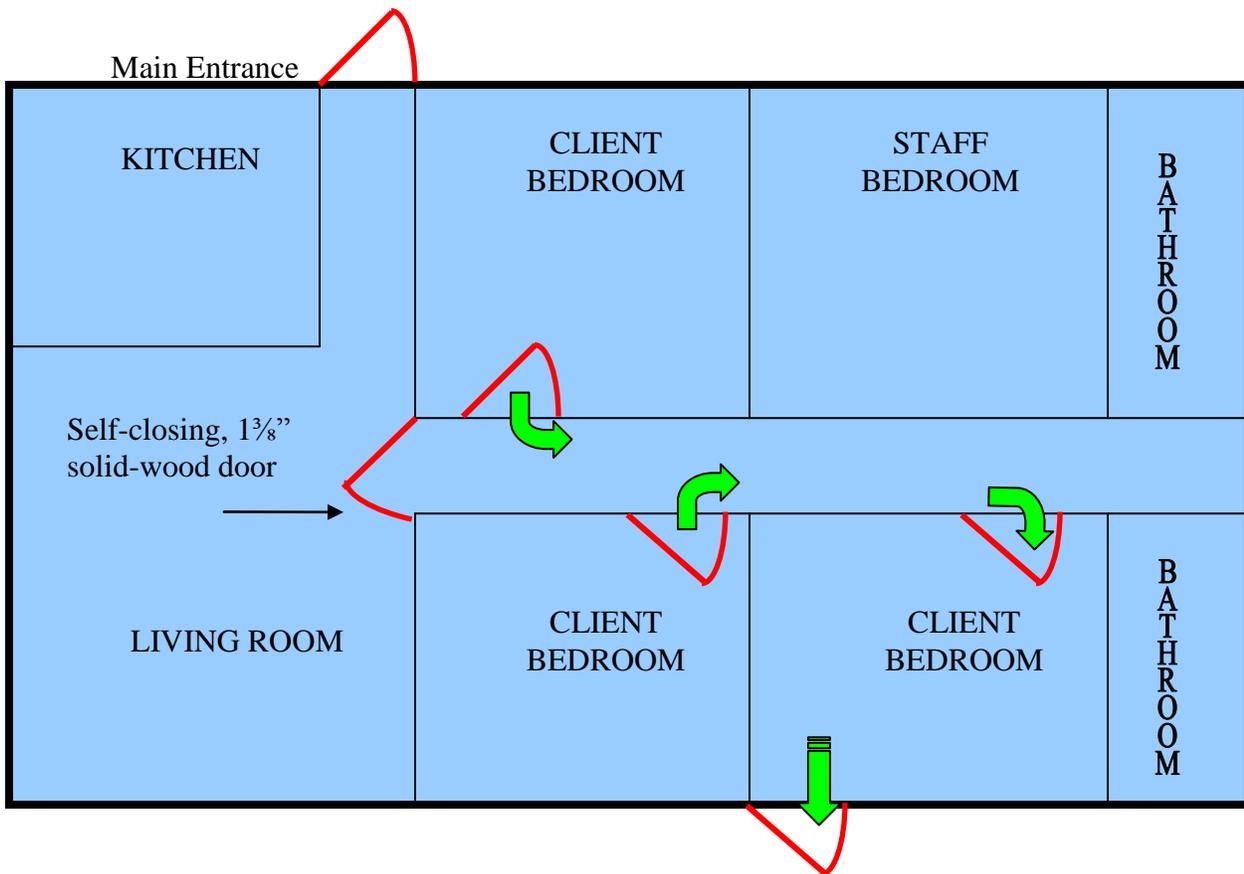
1. Exit Door Hardware – There shall be a minimum of two exits from the residence. All exits (i.e., doors and gates) shall have single-action hardware. This hardware shall be operable from the inside without a key or any special knowledge or effort. If a deadbolt is provided, it shall automatically release when the primary doorknob or lever is turned. No other locks or latches shall be installed on doors, screen doors, or gates. All required exits shall be at least three-feet wide by six-feet, eight-inches high and provide a 32-inch, clear opening.

2. Bedroom Exits – Bedrooms used by nonambulatory clients shall have access to at least one of the required exits that shall conform to one or more of the conditions/options listed below.

- A. An exit that passes through an adjoining bedroom, which exits to the exterior. (Note: No privacy locks on bedroom doors are allowed if the exit goes through an adjoining bedroom.)
- B. An exit that passes through a corridor/hallway serving the sleeping area, which then exits directly to the exterior.
- C. An exit that passes through a corridor/hallway or area and into a bedroom (in the immediate area) which has an exit directly to the exterior. Bedroom doors used as exits shall have exit signs and shall not be provided with a latch or lock preventing egress. The color and design of lettering, arrows and other symbols on exit signs shall be of high contrast with their background. Words on the signs shall be in letters, 6 inches in height with a stroke of not less than $\frac{3}{4}$ ".
- D. An exit that leads directly from the bedroom to the exterior.

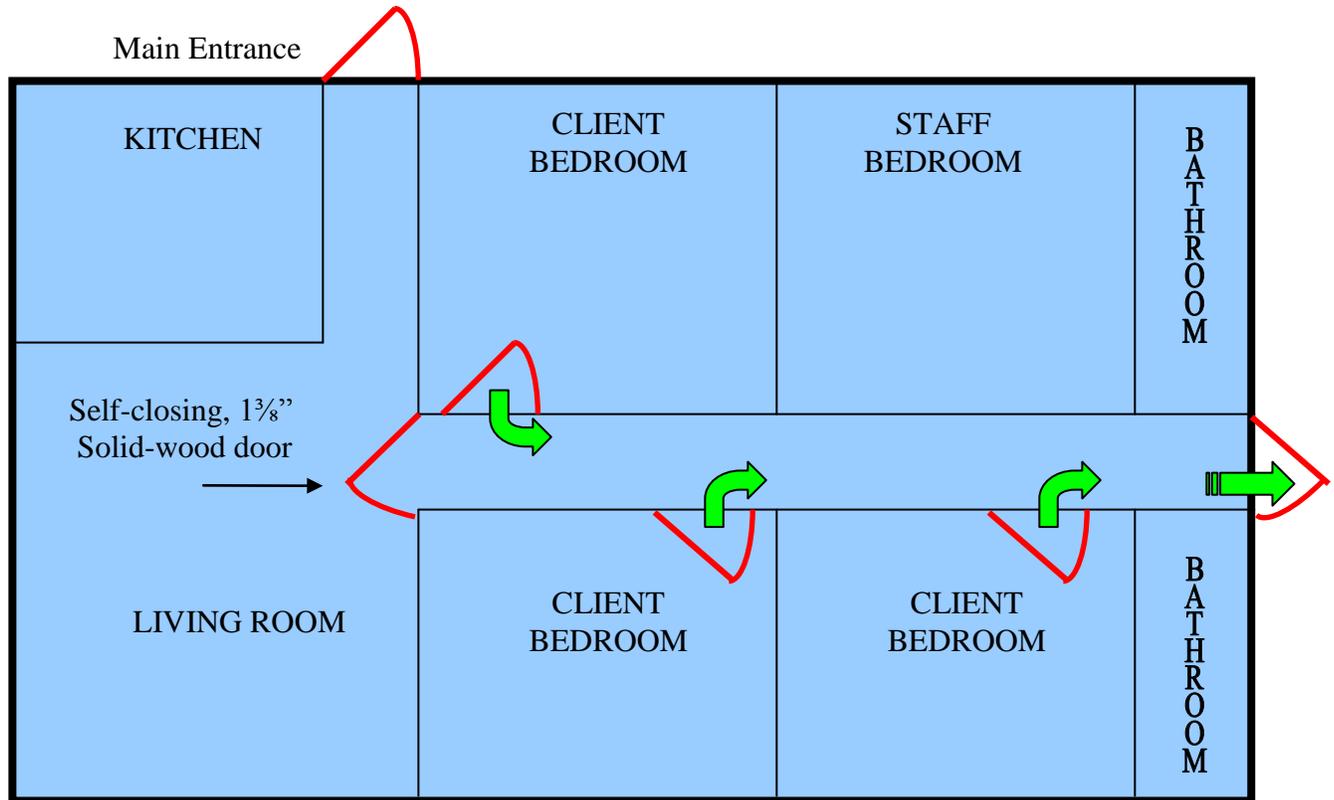
Option A – Nonambulatory

Egress through a hallway or area into a bedroom in the immediate area which has an exit directly to the exterior and the corridor/hallway is constructed consistent with the dwelling unit interior walls. The hallway shall be separated from the common areas by a solid-wood door not less than 1³/₈ inches in thickness, maintained self-closing or shall be automatic closing by actuation of a smoke detector installed in accordance with section 715.4.8 of the CBC.



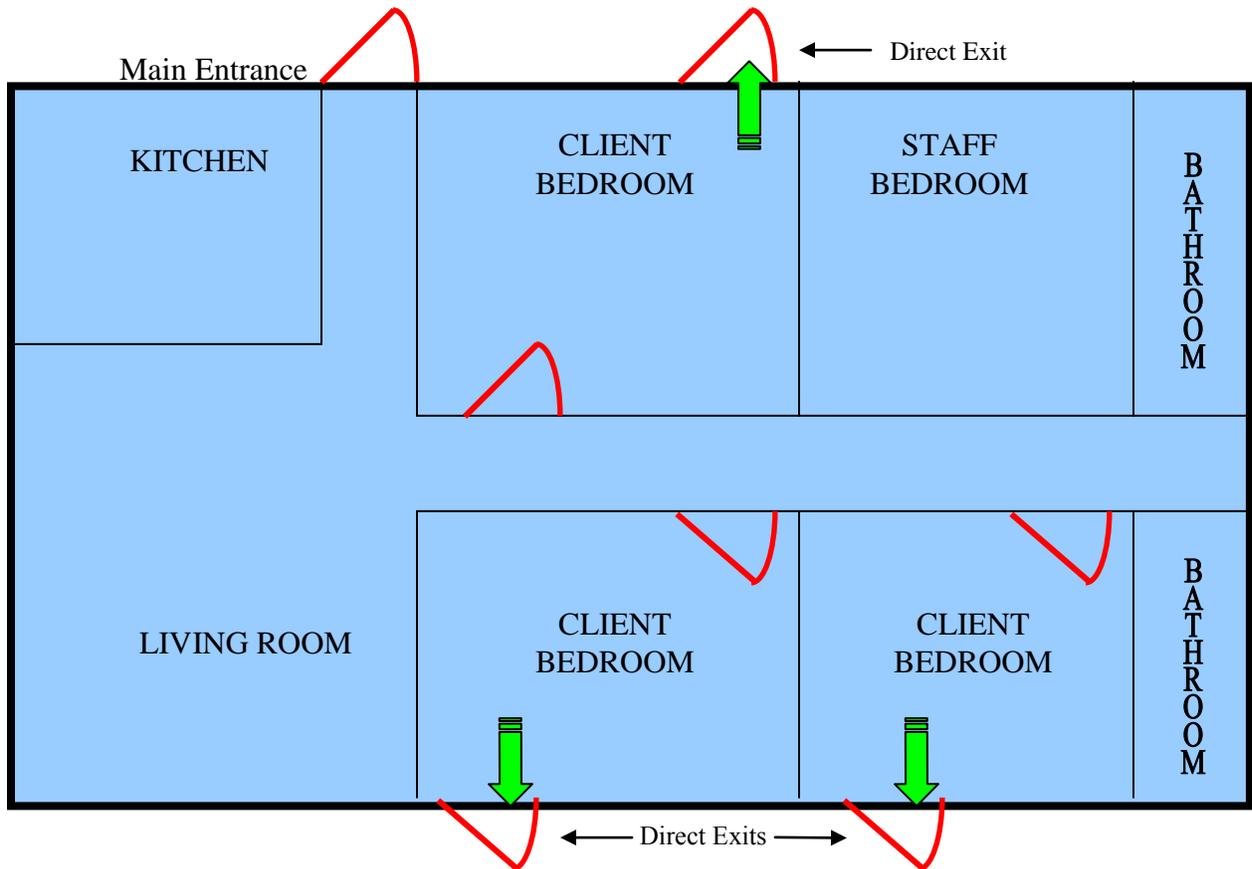
Option B - Nonambulatory

Egress through a hallway which has an exit directly to the exterior. The hallway shall be separated from the rest of the house by a wall constructed consistent with the dwelling unit interior walls and opening protected by a solid wood door not less than 1³/₈ inches in thickness, maintained self-closing or shall be automatic closing by actuation of a smoke detector installed in accordance with section 715.4.8 of the CBC.



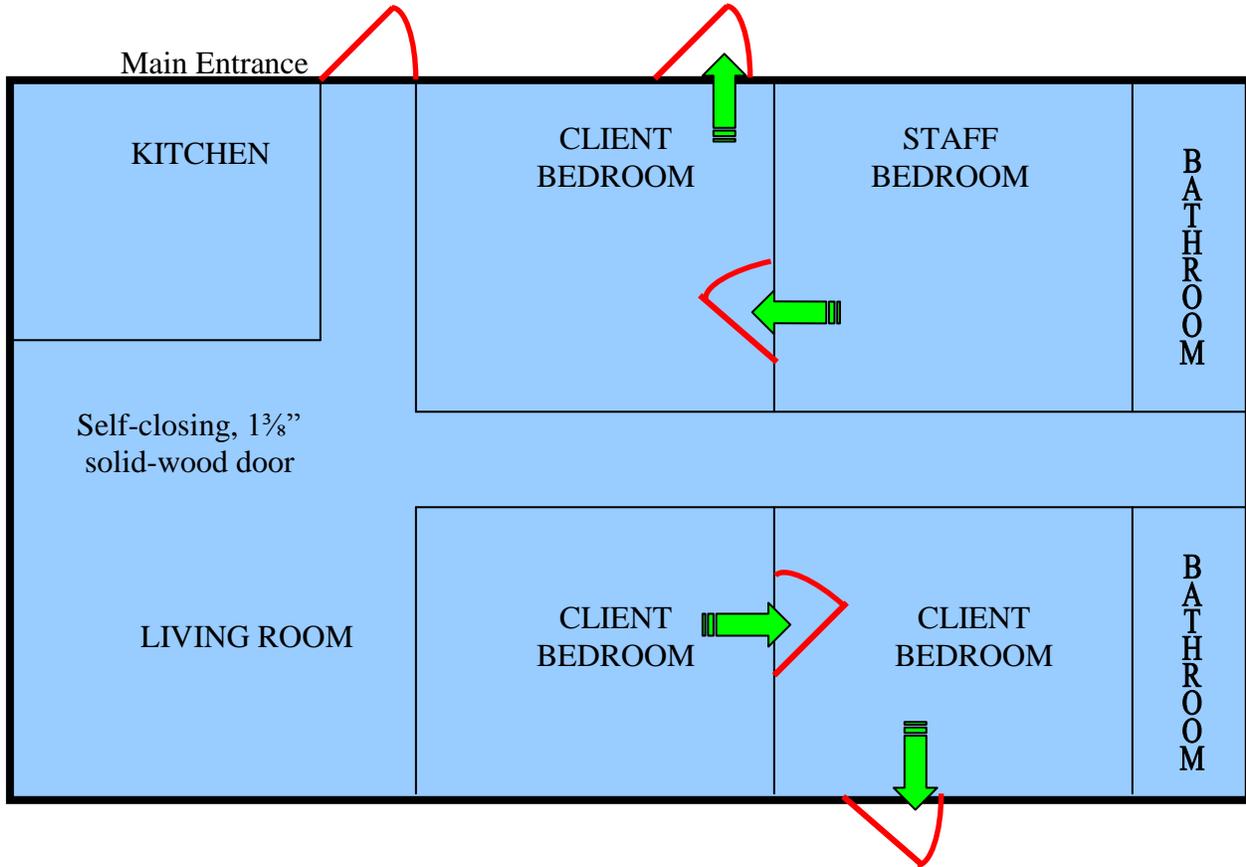
Option C - Nonambulatory

Direct exit from the bedroom to the exterior shall be of a size to permit the installation of a door not less than three feet in width and not less than six-feet, eight-inches in height. When installed, doors shall be capable of opening at least 90 degrees and shall be so mounted that the clear width of the exit way is not less than 32 inches.

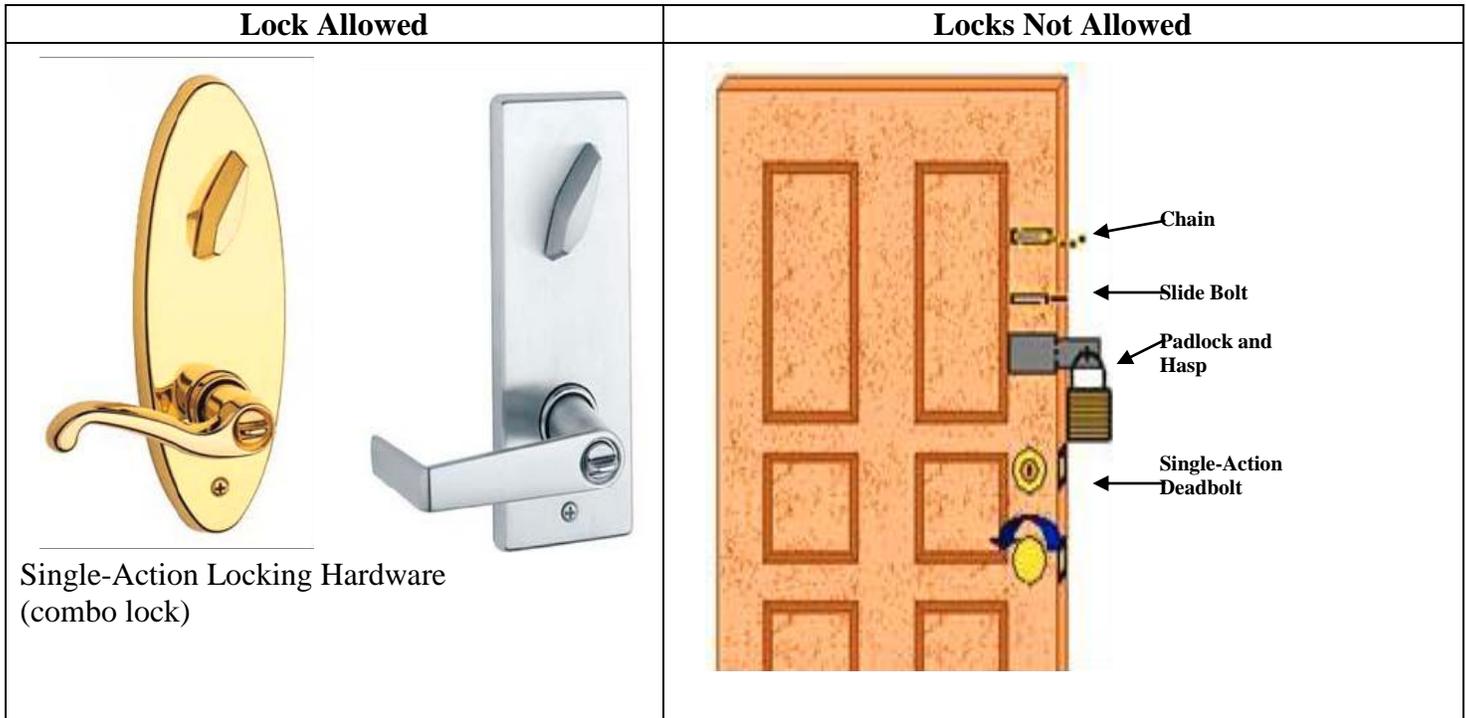


Option D - Nonambulatory

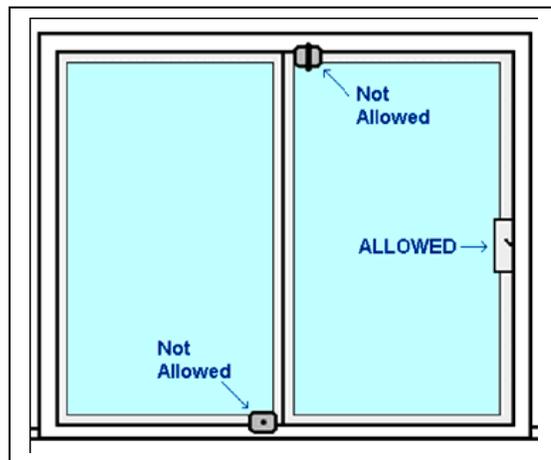
Egress through an adjoin bedroom which exits to the exterior.



3. Deadbolt Locks – When deadbolt security is desired, the locks shown in the picture on the left below are examples of types that satisfy lock requirements.



4. Sliding Doors – Sliding doors may be approved as required exits provided that only the manufacturer’s locking/latching hardware is used. No additional locks or devices (e.g., broomsticks placed in the track) may be added. The sliding door shall provide a minimum clear opening width of 32 inches, in which a six foot or larger sliding door will be necessary.



5. Intervening Rooms - CBC 425.8.3.4

A means of egress (exit) shall not pass through more than one intervening room. Means of egress shall not pass through kitchens, storerooms, closets, garages, or spaces used for similar purposes.

Exception: Kitchens that do not form separate rooms by construction.

In addition to exit doors, all sleeping rooms are required to have escape or rescue windows with a minimum net clear openable area of 5.7 square feet (24 inches high by 20 inches wide) that shall have a finished maximum sill height of 44 inches above the floor. Escape or rescue windows shall not have bars, grilles, or gates unless they meet the requirements in CBC for emergency release.

6. Landings – A floor or landing shall be provided on each side of every exit door. The exterior floor or landing shall have a minimum length of 44 inches and be at least as wide as the opening. Landings for hinged doors shall extend 24 inches past the edge of the door.

7. Ramps / Changes in Level – In Group R-3.1 occupancies housing nonambulatory clients, changes in level up to 0.25 inch (6mm) may be vertical and without edge treatment. Changes in level between 0.25 inch and 0.5 inch shall be beveled with a slope no greater than 1 unit vertical in 2 units horizontal (50% slope). If any part of the exit path for nonambulatory residents has more than one-half inch difference in elevation, a ramp shall be installed. The slope of the ramp shall not be steeper than 1” vertical to 12” horizontal with a minimum clear width of three feet. For example, a 6 inches drop from a landing would require a six-foot long ramp. Ramps shall have a non-skid surface.

8. Hand Rails – Handrails shall be provided on each side of any ramp. Handrails shall be 34” to 38” above the ramp surface. These handrails shall be 1¼ to 2 inches in cross-section dimension.

E. Fire Extinguishers

A fire extinguisher with a minimum classification of 2A:10B:C shall be mounted in a conspicuous and unobstructed location. The top of the extinguisher shall be no higher than five-feet above the finished floor. The extinguisher shall be serviced by a state-licensed company and affixed with a tag *annually*, or immediately after each use. More than one fire extinguisher may be needed, depending on the size of the facility, and after a field inspection has been conducted.

State Fire Marshal Service Tag

