



VENTURA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU
165 DURLEY AVENUE
CAMARILLO, CALIFORNIA 93010
www.fire.countyofventura.org
(805) 389-9738

STANDARD 14.8.1

RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES FOR THE ELDERLY (RCFE) WITH SIX OR LESS CLIENTS (GROUP R-3.1 OCCUPANCIES)

The information contained in this standard is provided solely for the convenience of the reader and was being enforced by the Ventura County Fire Protection District at the time of its publication. The District reserves the right to make changes and improvements to this standard as and when required by law, or otherwise, at any time. (The District's current standards will be posted and made available for downloading by the public at the following web site: <http://fire.countyofventura.org>.)

Please note that the District assumes no liability for any damages incurred directly or indirectly as a result of any errors, omissions, or discrepancies between this standard and any applicable law. It is the sole responsibility of the person or persons conducting any work pursuant to this standard to ensure their work complies with any and all applicable codes, ordinances, and regulations.

CHAPTER 1 ADMINISTRATION

1.1 Scope. This standard provides requirements for residential care facilities for the elderly with six or less clients on a 24-hour basis.

1.2 Purpose. This standard is not all-inclusive of all Code requirements, but is intended as a guide to the State Laws and Codes and local requirements. These requirements are based upon the California State Fire Marshal (SFM) Regulations, California Building Code (CBC), California Code of Regulations (CCR) and other codes in effect as of the date of this standard. The facility operator and the Fire District representative may also use this standard as an inspection guide.

1.3 Responsibility. All individuals and companies who intended to engage in the operation of a licensed care facility housing six or less clients are subject to the requirements of this standard.

1.4 Permits. A fire clearance must be obtained on a California State Form 850 and provided to Community Care Licensing prior to operation of any licensed facility.

CHAPTER 2 DEFINITIONS

2.1 General. The following words and terms shall, for the purposes of this standard and permit requirements of the VCFC, have the meanings shown herein.

2.2 Ambulatory Person. A person who is capable of demonstrating the mental competence and physical ability to leave a building without assistance of any other person or without the use of any mechanical aid in case of an emergency, as determined in CCR Title 22 regulations, by the Director of Social Services or his or her designated representative.

2.3 Bedridden Person. A person requiring assistance in turning and repositioning in bed, or being unable to independently transfer to and from bed, except in facilities with appropriate and sufficient care staff, mechanical devices if necessary and safety precautions, as determined in CCR Title 22 regulations, by the Director of Social Services or his or her designated representative.

2.4 Group R-3.1 Occupancy. A facility licensed by a governmental agency for a residentially based 24-hour care facility providing accommodations for six or fewer clients. Clients may be classified as ambulatory, non-ambulatory or bedridden.

2.5 Immediate Area. In accordance with California State Fire Marshal (SFM) Code Interpretation Number 08-008, the intent of the wording “into a bedroom (in the immediate area)” is the exiting through a bedroom which uses a corridor/hallway common with the bedroom being exited from.

2.6 Multiple-Station Smoke Alarm. Two or more single-station alarm devices that are capable of interconnection such that actuation of one causes all integral or separate audible alarms to operate. It also can consist of one single-station alarm device having connections to other detectors or to a manual fire alarm box.

2.7 Non-ambulatory 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 and any person who is unable to physically and mentally respond to a sensory signal approved by the State Fire Marshal or an oral instruction relating to fire danger.

2.8 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 and supervision, protective supervision or personal care are provided, based on their varying needs, as determined in order to be admitted and to remain in the facility. Persons under 60-years of age with compatible needs, as determined by the Director of Social Services in regulations, may be allowed to be admitted or retained in a residential-care facility for the elderly.

2.9 Single-Station Smoke Alarm. An assembly incorporating the detector, the control equipment and the alarm-sounding device in one unit, operated from a power supply either in the unit or obtained at the point of installation.

2.10 Ventura County Fire Code (VCFC). The specified portions of the California Building Standards Codes known as California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 9, “California Fire Code (CFC)” as adopted by the State Fire Marshal (SFM) and; portions of The International Fire Code (IFC), 2009 Edition referenced by the California Building Standards Code and not adopted or modified by the SFM and; the VCFPD amendments contained in Ordinance 27 to the above-referenced codes.

CHAPTER 3 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

3.1 General. The determination of a client’s status as ambulatory, non-ambulatory or bedridden shall be made by the Director of Social Services or his or her designated representative.

3.2 Temporary Bedridden Clients. Clients who become temporarily bedridden as defined in Health and Safety Code Section 1569.72 may continue to be housed on any story in Group R-3.1 occupancies 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 Ventura County Fire Protection District’s Fire Prevention Bureau of the estimated length of time the resident will retain his or her bedridden status in the facility.

3.3 Pre-Inspection. The Fire District recommends a pre-inspection of any facility desiring to become licensed as an RCFE or to have bedridden clients. Complete form California LIC 9092 – Fire Pre-Inspection/Consultation Request (VCFPD Form #13.1.17).

3.4 Premises Identification. Building address numbers shall comply with the following requirements and Fire Prevention Standard 14.4.1.

3.4.1 Number Size. Address numbers shall be a minimum of 6-inches in height, 3-inches in width and have a minimum stroke width of 1/2-inch.

3.4.2 Number Color. Address numbers shall be contrasting in color to their background. Brass or metallic finishes are not permitted.

3.4.3 Number Location. Address numbers shall be located on the building and readily visible from the street. This may require numbers to be installed in more than one location on the building and possibly posted at the street.

3.5 Fire Extinguishers. Provide minimum one type 2A:10B-C fire extinguisher in a visible and accessible location.

3.5.1 Fire Extinguisher Mounting. Fire extinguishers shall be mounted with the top no higher than 44-inches from floor level.

3.5.2 Fire Extinguisher Servicing. Fire extinguishers shall be serviced by a licensed contractor annually and after each use. Extinguishers shall have a current California State Fire Marshal's Certification Tag.

3.6 Self-Closing Doors. Doors required to be self-closing shall not be blocked open with the use of a doorstop, wedge or other device. Use of approved hold-open devices is acceptable. Doors required to be self-closing include:

- (1) Doors between the garage and living spaces
- (2) Doors between the hallway and the common area when required
- (3) The door between the hallway and the bedroom housing a bedridden client. This only applies in non-sprinklered facilities housing a single bedridden client.

3.7 Hold-Open Devices. Magnetic hold-open devices are approved for use on required self-closing doors and must meet the following:

- (1) There shall be a smoke detector installed in accordance with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 72.
- (2) Actuation of either smoke detector shall release the door.
- (3) Doors shall release on loss of power to the smoke detectors or hold-open device.
- (4) The door shall begin to close no longer than 10 seconds after the actuation of a smoke detector or loss of power.

3.8 Permits. Permits shall be obtained from the local building and safety department for any building modifications and/or electrical work. Copies of all permits and final approvals shall be required prior to issuance of a fire clearance.

CHAPTER 4 BUILDING CONSTRUCTION

4.1 Occupancy Separation Wall. The original 1-hour fire resistive wall between the garage and the residence shall be maintained in accordance with CBC for a one-hour rated wall.

4.2 Fire-Rated Door. The door between the garage and the residence shall be a self-closing, 20-minute door or solid wood door not less than 1-3/8" thickness and equipped with a smoke gasket.

4.3 Special Requirements. Residential care facilities within a two-story or multi-level home may have additional requirements. Contact the Fire Prevention Bureau for details.

CHAPTER 5 EGRESS REQUIREMENTS

5.1 General. All egress components shall comply with CBC Chapters 4 and 10.

5.2 Exit Discharge. The exit discharge shall provide a direct and unobstructed access to the public way (street). Sidewalks and pathways shall be minimum 32-inches wide and be paved or concrete.

5.3 Intervening Rooms. Exits shall not pass through more than one intervening room. Exits shall not pass through kitchens, store rooms, laundry rooms, closets or spaces used for similar purposes. Exits may pass through kitchens which do not form separate rooms by construction.

5.4 Emergency Escape and Rescue Windows. Emergency escape and rescue windows shall be provided in accordance with the CBC. Sufficient exterior space shall be provided outside these windows to allow for fire department ladder operations.

5.5 Elevation Changes. Ramps shall be provided when the change in elevation is greater than ½-inch. Changes between ¼-inch to ½-inch shall be beveled. Changes in level up to ¼-inch do not require edge treatment. This requirement only applies to interior and exterior elevation changes. Obtain building permits and final approval from the local building and safety department for repairs, alterations and improvements.

5.6 Exit Obstructions. Obstructions, including storage and furniture, shall not be placed in the required width of an exit, whether interior or exterior.

5.7 Emergency Evacuation Plans and Information. An evacuation plan shall be posted in a conspicuous location and include the items listed below. A copy of this plan shall be submitted to the Fire Prevention Bureau at the time of inspection request.

- (1) Exit routes from the structure to the public way or approved evacuation area.
- (2) Designated person to notify the Fire Department by calling 9-1-1.
- (3) The locations of portable fire extinguisher(s).

CHAPTER 6 EXIT DOORS, GATES AND PATHWAYS

6.1 Exit Doors. All exit doors shall comply with the requirements set forth in Chapter 10 and Section 425 of the California Building Code.

6.1.1 Exit Door Width. Exterior doors used as exits shall be a minimum of 36-inches wide, with a minimum clear opening width of 32-inches.

6.1.2 Exit Door Operation. Doors used as exits shall open from the inside without the use of a key or any special knowledge or effort.

6.1.3 Exit Door Hardware. A maximum of two (2) knobs/locking devices may be allowed on the main exit door, one of which shall be the primary knob/latch used to open the door. All locking devices shall be installed between 34 and 48 inches above the finished floor.

6.2 Sliding Glass Doors. Sliding glass doors used as exits within dwelling and sleeping units shall have only the “latch-type” lock on the handle. There shall not be any additional locking devices on the sliding door. Screen doors shall be maintained and open without difficulty.

6.3 Prohibited Doors. Doors opening directly between a sleeping room and the garage are prohibited.

6.4 Exit Pathways. Clear exit discharge shall be provided from every exterior exit door to the public way (street). Sidewalks/pathways shall be minimum 32-inches wide and shall be concrete, paved or other approved surface.

6.5 Gate Locks. Gates installed across an exit shall not be locked, chained, bolted, barred, latched or otherwise rendered unusable at times when the building or area served by the exit is occupied. All gates shall open without the use of a key or any special knowledge or effort.

CHAPTER 7 EGRESS CONFIGURATION

7.1 General. Egress shall comply with CBC Section 425 and this standard.

7.2 Required Exits. All Group R-3.1 occupancies shall have a minimum of two (2) exits.

7.3 Ambulatory Clients. Exits for facilities housing ambulatory clients only shall meet the requirements for R-3 occupancies (standard single-family home) under the CBC and CRC.

7.4 Non-ambulatory Clients. Bedrooms for non-ambulatory clients and facilities with two (2) or more bedridden clients shall have access to at least one of the required exits which shall conform to one of the following:

- (1) Egress through a hallway or area and into a bedroom within the immediate area that has an exit directly to the exterior. The hallway shall have construction consistent with the dwelling unit interior walls. The hallway shall be separated from common areas by a positive latching solid wood door not less than 1-3/8 inch in thickness and equipped with a smoke gasket. The door shall be maintained self-closing or shall be automatic closing by actuation of a smoke alarm. (See Exhibit A)
- (2) Egress through a hallway, serving the immediate sleeping area, which has an exit directly to the exterior. The hallway shall have construction consistent with the dwelling unit interior walls. The hallway shall be separated from common areas by a positive latching solid wood door not less than 1-3/8 inch in thickness and equipped with a smoke gasket. The door shall be maintained self-closing or shall be automatic closing by actuation of a smoke alarm. (See Exhibit B)
- (3) Direct exit door from the bedroom to the exterior. (See Exhibit C)
- (4) Egress through an adjoining bedroom that exits directly to the exterior. (See Exhibit D)

7.5 Single Bedridden Client. The bedroom for one bedridden client in a non-sprinklered building shall comply with all the following:

- (1) A direct exit door from the bedroom to the exterior shall be provided from the client’s sleeping room.
- (2) The interior door to the bedroom shall be a positive latching solid wood door not less than 1-3/8 inch in thickness and equipped with a smoke gasket. The door shall be maintained self-closing or shall be automatic closing by actuation of a smoke alarm.

- (3) Doors 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.
- (4) The exterior exit door shall be operable from both the interior and exterior of the residence.
- (5) Exit doorways shall not be less than 3 feet (36 inches) in width and not less than 6 feet, 8 inches in height. When installed, exit doorways shall be capable of opening at least 90 degrees and shall be mounted so that the clear width is not less than 32 inches.

Note. A sliding glass door can be used as an exterior exit doorway as long as it is operable from the interior and exterior of the residence and the clear opening width is not less than 32 inches.

CHAPTER 8 SMOKE ALARMS AND CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS

8.1 Smoke Alarms. All dwelling and sleeping units shall be provided with multi-station smoke alarms installed in accordance with their listing and the following:

- (1) On the ceiling or wall outside of each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of bedrooms.
- (2) In each room used for sleeping purposes.
- (3) In each story within a dwelling unit, including basements (excludes 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.
- (4) Smoke alarms shall be provided throughout the habitable areas of the dwelling unit except the kitchen.

8.1.2 Power Source. Smoke alarms shall receive their power from the building wiring and shall be equipped with a battery back-up. When smoke alarms are connected to an emergency electrical system, battery back-up is not required.

8.1.3 Interconnect Alarms. Smoke alarms shall be electrically interconnected so that all alarms sound in the dwelling units upon actuation of any single alarm.

8.2 Carbon Monoxide Alarms. Carbon monoxide alarms are required in all dwelling and sleeping units having a fossil fuel burning heater or appliance, fireplace, or attached garage as follows:

- (1) On the ceiling or wall outside of each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of bedrooms.
- (2) In each story within a dwelling unit, including basements (excludes crawl spaces and uninhabitable attics).

8.2.1 Power Source. Carbon monoxide alarms shall receive their power from the building wiring and shall be equipped with a battery back-up.

8.2.2 Approved Device. Carbon monoxide alarms shall be approved and listed by the California State Fire Marshal. Carbon monoxide alarms may be combined with smoke alarms if the device meets the State Fire Marshal's approval.

CHAPTER 9 FIRE SPRINKLER SYSTEMS

9.1 General. Fire sprinkler systems are not required to house ambulatory, non-ambulatory or one (1) bedridden client. Fire sprinkler systems are required to house two (2) or more bedridden clients.

9.2 Servicing. Where installed, systems shall be maintained in accordance with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 13D.

CHAPTER 10 INSPECTIONS

10.1 General. Facility inspections are conducted on an annual basis and anytime there is an issuance of a new license.

10.2 Responsibility. It is the responsibility of the facility owner, or their designated representative, to be on-site during the inspection.

10.3 Inspection Fees. There are no fees associated with fire clearance inspections for this type of facility.

10.4 Inspection Requests. Inspection requests can only be taken from the facility owner or their designated representative. Inspections shall be requested Monday through Friday prior to 3:00 p.m.

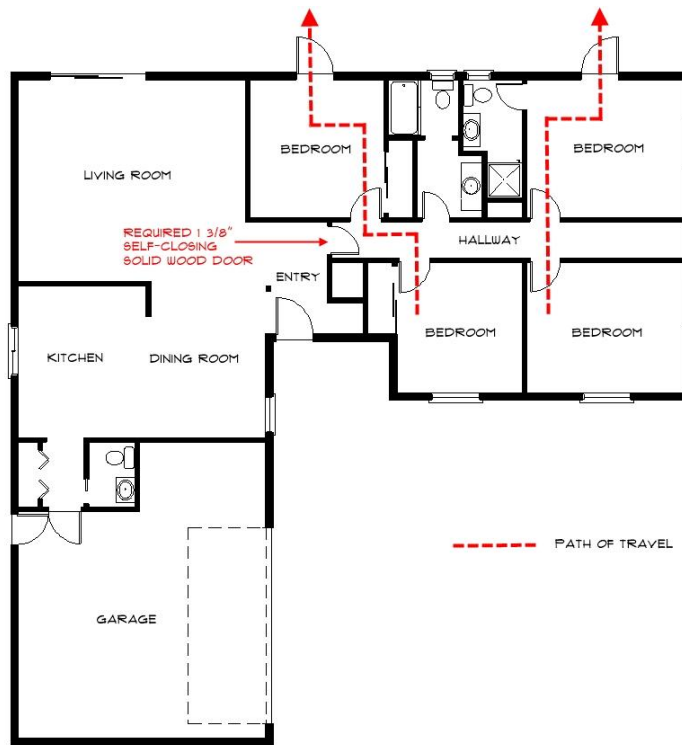
10.5 Request by phone. Call (805) 389-9744 for requesting an inspection. The inspection request line is open Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.

10.6 Request by fax. Inspections can be requested via fax at (805) 388-4356. Ventura County Fire Prevention Bureau Form FP13.1.3, found at <http://fire.countyofventura.org>, must be used to request inspections. Faxed inspection requests must be received prior to 3:00 p.m.

10.7 Contact Information. Be sure to leave your phone number, when you schedule an inspection by phone or fax, where the inspector can call you back to schedule your inspection date and time.

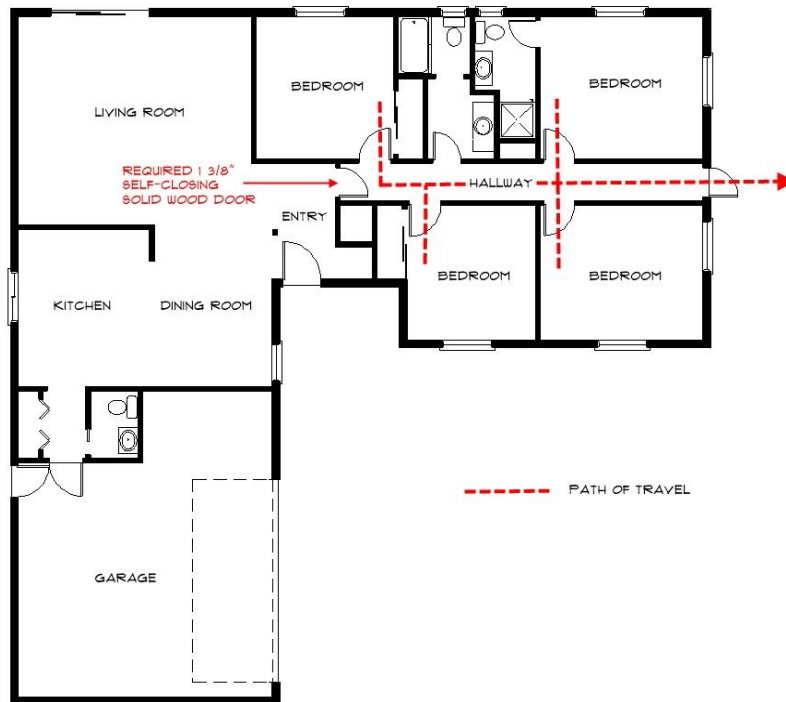
10.8 Inspection Schedule. An Inspector from the Ventura County Fire Prevention Bureau will contact the facility owner or their designated representative to schedule the facility inspection.

EXHIBIT A



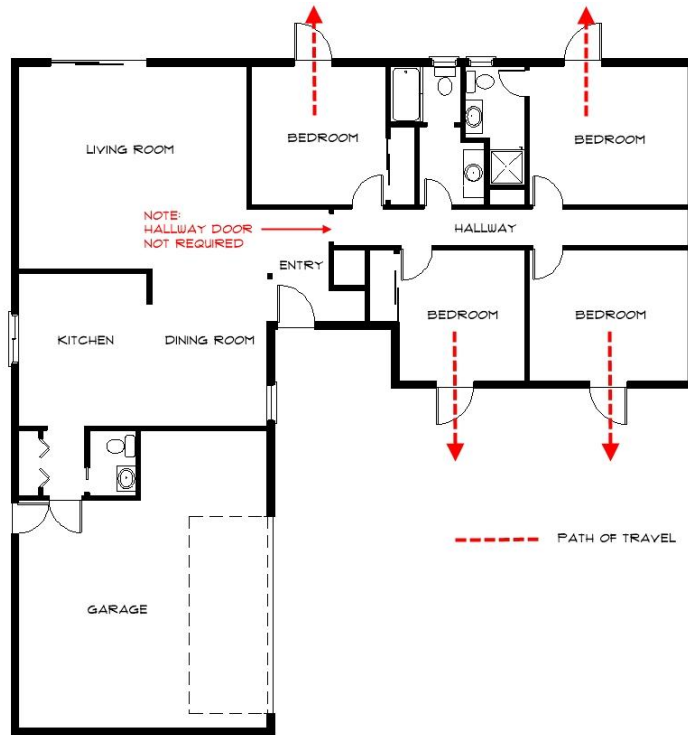
Non-ambulatory egress using bedrooms in the immediate area

EXHIBIT B



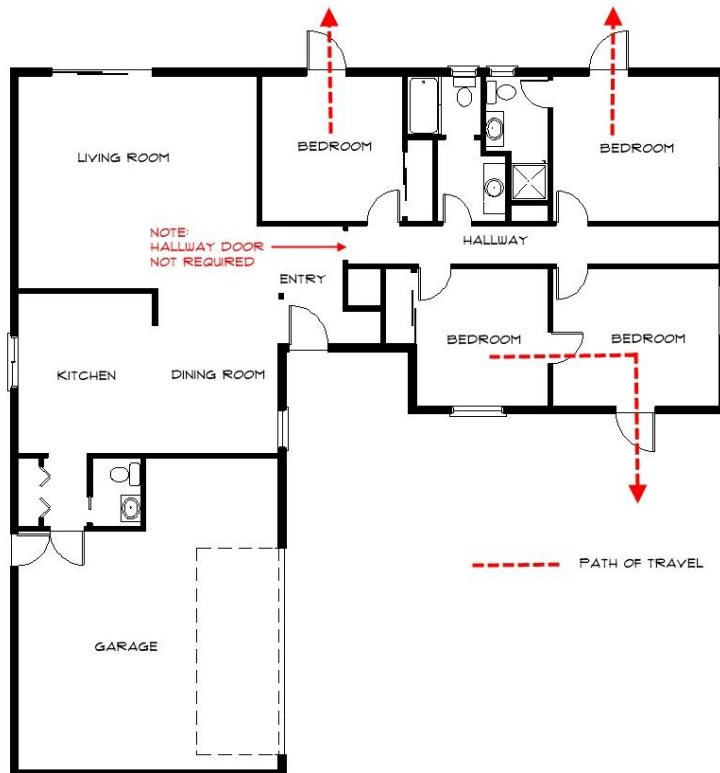
Non-ambulatory egress using direct hallway exit

EXHIBIT C



Non-ambulatory egress using direct exits from each bedroom

EXHIBIT D



Non-ambulatory egress using adjoining bedroom(s)