



CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH

Fire Department

Fire Prevention Division

GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

GUIDELINE A.09 – Residential Group R-3.1 Occupancies

A.09.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this guideline is to ensure compliance with the appropriate requirements for residentially based care facilities. The regulations regarding these facilities are found in the California Health and Safety Code, California Code of Regulations Title 19, California Fire Code, and California Building Code.

A.09.2 SCOPE

This guideline is intended to provide the minimum requirements for review and approval of licensed residentially based 24-hour care facilities providing accommodation for six or fewer clients of any age in a single-family residence. They include facilities such as social rehabilitation facilities (SRF) and residential care facilities for the elderly (RCFE).

For residential care facilities housing only ambulatory occupants, see [Guideline A.19 – Residential Group R-3 Occupancies](#).

Plans for facilities housing seven or more clients are required to be submitted to the City's Community Development Department. Call (949) 644-3200 for additional information or visit the City's website at [Community Development Department | City of Newport Beach](#).

This document does not include all regulations that may apply to residentially based care facilities. It is only intended to provide guidance on issues and commonly asked questions.

A.09.3 PROCEDURE

1. A zoning clearance letter is required to be obtained from the Planning Division prior to a fire clearance inspection. Call (949) 644-3204 for additional information.
2. Permits shall be secured and finalized by Community Development for any structural, electrical, or plumbing modifications. Call (949) 644-3200 for additional information.

3. Submit a site plan and floor plan to the Fire Prevention Division at fdprevention@newportbeachca.gov.

Site Plan shall include the following:

- Address of the property
- Outline of the home and any other structures on the property (detached garages, sheds, etc.)
- Exit pathways from the home to the street – note the width of the pathway
- The location of exit doors, landings, ramps, stairways, steps
- Fences and walls over 3 feet tall
- Gates – note the clear opening width

Floor Plan shall include the following:

- All rooms in the home – label each room with its function (bedroom, kitchen, bathroom, etc.) and clearly identify which rooms are being used as bedrooms for clients and how many clients are housed in each room
- Attached garages – show doors, windows, or other openings between the garage and the rest of the home
- Interior and exterior exit doors – note the clear width of each exterior door
- The location of all smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, and fire extinguishers

A.09.4 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Address numbers shall be posted on the residence and shall be visible from the street. The numbers shall not be less than 4 inches in height and contrast with their background.
2. A fire extinguisher with a minimum classification of 2A:10BC is required and shall be securely attached to a wall in a visible and readily accessible location. The top of the extinguisher shall not be more than 5 feet above finished floor level. A current annual service tag shall be attached to the fire extinguisher or if the extinguisher was purchased within the last year, attach proof of purchase receipt with date.

SMOKE ALARMS

3. Smoke alarms shall be installed in all habitable areas of the home and in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Do not install in kitchens, bathrooms, garages, or closets.

The smoke alarms shall be interconnected so that the activation of one alarm will activate all the alarms in the building.

In new construction, facilities housing any bedridden clients, and where existing homes are converted into residential care facilities (R-3.1 occupancy), smoke alarms shall receive their primary power from building wiring and be equipped with a battery backup. Wireless smoke alarms are not permitted.

EXITS

4. There shall be a minimum of two exits from the dwelling that are remotely located from each other. Exterior doors shall be 36" with a 32-inch clear opening.

Note: A sliding glass door can be used as an exterior exit doorway if it is operable from the inside and outside and the clear width of the exit way is not less than 32".

Hallways on floors housing clients shall not be less than 36" in width.

Exit paths both inside and outside the home shall be maintained clear with no furniture, equipment, storage, or other items obstructing the exit path.

Exits shall not pass through kitchens, garages, storerooms, or closets and shall not pass through more than one intervening room.

5. All lockable doors and gates along the paths of exit travel shall be equipped with hardware that does not require any special effort or knowledge or require the use of a key or other tool to operate. If screen doors are installed, they shall be equipped with similar door hardware.
6. Emergency escape and rescue openings shall be maintained free of any obstructions and shall be operational from inside the room without the use of keys or tools.

7. EXIT ACCESS – Non-Ambulatory Clients

Bedrooms used by non-ambulatory clients shall have access to one of the following exit arrangements:

- Direct exit from the bedroom to the exterior.
- Exit through an adjoining bedroom with a direct exit to the exterior.
- Exit through a hallway, which has an exit directly to the outside. The hallway shall be separated from the rest of the house by a wall and a 1-3/8" self-closing solid wood door. The door can be automatic closing by actuation of a smoke alarm.

- Exit from a bedroom through a hallway into another bedroom that has an exit directly to the outside. The hallway shall be separated from the rest of the house by a wall and a 1-3/8" self-closing solid wood door. The door can be automatic closing by actuation of a smoke alarm.

8. EXIT ACCESS – Bedridden Client

One bedridden client is permitted without having a fire sprinkler system if ALL the following are met:

- Bedridden room shall exit directly to the exterior of the building.
- Interior door to bedridden room shall be a self-closing, positive latching 1-3/8" solid wood door provided with a gasket to be smoke-tight. The door can be automatic closing by actuation of a smoke alarm.
- Doors from the bedridden room leading to an interior corridor or interior area shall not have a night-latch, dead-bolt, security chain, or any similar locking devices.
- Exterior exit doors from bedridden room shall be operable from both the interior and exterior of the building.
- Exterior bedridden room door opening shall be at least 3 feet wide and 6 feet 8 inches high with a clear width of 32" and capable of opening at least 90 degrees.

Note: A sliding glass door can be used as an exterior exit doorway if it is operable from the inside and outside and the clear width of the exit way is not less than 32 inches.

Facilities can have up to six bedridden clients provided they have a residential fire sprinkler system installed per NFPA 13-D.

9. Existing stairways may be used as a means of egress provided the stairs have a maximum rise of 8" and a minimum run of 9". The minimum stairway width may be 30". (Winding and spiral stairways are not permitted as a required means of egress.)

10. Facilities housing non-ambulatory clients above the first floor shall be provided with a non-fire-resistance constructed floor separation at stairs to prevent smoke migration between floors.

Exception:

- Unless at least one exterior exit from floors occupied by clients is provided AND
- Facility is provided with an automatic fire sprinkler system

Doors within such floor separations shall be tight fitting solid wood at least 1-3/8" in thickness, positive latching, smoke gasketed, and automatic self-closing by smoke detection.

11. Interior ramps – 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). Changes in level greater than 0.5 inch shall be accomplished by means of a ramp.
12. If the garage is attached to the dwelling, the door between the dwelling and the garage shall be equipped with a self-closing device and be positive latching. The door shall be a minimum of a 1 3/8-inch-thick, solid wood door. There shall be no openings from the garage into any of the sleeping areas.

Maintain the garage in a neat, orderly fashion with minimal combustible storage. Clearance around the water heater shall be maintained in accordance with manufacturer's specifications.

13. Post evacuation signs in locations where they will be readily visible to clients and care providers. The signs shall at a minimum include a floor plan showing the location of exits, and state "In Case of Emergency Dial 911."
14. All drapes/curtains and other decorative material including Christmas trees shall be made from 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.
Exception:
 - Individual patient room window curtains and drapes.
15. Chimneys shall be equipped with a spark arrestor.

TEMPORARY BEDRIDDEN CLIENTS

Clients who become temporarily bedridden may continue to be housed on any story in homes classified as Residential Care Facilities 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 fire department of the estimated length of time the resident will retain their bedridden status in the facility.

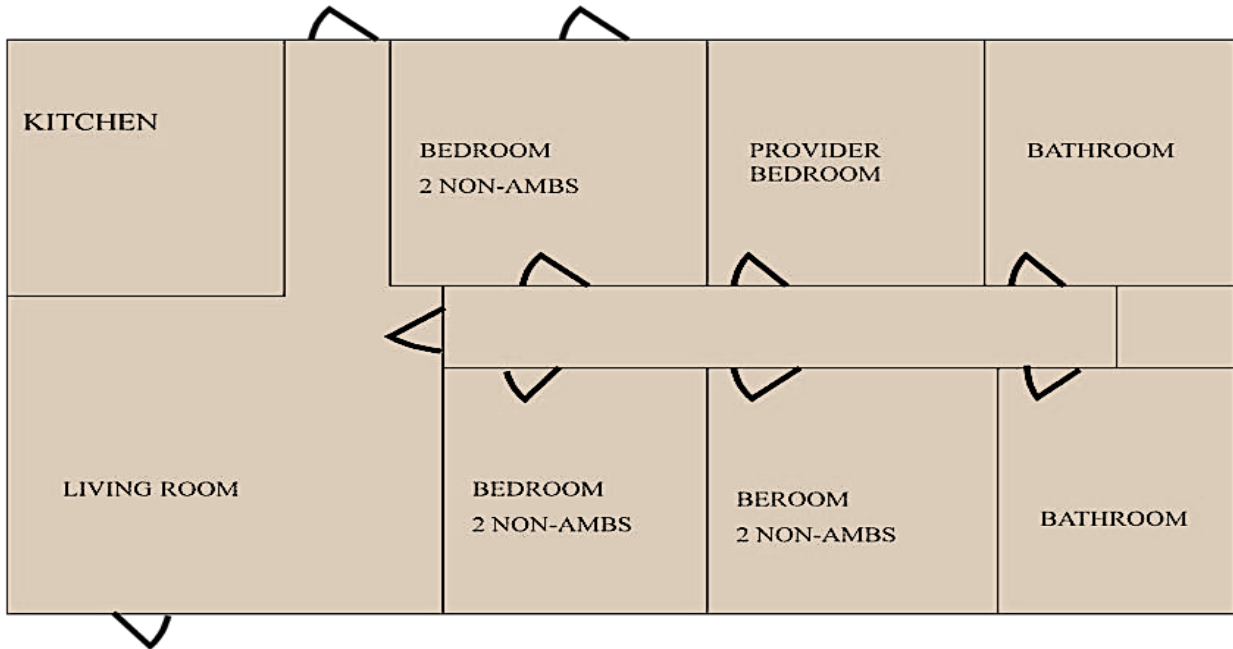
AUTOMATIC FIRE SPRINKLER SYSTEM

An NFPA 13-D automatic fire sprinkler system is required in newly constructed single-family dwellings after January 1, 2011.

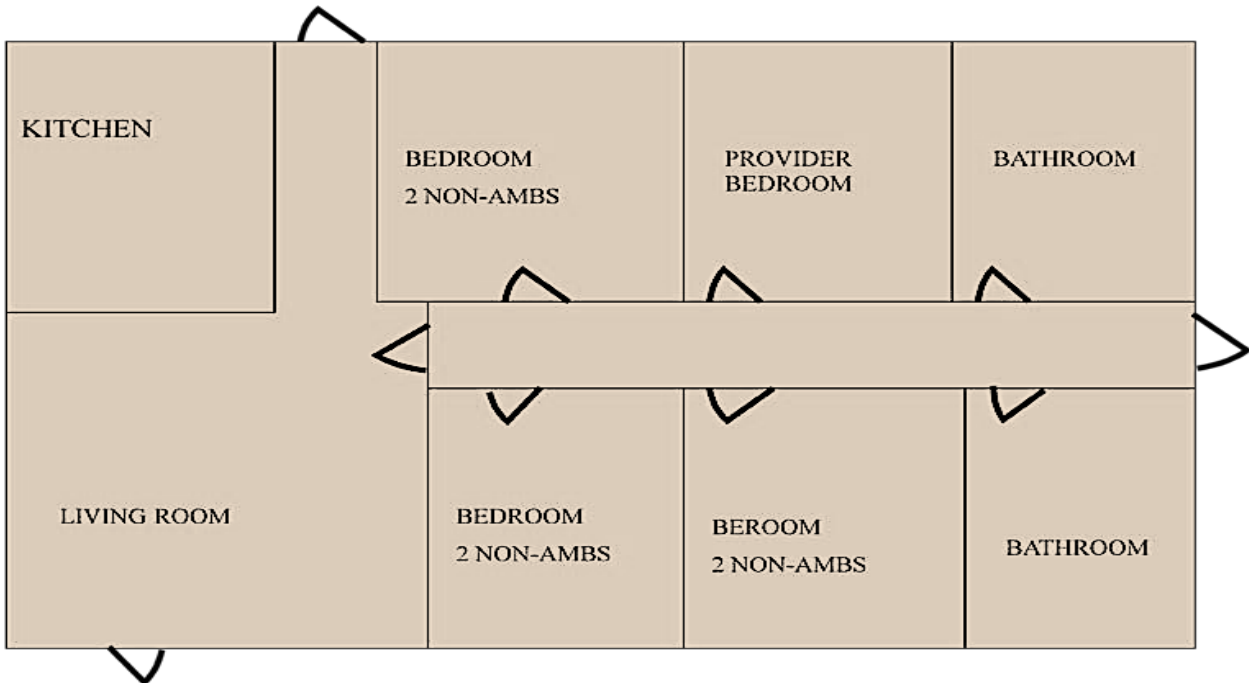
Exception – Existing Group R-3 occupancies converted to Group R-3.1 occupancies:

1. Not housing more than one bedridden client.
2. Not housing non-ambulatory clients above the first floor.
3. Not housing clients above the second floor.

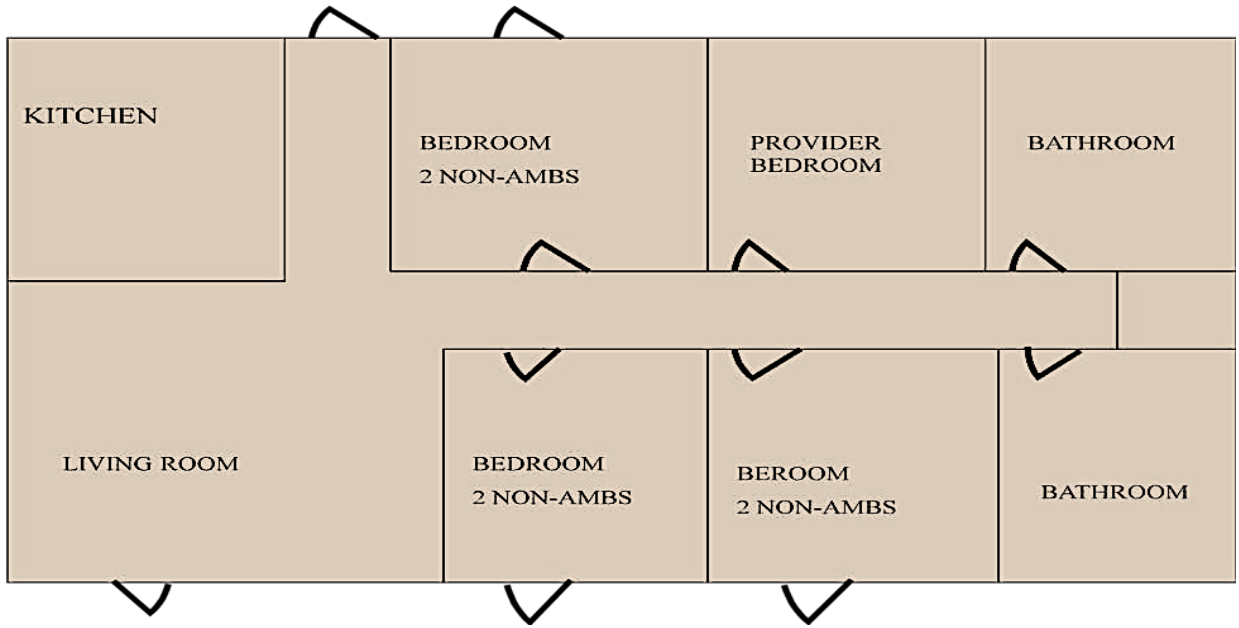
FROM ROOM TO HALLWAY TO ROOM TO OUTSIDE



FROM ROOM TO HALLWAY TO OUTSIDE



DIRECT EXITS TO THE OUTSIDE



FROM ROOM TO ROOM TO OUTSIDE

