

# Rules for the Licensing of Domiciliary Homes

(Homes for the Aged and Family Care Homes)



**DFS**

North Carolina Department of Human Resources  
Division of Facility Services  
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## SECTION .1500 - THE BUILDING

**.1501 LOCATION**

In addition to the requirements in 10 NCAC 42C .2101, the following shall apply:

- (1) A home for the aged and disabled may be located in an existing building or in a building newly constructed specifically for that purpose; and
- (2) The building and site are to be reviewed and approved by the Construction Section of the Division of Facility Services.

*History Note: Statutory Authority G.S. 131D-2; 143B-153;  
Eff. January 1, 1977;  
Readopted Eff. October 31, 1977;  
Amended Eff. January 1, 1991; April 1, 1984.*

**.1502 CONSTRUCTION**

(a) Any building licensed for the first time must meet the requirements of the North Carolina State Building Code for new construction as well as all of the rules of this Section. No horizontal exits shall be permitted in newly constructed facilities or new additions to existing facilities.

(b) In a facility licensed before April 1, 1984, the building must meet and be maintained to meet all the requirements for new construction required by the North Carolina State Building Code in effect at the time the building was constructed. Where code requirements require a modification of the building's structural system, an alternative method may be used to meet the intent of the code.

(c) In a facility licensed before April 1, 1984 and constructed prior to January 1, 1975, the building, in addition to meeting the requirements of the North Carolina State Building Code in effect at the time the building was constructed, shall be provided with the following:

- (1) A fire alarm system with pull stations near each exit and sounding devices which are audible throughout the building must be provided.
- (2) Products of combustion (smoke) U/L listed detectors in all corridors. The detectors must be no more than 60 feet from each other and no more than 30 feet from any end wall.
- (3) Heat detectors or products of combustion detectors in all storage rooms, kitchens, living rooms, dining rooms and laundries.
- (4) All detection systems interconnected with the fire alarm system.
- (5) Emergency power for the fire alarm system, heat detection system, and products of combustion detection system. The emergency power for these systems may be a manual start system capable of monitoring the building for 24-hours and sound the alarm for five minutes at the end of that time. The emergency power for the emergency lights shall be a manual start generator or a U/L approved trickle charge battery system capable of providing light for 1-1/2 hours when normal power fails.

(d) The building must meet sanitary requirements as determined by the North Carolina Division of Health Services.

(e) Effective July 1, 1987, resident bedrooms and resident services shall not be permitted on the second floor of any facility licensed prior to April 1, 1984 and classified as two-story wood frame construction by the North Carolina State Building Code.

*History Note: Statutory Authority G.S. 131D-2; 143B-153;  
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Amended Eff. July 1, 1990; September 1, 1986; April 1, 1984.*

**.1503 PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

The home must provide ample living arrangements to meet the individual needs of the residents, the live-in staff and other live-in persons.

- (1) The requirements for each living room and recreational area are:

- (a) Each living room and recreational area must be located off a lobby or corridor and enclosed with walls and doors;
  - (b) In buildings with a licensed capacity of 15 or less, there must be a minimum area of 250 square feet;
  - (c) In buildings with a licensed capacity of 16 or more, there must be a minimum of 16 square feet per resident; and
  - (d) Each living room and recreational area must have windows.
- (2) The requirements for the dining room are:
- (a) The dining room must be located off a lobby or corridor and enclosed with walls and doors;
  - (b) In buildings with a licensed capacity of 15 or less, there must be a minimum of 200 square feet;
  - (c) In building with a licensed capacity of 16 or more, there must be a minimum of 14 square feet per resident; and
  - (d) The dining room must have windows.
- (3) The requirements for the kitchen are:
- (a) The size of the kitchen and the kitchen equipment must meet the sanitation requirements of the North Carolina Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources; Division of Environmental Health. Scaled drawings and specifications must be submitted to the Division of Facility Services; and
  - (b) In areas where approved water and sewer services are not available, the owner must secure from the local sanitarian instructions on the installation of an approved water and sewer system and comply with these instructions.
- (4) The requirements for the bedroom are:
- (a) The number of resident beds set up must not exceed the licensed capacity of the facility;
  - (b) There must be bedrooms sufficient in number and size to meet the individual needs according to age and sex of the residents, the administrator or supervisor-in-charge, other live-in staff and any other persons living in the home. Residents are not to share bedrooms with staff or other live-in non-residents;
  - (c) Only rooms authorized as bedrooms shall be used for residents' bedrooms;
  - (d) Bedrooms must be located on an outside wall and off a corridor. A room where access is through a bathroom, kitchen, or another bedroom will not be approved for a resident's bedroom;
  - (e) There must be a minimum area of 100 square feet excluding vestibule, closet or wardrobe space, in rooms occupied by one person and a minimum area of 80 square feet per bed, excluding vestibule, closet or wardrobe space, in rooms occupied by two or more people;
  - (f) The total number of residents assigned to a bedroom must not exceed the number authorized for that particular bedroom;
  - (g) A bedroom may not be occupied by more than four residents. This does not apply to homes licensed before April 1, 1984, with five residents occupying one bedroom, which meet all other rules of this Subchapter;
  - (h) Resident bedrooms must be designed to accommodate all required furnishings;
  - (i) Each resident bedroom must be ventilated with one or more windows which are maintained operable and well lighted. The window area must be equivalent to at least eight percent of the floor space. The windows must be low enough to see outdoors from the bed and chair, with a maximum 36 inch sill height; and
  - (j) Bedroom closets or wardrobes must be large enough to provide each resident with a minimum of 48 cubic feet of hanging clothing storage space (approximately two feet deep by three feet wide of hanging space by eight feet high).
- (5) The requirements for bathrooms and toilet rooms are:
- (a) Minimum bathroom and toilet facilities must include a toilet and a hand lavatory for each 5 residents and a tub or shower for each 10 residents or portion thereof;
  - (b) Entrance to the bathroom must not be through a kitchen, another person's bedroom,

- or another bathroom;
  - (c) Toilets and baths for staff and visitors must be in accordance with Volume II, Plumbing, North Carolina Building Code;
  - (d) Bathrooms and toilets accessible to the physically handicapped must be provided as required by Section 11X, Volume I, North Carolina Building Code;
  - (e) The bathrooms and toilet rooms must be designed to provide privacy. Bathrooms and toilet rooms with two or more water closets (commodes) shall have privacy partitions or curtains for each water closet. Each tub or shower shall have privacy partitions or curtains;
  - (f) Hand grips must be installed at all commodes, tubs and showers used by or accessible to residents;
  - (g) Each home must have at least one bathroom opening off the corridor with: a door three feet minimum width, a three feet by three feet roll-in shower designed to allow the staff to assist a resident in taking a shower without the staff getting wet, a bathtub accessible on at least two sides, a lavatory and a toilet. If the tub and shower are in separate rooms, each room must have a lavatory and a toilet. All fixtures must meet the State Building Code requirements for the physically handicapped in effect at the time the building was constructed;
  - (h) Bathrooms and toilet rooms must be located as conveniently as possible to the residents' bedrooms;
  - (i) Resident toilet rooms and bathrooms must not be utilized for storage or purposes other than those indicated in Paragraph (5) of this Rule;
  - (j) Toilets and baths must be well lighted and mechanically ventilated at two cubic feet per minute. The mechanical ventilation requirement does not apply to facilities licensed before April 1, 1984, with adequate natural ventilation;
  - (k) Nonskid surfacing or strips must be installed in showers and bath areas; and
  - (l) The floors of the bathrooms and toilet rooms must have a non-slippery, water-resistant covering.
- (6) The requirements for storage rooms and closets are:
- (a) General Storage for the Home. A minimum area of five square feet (40 cubic feet) per licensed capacity must be provided. This storage space is to be either in the facility or within 500 feet of the facility on the same site;
  - (b) Linen Storage. Storage areas must be adequate in size and number for separate storage of clean linens and separate storage of soiled linens. Access to soiled linen storage must be from a corridor or laundry room;
  - (c) Food Storage. Space must be provided for dry, refrigerated and frozen food items to comply with sanitation regulations;
  - (d) Housekeeping storage requirements are:
    - (i) A housekeeping closet, with mop sink or mop floor receptor, must be provided at the rate of one per 60 residents or portion thereof; and
    - (ii) There must be separate locked areas for storing cleaning agents, bleaches, pesticides, and other substances which may be hazardous if ingested, inhaled or handled. Cleaning supplies must be supervised while in use;
  - (e) Drug storage requirements are:
    - (i) Handwashing facilities with wrist type lever handles must be provided immediately adjacent to the drug storage area;
    - (ii) All drugs (prescription and non-prescription drugs, including topical preparations) must be stored in a well lighted and well ventilated locked cabinet or closet except when under the direct supervision of employees approved to administer drugs;
    - (iii) The locked cabinet or closet must be large enough to store all drugs in an orderly manner. Dividers shall be installed or containers provided in the cabinet or closet and drug cart, when used, to

- separate each resident's drugs with proper labeling for each resident;
- (iv) If the home utilizes drug carts, they must be stored in a locked immobile manner or in a locked area;
  - (v) Drugs for external use must be stored in a designated area separate from internal drugs;
  - (vi) Drugs must not be stored in bathrooms, a utility room, or in the kitchen area;
  - (vii) Drugs requiring refrigeration must be stored in a separate locked box in the refrigerator or in a lockable drug-only refrigerator, capable of maintaining a temperature range of 36 degrees F (2 degrees C) to 46 degrees F (8 degrees C);
  - (viii) First aid supplies must be immediately available and stored separately in a secure and orderly manner, out of the sight of residents and the general public;
  - (ix) Drugs may be stored in the resident's room for his self-administration upon the written approval and instructions of the prescriber. The home must take reasonable precautions to assure that they are stored and maintained in a safe and secure manner to protect against contamination, spillage, misidentity and pilferage. In establishing a means for safe storage with the resident and the prescriber, the home shall take into account the status of the residents and others living in the home, the degree to which the resident needs immediate access to the drug, and the potential harm of the drug should it be misused;
- (f) Storage for Resident's Articles. Some means for residents to lock personal articles within the home must be provided; and
  - (g) Staff Facilities. Some means for staff to lock personal articles within the home must be provided.
- (7) The requirements for corridors are:
- (a) Doors to spaces other than small reach-in closets must not swing into the corridor;
  - (b) Handrails must be provided on both sides of corridors at 36 inches above the floor and be capable of supporting a 250 pound concentrated load;
  - (c) Corridors must be lighted sufficiently with night lights providing 1 foot-candle power at the floor; and
  - (d) Corridors must be free of all equipment and other obstructions.
- (8) The requirements for outside entrances and exits are:
- (a) Public and service entrances must not be through required resident areas;
  - (b) All steps, porches, stoops and ramps must be provided with handrails and guardrails; and
  - (c) All exit door locks must be easily operable, by a single hand motion, from the inside at all times without keys.
  - (d) In homes with at least one resident who is determined by a physician or is otherwise known to be disoriented or a wanderer, each required exit door shall be equipped with a sounding device that is activated when the door is opened. The sound must be of sufficient volume that it can be heard by staff. A central control panel that will deactivate the sounding device may be used provided the control panel is located in the office of the administrator.
- (9) The requirements for floors are:
- (a) All floors must be of smooth, non-skid material and so constructed as to be easily cleanable;
  - (b) Scatter or throw rugs are not to be used; and
  - (c) All floors must be kept in good repair.
- (10) Soil Utility Room. A separate room must be provided and equipped for the cleaning and sanitizing of bed pans and must have handwashing facilities.

- (11) Office. There must be an area within the home large enough to accommodate normal administrative functions.
- (12) The requirements for laundry facilities are:
  - (a) Laundry facilities must be large enough to accommodate washers, dryers, and ironing equipment or work tables;
  - (b) These facilities must be located where soiled linens will not be carried through the kitchen, dining, clean linen storage, living rooms or recreational areas; and
  - (c) A minimum of one residential type washer and dryer each must be provided, even if all laundry services are contracted.
- (13) The requirements for outside premises are:
  - (a) The outside grounds must be maintained in a clean and safe condition;
  - (b) If the home has a fence around the premises, the fence must not prevent residents from exiting or entering freely or be hazardous; and
  - (c) Outdoor walkways and drives must be illuminated by no less than five foot-candles of light at ground level.

*History Note: Statutory Authority G.S. 131D-2; 143B-153;  
Eff. January 1, 1977;  
Readopted Eff. October 31, 1977;  
Amended Eff. July 1, 1990; April 1, 1987; July 1, 1984; April 1, 1984.*

**.1504 HOUSEKEEPING AND FURNISHINGS**

- (a) The requirements in 10 NCAC 42C .2212 shall control for this Subchapter, except that a home for the aged and disabled must have an approved sanitary classification at all times in a home with twelve beds or less and must have a sanitary grade of ninety or above at all times in a home with thirteen beds or more.
- (b) In addition to the requirements in 10 NCAC 42C .2212, the dining room in homes for the aged and disabled must have small tables serving from two to eight persons.

*History Note: Statutory Authority G.S. 131D-2; 143B-153;  
Eff. January 1, 1977;  
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Amended Eff. April 1, 1987; April 1, 1984.*

## SECTION .1600 - FIRE SAFETY AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS

**.1601 FIRE ALARM SYSTEM**

- (a) The fire alarm system must be able to transmit an automatic signal to the local fire department where possible.
- (b) For the minimum fire alarm system in facilities licensed before April 1, 1984, see Rule .1502(c) of this Subchapter.
- (c) Any other applicable fire safety requirements required by city ordinances or county building inspectors must be provided.

*History Note: Statutory Authority G.S. 131D-2; 143B-153;  
Eff. January 1, 1977;  
Readopted Eff. October 31, 1977;  
Amended Eff. April 1, 1984.*

**.1602 FIRE EXTINGUISHERS :**

- (a) At least one five pound or larger (net charge) A-B-C type fire extinguisher is required for each 2,500 square feet of floor area or fraction thereof.
- (b) One five pound or larger (net charge) A-B-C or CO/2 type is required in the kitchen and, where applicable, in the maintenance shop.

*History Note: Statutory Authority G.S. 131D-2; 143B-153;  
Eff. January 1, 1977;  
Readopted Eff. October 31, 1977;  
Amended Eff. July 1, 1990; April 1, 1987; April 1, 1984.*

**.1603 PLAN FOR EVACUATION**

- (a) A written fire/disaster plan (including a diagrammed drawing) which has the approval of the local fire department must be prepared in large print and posted in a central location on each floor. The plan must be reviewed with each resident on admission and must be a part of the orientation for all new staff.
- (b) There must be at least 12 rehearsals of the fire/disaster plan each year (four times on each shift).
- (c) Records of rehearsals shall be maintained and copies furnished to the county department of social services annually. The records must include the date and time of the rehearsals, the shift, staff members present, and a short description of what the rehearsal involved.

*History Note: Statutory Authority G.S. 131D-2; 143B-153;  
Eff. January 1, 1977;  
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Amended Eff. April 1, 1987; April 1, 1984.*

**.1604 ELECTRICAL SYSTEM**

All electrical outlets in wet locations such as bathrooms and outside of building must have ground fault interrupters.

*History Note: Statutory Authority G.S. 131D-2; 143B-153;  
Eff. January 1, 1977;  
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Amended Eff. April 1, 1984.*

**.1605 OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

- (a) The building and all fire safety, electrical, mechanical, and plumbing equipment must be maintained in a safe and operating condition.
- (b) There must be an approved heating system sufficient to maintain 75 degrees F (24 degrees C) under winter design conditions.

- (1) Built-in electric heaters, if used, must be installed or protected so as to avoid burn hazards to residents and room furnishings.
  - (2) Unvented fuel burning room heaters and portable electric heaters are prohibited.
  - (3) Fireplaces, fireplace inserts and wood stoves must be designed or installed so as to avoid a burn hazard to residents. Fireplace inserts and wood stoves must be U.L. listed.
- (c) Air conditioning or at least one fan per resident bedroom and living and dining areas must be provided when the temperature in the main center corridor exceeds 88 degrees F (31 degrees C).
- (d) The hot water system must be of such size to provide an adequate supply of hot water to the kitchen, bathrooms, laundry, housekeeping closets and soil utility room. The hot water temperature at all fixtures used by residents must be maintained at a minimum of 100 degrees F (38 degrees C) and must not exceed 116 degrees F (46.7 degrees C).
- (e) All multi-story facilities must be equipped with elevators.
- (f) In addition to the required emergency lighting, minimum lighting must be as follows:
- (1) 30 foot-candle power for reading;
  - (2) 10 foot-candle power for general lighting; and
  - (3) 1 foot-candle power at the floor for corridors at night.
- (g) The spaces listed in this Paragraph must be provided with exhaust ventilation at the rate of two cubic feet per minute per square foot. This requirement does not apply to facilities licensed before April 1, 1984, with adequate natural ventilation in these specified spaces:
- (1) soiled linen storage;
  - (2) soil utility room;
  - (3) bathrooms and toilet rooms;
  - (4) housekeeping closets; and
  - (5) laundry area.
- (h) Where required for staffing purposes, an electrically operated call system must be provided connecting each resident bedroom to the live-in staff bedroom. The resident call switches must be such that they can be activated with a single action and remain on until switched off by staff. The call switch must be within reach of the resident lying on his bed.

*History Note: Statutory Authority G.S. 131D-2; 143B-153;  
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