



# FRESNO COUNTY FIRE

PROTECTION DISTRICT

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## RESIDENTIAL-BASED CARE FACILITY R-2.1 GUIDLINE

### Purpose

This informational bulletin has been developed to assist development applicants, architects, and contractors in determining the minimum requirements for licensed care facilities housing six or more clients. This occupancy may contain more than six non-ambulatory and/or bedridden clients.

### Scope

This bulletin is intended to ensure compliance with the appropriate requirements for Group R-2.1 residentially-based care facilities. The regulations regarding residentially-based care facilities are found in the California Code of Regulations CCR, Title 19, as well as the 2022 California Fire Code (CFC) and 2022 California Building Code (CBC). Plans not conforming to the requirements listed herein will be returned as incomplete.

### Occupancy Classifications

This occupancy shall include buildings, structures or parts thereof housing clients, on a 24-hour basis, who because of age, mental disability or other reasons, live in a supervised residential environment that provides personal care services. This occupancy may contain more than six non-ambulatory and/or bedridden clients. This group shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

#### **Assisted Living Facilities such as:**

- Residential Care Facilities
- Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly (RCFE's)
- Adult Residential Care
- Congregate Living Health Facilities
- Group Homes
- Residential Care Facilities for the Chronically Ill
- Congregate Living Health Facilities for the Terminally Ill.

## **Social Rehabilitation Facilities such as:**

Halfway houses  
Community Correctional Centers  
Community Correction Re-Entry Centers  
Community Treatment Programs  
Work Furlough Programs  
Alcoholism / Drug Abuse Recovery or Treatment Facilities

## **Submittal Requirements**

Prior to requesting a fire safety inspection, **two sets** of engineered dimensioned or scaled site and floor plans shall be submitted to Fresno County Fire Protection District, Protection and Planning Bureau for review and approval. Please submit these drawings at least two weeks prior to requesting an inspection. The plans must include the building address, occupancy and the location of engineered sprinkler systems, smoke detectors / alarms, exit doors, landings, ramps, stairways, steps, sidewalks and gates.

Provide a detailed letter identifying all intended use and operations of the facility. Include room locations for staff, ambulatory, non-ambulatory and bedridden clients.

Furniture shall be in place for fire inspection.

Please be aware that clearance from the fire inspection does not constitute zoning clearance.

Contact the community development or planning department of your local jurisdiction for zoning information.

Use this guideline to ensure that your plans have at least the minimum amount of information required to begin a review. It may be necessary to provide additional information beyond what is requested in this guideline depending on the project.

## **Codes and Standards**

### **1. Addressing:**

Address numbers shall be posted on the building and shall be visible from the street. Said numbers shall contrast with their background. CFC 505.1

### **2. Key Boxes:**

a. Where access to or within a structure or an area is restricted because of secured openings or where immediate access is necessary for life-saving or fire-fighting purposes, the fire code official is authorized to require a key box to be installed in an approved location. The key box shall be of an approved type and shall contain keys to gain necessary access as required by the fire code official. CFC 506

- b. An approved lock shall be installed on gates or similar barriers when required by the fire code official. CFC 506.1.1

### 3. Emergency Information:

a. Emergency procedures information printed on a floor plan shall be posted at every stairway landing, at every elevator landing and immediately inside all public entrances to the building. The information shall be representative of the floor level and be posted so that the bottom edge of such information is not located more than 4-feet above the floor, where it can be easily identified. Emergency procedures information shall be printed with a minimum of 3/16-inch non-decorative lettering providing a sharp contrast to the background. Title 19 3.09

b. Emergency procedures information shall include, but not be limited to that described in subsection (a)(2)(A-D) . Title 19 3.09

c. Owner(s) and operator(s) of hotels, motels, lodging houses, high rise office buildings and Group R-2.1 occupancies as defined in the State Building Code (except honor farms and conservation camps) shall appoint a Fire Safety Director, who shall: CCR, Title 19 3.09

- i. Report to owner(s) or operator(s):
- ii. Coordinate fire safety activities of the facility with the authority having jurisdiction:
- iii. Conduct, or cause to be conducted, all training as described in subsection (e) for all building employees and maintain records of dates, subjects, and attendance of each training session; and,
- iv. Develop and maintain a written facility emergency plan acceptable to the authority having jurisdiction. Upon request, the facility emergency plan shall be made physically available at the respective facility to the authority having jurisdiction. Facility emergency plans shall include, but not be limited to the following: CCR, Title 19 3.09
  - 1) Fire department emergency telephone number 911:
  - 2) Other emergency response telephone numbers;
  - 3) Evacuation or relocation plan for the building occupants;
  - 4) Duties of the Fire Safety Director and other designated emergency personnel;
  - 5) Building employee responsibilities in case of emergency , including individual assignments and reporting responsibilities : and,
  - 6) Procedures to identify and assist the non-ambulatory and physically disabled.

d. Assure that the requirements of subsection (d)(4)(F), procedures to identify and assist the non-ambulatory and physically disabled are accomplished as follows: CCR, Title 19 3.09

- i. Hotels, motels, and lodging houses shall comply with subsection (b)(3):
- ii. Owners or operators of high-rise office buildings shall maintain a list of all permanent building tenants who have disabilities. Building owners or operators

shall be notified in writing by those who have disabilities. Information provided in the list shall include any special emergency evacuation needs and permanent work location of such physically disabled persons. The list shall be located in the building manager's office;

- iii. Group R-2.1 occupancies as defined in the State Building Code (except honor farms and conservation camps) shall comply with normal hospital policies of assisting patients and guests during an emergency evacuation.

e. Group R-2.1 occupancies as defined in the State Building Code (except honor farms and conservation camps) shall conduct quarterly fire emergency training for individuals listed in subsection (d)(3). CCR, Title 19 3.09

- i. Fire safety Directors and their designated emergency personnel shall receive training in the identification and use of facility fire safety equipment, communication procedures, people movement procedures, fire prevention practices and their duties outlined in their respective emergency plan. The training curriculum shall be approved by, and made available to the authority having jurisdiction.
- ii. Individuals designated in subsection (d)(3) shall receive training covering the identification and use of facility fire safety equipment, fire prevention practices and appropriate procedures to follow in the event of a fire.
- iii. Actual evacuation or relocation of building occupants, pursuant to procedures contained in the emergency plan shall be conducted at least annually by those individuals designed in subsection (d)(3). Appropriate records, including dates, floor or buildings involved, and persons conducting evacuation or relocation procedures shall be maintained and made immediately available to the authority having jurisdiction upon their request. The authority having jurisdiction shall be notified not less than 48 hours in advance of such planned evacuation or relocation. CCR, Title 19 3.09

**Exception:** In hotel, motels, lodging houses, and Group R-2.1 occupancies as defined in the State Building Code, guests and patients are not required to participate in evacuation or relocation of the building. In hotels, motels, lodging houses, Group R-2.1 occupancies as defined in the State Building Code, and high-rise office buildings, on-duty personnel who have security or maintenance related responsibilities and designated management personnel approved by the fire authority having jurisdiction shall not be required to participate in any drill but they shall provide an alternate method approved by the authority having jurisdiction to measure their knowledge of their respective duties pursuant to the emergency plan.

- f. Emergency procedures signage posted prior to the effective date of these regulations may be continued in use until one year after such effective date of these regulations. CCR, Title 19 3.09

#### 4. Electrical:

- a. Identified electrical hazards shall be abated. Identified hazardous electrical conditions in permanent wiring shall be brought to the attention of the code official responsible for enforcement of the California Electrical Code. Electrical wiring, devices, appliances and other equipment that is modified or damaged and constitutes an electrical shock or fire hazard shall not be used. CFC 603.1
- b. Extension cords and flexible cords shall not be a substitute for permanent wiring. Extension cords and flexible cords shall not be affixed to structures, extended through walls, ceilings or floors, under doors or floor coverings, nor shall such cords be subject to environmental damage or physical impact. Extension cords shall be used only with portable appliances. CFC 603.6
- c. Multiplug adapters, such as cube adapters, unfused plug strips or any other device not complying with the California Electrical Code shall be prohibited. CFC 603.5
- d. Relocatable power taps shall be directly connected to a permanently installed receptacle. CFC 603.5.2
- e. Doors into electrical control panel rooms shall be marked with a plainly visible and legible sign stating **ELECTRICAL ROOM** or similar approved wording. The disconnecting means for each service, feeder or branch circuit originating on a switchboard or panelboard shall be legibly and durably marked to indicate its purpose unless such purpose is clearly evident. CFC 603.4.1
- f. A working space of not less than 30-inches in width, 36-inches in depth and 78-inches in height shall be provided in front of electrical service equipment. Where the electrical service equipment is wider than 30-inches, the working space shall not be less than the width of the equipment. No storage of any materials shall be located within the designated working space. CFC 603.4

#### Exceptions:

- 1) Where other dimensions are required or allowed by the California Electrical Code.
- 2) Access openings into attics or under-floor areas which provide a minimum clear opening of 22-inches by 30-inches.

## 5. Fire Alarms:

- a. Fire alarm systems and smoke alarms shall be installed in R-2.1 occupancies as required in Section 907.2.9
- b. Licensed Group R-2.1 occupancies housing more than six non-ambulatory, elderly clients shall be provided with an approved manual and automatic fire alarm system. CBC 907.2.9.2

**Exceptions:** Building housing non-ambulatory clients on the first story only and which are protected throughout by the following:

- 1) An approved and supervised automatic sprinkler system, as specified in CBC Sections 903.3.1.1 or 903.3.1.2, which upon activation will initiate the fire alarm system to notify all occupants.
  - 2) A manual fire alarm system
  - 3) Smoke alarms required by CBC Section 907.2.11.
- c. dBA Requirements: Where audible appliances are installed to provide signals for sleeping areas, they shall have a sound level at least 15 dB above the average ambient sound level or 5 dB above the maximum sound level having a duration of at least 60 seconds or a sound level of at least 75 dBA, whichever is greater measured at the pillow level in the occupiable area, using the A-weighted scale. NFPA 72, 18.4.6.1.
  - d. An approved sign to identify the **Fire Alarm Control Panel/FACP** shall be placed on the exterior door constructed of durable materials, permanently installed and readily visible. CFC 509.1

## 6. Smoke Alarms:

- a. Smoke alarms shall be installed where required in CBC Section 907.2.11.2. CBC 435.7.3
- b. Single-or multiple-station smoke alarms shall be installed and maintained in Group R-2.1 occupancies regardless of occupant load at all of the following locations: CBC 907.2.11.2
  - i. On ceilings or walls outside of each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of bedrooms.
  - ii. In each room used for sleeping purposes.
  - iii. In each story within a dwelling unit, including basements but not including crawl spaces and uninhabitable attics. In dwellings or dwelling units with split levels and without an intervening door between the adjacent levels, a smoke alarm installed on the upper level shall suffice for the adjacent lower level provided that the lower level is less than one full story below the upper level.

## 7. Carbon Monoxide Alarms

CFC 907.2.11 requires Group R occupancies located in a building containing a fuel-burning appliance or a building that has an attached garage shall be equipped with single station carbon monoxide alarms. The carbon monoxide alarms shall be listed as complying with UL 2034 and shall be installed and maintained in accordance with NFPA 720 and the manufacturer's instructions.

**Exception:** Sleeping units or dwelling units that do not themselves contain a fuel-burning appliance or have an attached garage, but that are located in a building with a fuel-burning appliance or an attached garage, need not be provided with single station carbon monoxide alarms provided that:

1. The sleeping unit or dwelling unit is located more than one story above or below any story that contains a fuel-burning appliance or an attached garage; and
2. The sleeping unit or dwelling unit is not connected by duct work or ventilation shafts to any room containing a fuel-burning appliance or to an attached garage; and
3. The building is equipped with a common area carbon monoxide detection system that includes all enclosed common area spaces.

## 8. Sprinklers:

- a. An automatic sprinkler system shall be installed where required in CBC Section 903. CBC 435.7.1
- b. An automatic sprinkler system shall be provided throughout buildings with a Group R-2.1 fire area. CBC 903.2.8

**Exception:** When not used in accordance with area or height increases for automatic sprinklers allowed in the CBC an automatic fire sprinkler system in accordance with section 903.3.1.2 shall be allowed in Group R-2.1 occupancies.

An automatic sprinkler system designed in accordance with CBC Section 903.3.1.3 shall not be utilized in Group R-2.1 occupancies.

- c. An approved sign to identify the **Fire Riser Room** shall be placed on the exterior door constructed of durable materials, permanently installed and readily visible. CFC 509.1

## 9. Maintenance Records:

- a. The maintenance and testing schedules and procedures for fire alarm and fire detection systems shall be in accordance with this section (CFC Chapter 9) and Chapter 14 of NFPA 72, 2022 edition. CFC 901.6 and 907.8.

- b. Smoke detector sensitivity shall be checked within one year after installation and every alternate year thereafter. After the second calibration test, where sensitivity tests indicate that the detector

has remained within its listed and marked sensitivity range (or 4-percent obscuration light grey smoke, if not marked), the length of time between calibration tests shall be permitted to be extended to a maximum of five years. Where the frequency is extended, records of detector-caused nuisance alarms and subsequent trends of these alarms shall be maintained. In zones or areas where nuisance alarms show any increase over the previous year, calibration test shall be performed. CFC 907.8.3

c. A record of all inspections, testing, and maintenance shall be provided that includes the following information regarding tests and all the applicable information requested in Figure 7.8.2(g) 2022 NFPA 72

d. Maintenance schedule for water-based fire protection systems see NFPA 25, 2013, California Edition.

e. Hood extinguishing system: Automatic fire-extinguishing systems shall be serviced at least every 6 months and after activation of the system. Inspection shall be by qualified individuals, and a certificate of inspection shall be forwarded to the fire code official upon completion. CFC 904.5.1

f. Portable fire extinguishers shall be selected, installed and maintained in accordance with this section and Division 1, Chapter 3 Title 19 California Code or Regulations. CFC 906.

## 10. Exit Doors:

a. Egress doors shall readily openable from the egress side without the use of a key or special knowledge or effort. CBC 1010.2

b. Door handles, pulls, latches, locks and other operating devices shall be installed 34 inches minimum and 48 inches maximum above the finished floor. Locks used only for security purposes and not used for normal operation are permitted at any height. CBC 1010.2.3.

**Exception:** Access doors or gates in barrier walls and fences protecting pools, spas and hot tubs shall be permitted to have operable parts of the release of latch on self-latching devices at 54-inches maximum above the finished floor or ground, provided the self-latching devices are also not self-locking devices operated by means of a key, electronic opener or integral combination lock.

c. Exits shall be 3-feet wide by 6-feet, 8-inches high and provide a 32-inch clear opening. A sliding door may be used as an exit from bedrooms; however, in order to provide a 32-inch clear opening, a 6-foot or larger door will be necessary. Exits shall not pass through kitchens, garages, storerooms, or closets and shall not pass through more than one intervening room. CBC 435.8.1 and 435.8.3.4

d. A means of egress shall be free from obstructions that would prevent its use, including the accumulation of snow and ice. CFC 1032.3

## 11. Exiting:

a. In addition to the general means of egress requirements of Chapter 10 there shall be a minimum of two exits. CBC 435.8.2.1

## 12. Exit signs:

a. Exit and exit access doors shall be marked by an approved exit sign readily visible from any direction of egress travel. Access to exits shall be marked by readily visible exit signs in cases where the exit or the path of egress travel is not immediately visible to the occupants. Exit sign placement shall be such that no point in a corridor is more than 100-feet or the listed viewing distance for the sign, whichever is less, from the nearest exit sign. CBC 1013.1

b. Exit Signs shall be internally or externally illuminated. CBC 1013.3

## 13. Means of Egress Illumination:

a. The means of egress, including the exit discharge, shall be illuminated at all times the building space served by the means of egress is occupied. CBC 1006.1

**Exceptions:** Sleeping units of Group I, R-2.1 and R-4 occupancies.

## 14. Delayed Egress:

a. Approved, listed, delayed egress locks shall be permitted to be installed on doors serving any occupancy except Group A, E and H occupancies in buildings that are equipped throughout with an automatic sprinkler system in accordance with CBC Section 903.3.1.1 and an approved automatic smoke detection system installed in accordance with CBC Section 907, provided that the doors unlock in accordance with items 1 through 9 below. A building occupant shall not be required to pass through more than one door equipped with a delayed egress lock before entering an exit. Delayed egress devices shall conform to all of the following: CBC 1010.2.13

- i. The doors unlock upon actuation of the automatic sprinkler system or automatic smoke detection system.
- ii. The doors unlock upon loss of electrical power to any of the following:
  - 1) The egress-control device itself.
  - 2) The smoke detection system
  - 3) Means of egress illumination as required by CBC Section 1006.1
- iii. The door locks shall have the capability of being unlocked by a signal from a switch located in an approved location.
- iv. The initiation of an irreversible process which will release the latch in not more than 15 seconds when a force of not more than 15-pounds is applied for 1-second to the release device. Initiation of the irreversible process shall activate an audible signal in the vicinity of the door. Once the door lock has been released by the application of force to the releasing device, relocking shall be by manual means only. The time delay established for each egress-control device shall not be field adjustable.
- v. A sign shall be provided on the door located above and within 12-inches of the release device reading: "PUSH UNTIL ALARM SOUNDS. DOOR CAN BE OPNED IN 15 {30} SECONDS." Sign lettering shall be at least 1-inch in height and shall have a stroke of not less than 1/8-inch.
- vi. A tactile sign shall also be provided in Braille and raised characters which complies with CBC Section 1008.1.9.7, item 5.1
- vii. Emergency lighting shall be provided at the door.

- viii. Actuation of the panic bar or other door-latching hardware shall activate an audible signal at the door.
- ix. The unlatching shall not require more than one operation.
- x. Regardless of the means of deactivation, relocking of the egress-control device shall be by manual means only at the door.
- xi. The delayed egress locking system shall be listed in accordance with UL 294.

## **15. Stairways:**

- a. Group R-2.1 occupancies housing more than six non-ambulatory clients above the first floor shall be provided with two vertical exit enclosures. Stairway enclosures shall be in compliance with CBC Section 1011. Exceptions to Section 1011 shall not apply in facilities licensed as a 24-hour care facility. CBC 435.8.6.1

## **16. Intervening Rooms:**

- a. A means of egress shall not pass through more than one intervening room. A means of egress shall not pass through kitchens, storerooms, closets, garages, or spaces used for similar purposes. CBC 435.8.3.4

## **17. Corridors:**

- a. Group R-2.1 occupancies shall have 60-inches on floors housing non-ambulatory clients and 44-inches on floors housing only ambulatory clients. CBC 435.8.4.2
- b. In Group R-2.1 occupancies having smoke barriers, cross-corridor doors in corridors 6-foot or less in width shall have, as a minimum, a door 36-inches in width. CBC 435.8.4.3

## **18. Fences and Gates:**

- a. Grounds of residential care for the elderly facility serving Alzheimer's clients may be fenced and gates therein equipped with locks, provided safe dispersal areas are located not less than 50-feet from buildings. Dispersal areas shall be sized to provide an area of not less than 3-square feet per occupant. Gates shall not be installed across corridors or passageways leading to such dispersal areas unless they comply with egress requirements. CBC 435.8.8
- b. Gates serving the means of egress system shall comply with the requirements of this section. Gates used as a component in a means of egress shall conform to the applicable requirements for doors. CBC 1010.2

## **19. Ramps:**

- a. Where changes in elevations of less than 12-inches exist in the means of egress, sloped surfaces shall be used. Where the slope is greater than one unit vertical in 20-units horizontal, ramps complying with Section 1010 shall be used. Where the difference in elevation is 6-inches or less, the ramp shall be equipped with either handrails or floor finish materials that contrast with adjacent floor finish materials. CBC 1003.5
- b. Ramps used as part of means of egress shall have a running slope not steeper than one unit vertical in 12-units horizontal. The slope of other pedestrian ramps shall not be steeper than one unit vertical unit in 8 units horizontal. CBC 1012.2

- c. The minimum width of a means of egress ramp shall not be less than required for corridors by Section 1020.2. The clear width of a ramp and the clear width between handrails, if provided, shall be 36-inches minimum. CBC 1012.5.1
- d. The surface of ramps shall be of slip-resistant materials that are securely attached. CBC 1012.7.1.
- e. Handrail height, measured above stair tread nosings, or finish surface of ramp slope shall be uniform, not less than 34-inches and not more than 38-inches. CBC 1012.2
- f. Guardrails shall be provided if ramps are more than 30-inches above grade. CBC 1015.2

## **20. Fire Extinguisher:**

- a. Portable fire extinguishers shall be installed in the following locations. CFC 906.1
  - i. In new and existing R-2.1 occupancies
  - ii. Within 30-feet of commercial cooking equipment.
- b. A minimum rated extinguisher of 2A10BC shall be used. CCR, Title 19, Table 2 & Table 3
- c. The maximum travel distance to an extinguisher shall be 75-feet. CCR, Title 19, Table 2.
- d. Portable fire extinguishers having a gross weight not exceeding 40-pounds shall be installed so that its top is not more than 5-feet above the floor. CFC 906.9.1 and CCR, Title 19, 567.6
- e. Portable fire extinguishers shall be serviced annually. CCR, Title 19, 575.1/596

## **21. Open Flame:**

- a. A person shall not utilize or allow to be utilized, an open flame in Group R-2.1 occupancies. CFC 308.5

## **22. Ignition Sources:**

- a. Clearance between ignition sources, such as luminaries, heaters, flame-producing devices and combustible materials shall be maintained in an approved manner. CFC 305.1

## **23. Decorative Materials:**

- a. In Group R-2.1 occupancies all drapes, hangings, curtains, drops, and all other decorative material, including Christmas trees, that would tend to increase the fire and panic hazard shall be made from a nonflammable material, or shall be treated and maintained in a flame – retardant condition by means of a flame-retardant solution or process approved by the State Fire Marshal, as set forth in Subchapter 8, Chapter 1, Title 19, CAC, Exits, exit lights, fire alarm sending stations, wet standpipe hose cabinets, and fire extinguisher locations shall not be concealed, in whole or in part, by any decorative material. Title 19, 3.08.

## **24. Securing Compressed Gas Container, Cylinders and Tanks:**

- a. Compressed gas containers, cylinders and tanks shall be secured to prevent falling caused by contact, vibration or seismic activity. CFC 5303.5

## 25. Kitchen:

a. All automatic fire extinguishing systems, including systems installed as an alternate to other building requirements shall be inspected, tested, and maintained in accordance with the following frequencies. Local authorities may require more frequent inspections, testing and maintenance and additional procedures. CCR, Title 19, Sec. 904

- i. Water based fire protection systems shall be inspected, tested and maintained in accordance with the frequencies required by NFPA 25 (2022 edition) including and Annexes A,C, D and E as amended by the State of California.
- ii. Engineered and pre-engineered fixed extinguishing systems shall be inspected, tested and maintained at least semi-annually, and immediately after system activation.

b. Automatic fire-extinguishing systems shall be serviced at least every 6 months and after activation of the system. Inspection shall be by qualified individuals, and a certificate of inspection shall be forwarded to the fire code official upon completion. CCR, Title 19, 904.

c. Fusible links and automatic sprinkler heads shall be replaced at least annually and other protection devices shall be serviced or replaced in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. CFC 904.13.5.3.

**Exception:** Frangible bulbs are not required to be replaced annually.

d. Portable fire extinguishers shall be provided and maintained in accordance with Title 19 California Code of Regulations, Chapter 3. Title 19, 575.1/596

e. Each required commercial kitchen exhaust hood and duct system required by CFC Section 606 to have a Type I hood shall be protected with an approved automatic fire-extinguishing system installed in accordance with this code. CFC 904.13.

f. Hoods, grease-removal devices, fans, ducts and other appurtenances shall be cleaned at intervals necessary to prevent the accumulation of grease. Cleanings shall be recorded, and records shall state the extent, time and date of cleaning. Such records shall be maintained on the premises.

## 26. Upholstered Furniture:

a. In Group R-2.1 occupancies all drapes, hangings, curtains, drops, and all other decorative material, including Christmas trees, that would tend to increase the fire and panic hazard shall be made from a nonflammable material, or shall be treated and maintained in a flame – retardant condition by means of a flame-retardant solution or process approved by the State Fire Marshal, as set forth in Subchapter 8, Chapter 1, CCR, Title 19. Exits, exit lights, fire alarm sending stations, wet standpipe hose cabinets, and fire extinguisher locations shall not be concealed, in whole or in part, by any decorative material. CCR, Title 19, 3.08