



Fire Drills in Assisted Living Facilities

This document lists requirements for fire drills in assisted living facilities (ALF's) classified as Residential Board and Care Occupancies. These requirements do not apply to ALF's classified as Limited Care Facilities (Health Care).

Basic Requirements

- For Existing ALF's, some requirements are based on Evacuation Capabilities
 - Recommendations to determine Evacuation Capabilities
 - Achieve a positive score using NFPA 101A, *Guide on Alternative Approaches to Life Safety*; or
 - Use time for all residents to reach a Point of Safety during fire drills
 - ❖ Prompt Evacuation Capability: 3 minutes or less
 - ❖ Slow Evacuation Capability: >3 minutes, but <13 minutes
 - ❖ Impractical to Evacuate Capability: >13 minutes
 - Point of Safety means:
 1. A location that is exterior to and away from a building;
or
 2. When the ALF is fire sprinkler protected, relocation to an exit stair enclosure or through smoke barrier doors;
or
 3. When the ALF is not fire sprinkler protected, number 2 is permitted only when the building construction provides at least one-hour fire rated construction for the structural members
- For all ALF's covered by this document:
 - Six fire drills must be conducted annually (bimonthly)
 - All residents must participate in all fire drills with no, or very limited assistance.

- The fire alarm system must provide a minimum of 50 decibels of sound within sleeping rooms used by residents so that they can hear and respond when the fire alarm activates.
- Residents are permitted to be notified of a fire drill in advance.
- Fire drills throughout the year must utilize different exits or means of escape so that residents utilize all available exits within the year.
- At least two of the six fire drills must be conducted at night when residents are typically asleep.
 - It is acceptable to utilize a window from resident sleeping rooms for a night fire drill. During these fire drills, residents are permitted to signal for assistance from the exterior window to notify first responders and are not required to evacuate through the window.
 - In existing ALF's, when any resident is not able to participate in night fire drills, the resident is not required to participate, and the fire evacuation plan must address how staff will ensure rapid evacuation so that evacuation capability requirements are met.
 - In new ALF's, when any resident is not able to participate in night fire drills, the facility must conduct fire drills meeting the requirements of a health care facility.
- Notes: Facilities should have admission and retention policies in place that address the ongoing ability of residents to hear and physically respond to activation of the fire alarm system. The facility may consider locating a resident to a facility with a higher degree of staff assistance or a health care facility where staff conduct all resident evaluations.
- Facilities should consider alternative means to provide notification to residents who are hearing impaired. This can include bed shaking devices or low-frequency sounders for fire alarm notification appliances.

Documentation

- Provide 15 months of fire drill documentation and fire alarm receiving logs to show that the fire alarm system was activated during the fire drill or within 24 hours for night fire drills.
- Date/Time/Shift of fire drill
- Location of simulated fire
- Who initiated/participated in the fire drill?
 - Include names/signatures and job titles of participants.
- After Action Report
 - Comments, Actions taken, Questions asked, Problems found and Discussion