

# House Requirements

Adult Care Home Program



**Opening a new adult  
care home in  
Multnomah County**

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# How to Use This Guide

## Review this guide closely before buying or renting a house:

This resource guide is for applicants who want to open an adult care home. It will help you understand what is needed for a home to be approved for licensing. It combines regulations from the Multnomah County Administrative Rules (MCAR), ADA requirements, city building requirements and fire code into one guide to help applicants choose the right home. The ACHP strove to include the most updated, relevant information from these sources. Sources and links are accurate to the best of our knowledge at time of print (August 2025). Regulations can change, so be sure to consult the agency that regulates the specific area in question.



This guide summarizes physical building requirements, but much more is needed to become an adult care home operator. In case of any discrepancy between this guide and a regulation or code, the applicable regulation or code applies. Always refer to the MCAR for more information.

**How state and city building codes apply to an adult care home:** The house must meet all applicable zoning, building and housing codes, and state and local fire and safety regulations for a single family residence. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all applicable local codes have been met. ([MCAR 123-100-105](#))

Portland and Gresham have city building codes that apply to houses within these cities. Whenever possible, we have included information for these requirements. If your home is located in Portland or Gresham, it needs to meet these requirements. The cities of Troutdale, Wood Village and Fairview do not have their own building codes. Instead they refer residents to the state's 2023 Oregon Residential Speciality Code.

The Oregon Residential Speciality Code applies to all new houses being built in the state of Oregon. This code also applies to repairs, additions and alterations. It's important to be familiar with this code when you are making building changes and remodeling (see page 45 for more information). The statewide building codes are not applied retroactively, so previously-approved houses do not require changes or alterations to meet the Oregon Residential Speciality Code.

**ADA Standards for Accessible Design:** All ramps, both existing ramps and new ramps, must follow the ADA Standards. Other parts of the home are not required to follow ADA standards. However, they are a helpful guide if you need to make changes to your home to improve accessibility. Adult care homes must be accessible for the needs of the residents.

**Other codes:** We have included other required codes whenever possible in this guide, including fire code, mechanical code and electrical code.



## Quick Links

### [Adult Care Home Regulations](#)

[multco.us/info/adult-care-home-regulations](http://multco.us/info/adult-care-home-regulations)

### [How to Become an Adult Care Home](#)

[Operator multco.us/info/how-become-adult-care-home-operator](http://multco.us/info/how-become-adult-care-home-operator)



# The Home

As a **single family residence or dwelling**, the adult care home must meet all zoning, building and housing codes, and state and local fire and safety regulations.

Duplexes, multiplexes and apartments are not single-family residences, and cannot be licensed.

If you lease the home, the property owner must sign the Landlord Statement of Understanding form. The ACHP emails this form to you when you request an application.

## City of Portland Housing Inspection

- For homes in the City of Portland, an adult care home safety inspection permit is also required.  
**Adult Care Home Inspection Permits**  
[link.multco.us/portland.inspection](http://link.multco.us/portland.inspection)
- The inspector will check for safety and maintenance issues. This includes checking for required plumbing, electrical, mechanical and structural permits.
  - Violations must be corrected.
  - When corrections are completed, approval will be issued by the inspector.
- **Currently, city building inspections are not required in Gresham, Troutdale, Fairview, Wood Village or unincorporated areas of Multnomah County.**

## Manufactured Homes

- Manufactured homes can be licensed as adult care homes, but it's uncommon.
- They must have been built after 1976.
- They must be designed for use as a home rather than a travel trailer.
- The manufacturer's label must be permanently secured to the unit.
  - Some manufactured homes without labels may still meet the required specifications.
  - The operator can take steps to secure verification of compliance from the manufacturer. **(MCAR 023-100-120)**



### Did You Know?

The ACHP may ask a fire marshal to inspect the home. The ACHP may require compliance with a recommendation from the fire marshal. (MCAR 023-100-110)

# Doors and Locks

## Locks and Door Handles

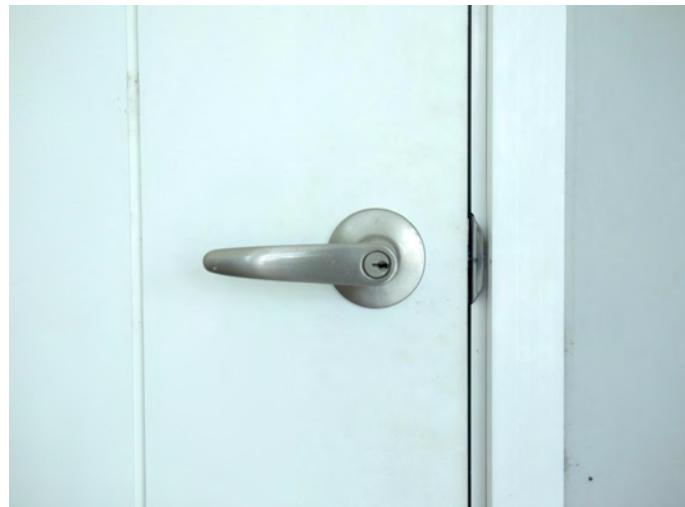
- Exit and interior doors used by residents must have visible and simple locks.
- The doors cannot be locked to prevent exit.
- The lock must have an **obvious method of single action operation**.
- Hasps, sliding bolts, sliding chain locks, hooks and eyes, and double key deadbolts must not be used.
- All door handles must be mounted between **34-48 inches** from the floor.
- Door locks must be easily openable with a single motion (no more than one motion) from the inside without the use of a key, tool, special knowledge or effort.
  - For interior doors, the lock must have a lever that opens from the inside with a single action (e.g., engaging the lever).
  - For exterior doors with a deadbolt, the lock must have an interconnect device that links the deadbolt and the lever handle for simultaneous single action release.

(MCAR 023-100-605)

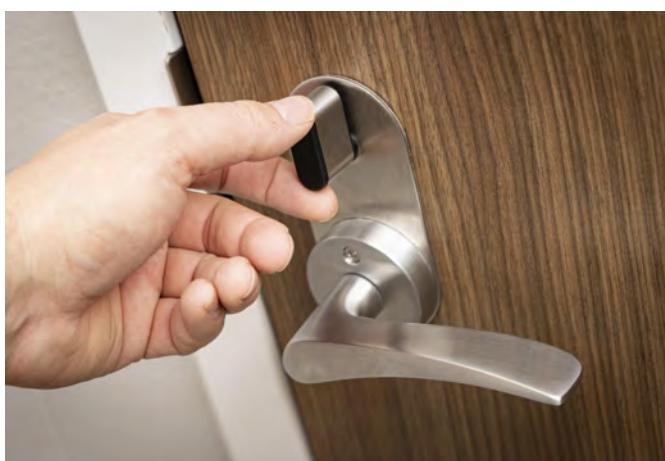


### ADA 309 Operable Parts

Operable parts must be usable with one hand. The parts must not require tight grasping, pinching or twisting of the wrist.



Outside of resident bedroom door.



Front door lock.

## Door Maintenance

- Every interior door and doorframe must be maintained in good condition.
- Doors must fit within doorframes.
- Every exterior door, door hinge, door lock and strike plate must be in good working condition.
- Exterior doors must be in good repair and sound condition.
- Door frames must be weather tight, and prevent rain and wind from entering the building.

### 29.30.100 Doors (Portland)

[link.multco.us/portland.code.doors](http://link.multco.us/portland.code.doors)

### 10.30.170 Weather Proofing and Screens (Gresham)

[link.multco.us/gresham.code](http://link.multco.us/gresham.code)

## Door Openings

Whether a door opens inward or outward, the opening must freely accommodate a wheelchair.  
(MCAR 023-020-105 (39))



Person in wheelchair going through doorway.

## Screens

- For doors used for ventilation, screens must be installed to keep the home free of insects and rodents.  
(MCAR 023-100-235)
- If an operator wants to install storm doors, they must be easy to open from the inside, without the use of a key, tool, special knowledge or effort, or more than one motion.  
(MCAR 023-100-615)

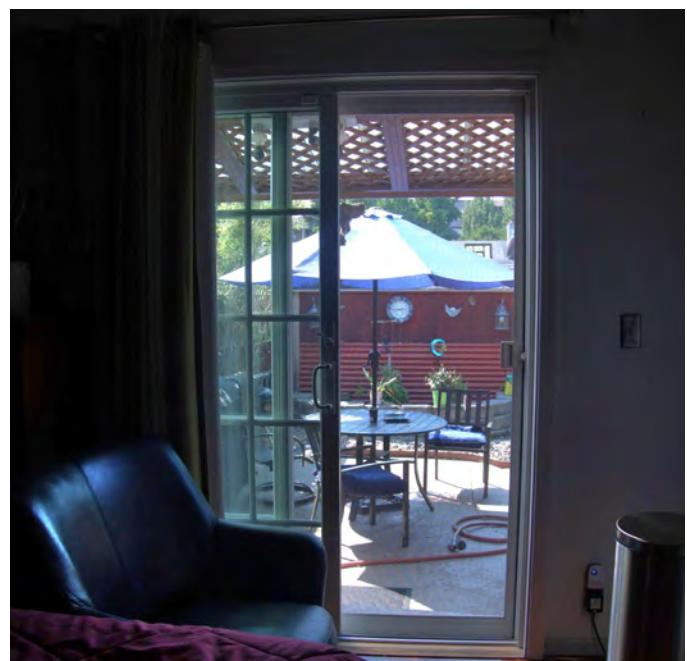


### ADA 404.2 Clear Width

Door openings must provide a clear width of at least 32 inches.

### ADA 404.2.7 Door & Gate Hardware

- Handles, pulls, latches, locks and other parts on doors and gates must be easily operable with one motion, and be ADA approved.
- Operable parts of hardware must be **34-48 inches** above the ground.
- When sliding doors are open all the way, hardware must be exposed and usable from both sides.



Sliding door with screen in resident's room.



### Did You Know?

Gates in outdoor fencing must not be locked. They must have an obvious method to open with a single action.

# Common Use Areas

- Common use areas are shared spaces that are accessible by all residents to spend time together or receive visitors.
- Common living areas must accommodate the recreational and social needs of all home occupants at one time.
- The common spaces in the home must have enough furniture for all the occupants at one time.
  - Most adult care homes have up to five residents, so it is important to plan for enough seating for residents' group activities and visitors.
- Offices are not allowed in resident living areas, including the living room. This detracts from a homelike environment.
- A separate dining area must be furnished to serve all residents at a meal, family style. This includes enough space to accommodate residents in wheelchairs to join others at the table for meals.
- No common space can be in an unfinished basement or garage unless constructed for that purpose or converted with permits.
  - Residents must be able to access these areas. See page 21 for more information about accessibility, hallways and stairs.
- Video monitors are not allowed. See page 14 for information on monitors and intercoms.



Table is large enough for residents, caregiver and wheelchair.

## Size Requirements

- There must be at least **150 square feet** of common living space for the residents.
- Additional space is required to accommodate residents with wheelchairs.
- An additional **40 square feet** of common space is required for each relative receiving care, or adult day services recipient.

(MCAR 023-100-150)



### Quick Links

**Converting an attic, basement or garage into a common area?** This requires a permit. See Building Changes and Remodeling on page 45 for more information.

Portland's brochure on converting attics, basements and garages provides helpful information regardless of where your home is located.

[Converting Attics, Basements and Garages to Living Space](#)  
[link.multco.us/portland.code.convert](http://link.multco.us/portland.code.convert)

# Fireplaces, Wood Stoves

- Fireplaces cannot be used to burn trash. If the fireplace is used, chimneys must be properly maintained and cleaned annually so no accumulation of creosote or combustible residue can accumulate. (MCAR 023-100-535)
- Fireplaces require a protective glass screen or metal mesh curtains attached top and bottom.
- A non-combustible heat resistant safety barrier is required around wood stoves.
  - The barrier must be installed a minimum of **36 inches** distance from the stove on all sides to prevent accident or injury to residents. (MCAR 023-100-530)
  - (OR Fire Code R111.2 Screens)



Custom-made barrier for fireplace or wood stove, with fire extinguisher located nearby.

## Permits

- There must be permits that verify proper installation of the existing wood stove, pellet stove or gas fireplace.
- If the operator does not have this permit, the wood stove, pellet stove or gas fireplace must be inspected by a:
  - Qualified inspector
  - Certified Oregon Chimney Sweep Association member
  - Oregon Hearth Products Association member

(MCAR 023-100-540)



Ceiling with crown moulding in good repair.

## Quick Links

[29.30.040 Chimneys](#)  
[link.multco.us/portland.code.chimneys](http://link.multco.us/portland.code.chimneys)

## Walls, Ceilings, Floors

- Walls, ceilings and floors must be easy to wash, clean or paint as needed.
- There cannot be loose plaster or wallpaper, flaking, peeling or scaling paint.

[29.30.110 Interior Walls, Floors, and Ceilings](#)  
[\(Portland\).portland.gov/code/29/30/110](http://(Portland).portland.gov/code/29/30/110)  
 (MCAR 023-100-125)

- If leasing a property, written permission from the landlord may be needed to paint or make changes to surfaces of the home.

# Bedrooms



Resident bedroom with personal belongings and decorations.



## Did You Know?

A **split-level house** has staggered levels that connect via short flights of stairs. The same requirements for residents who live on a second story apply to split-level houses.

**The ACHP does not recommend investing in a split-level home.**

The only residents who are allowed to live in a split-level home must be:

- ambulatory.
- capable of self-preservation.
- Able to exit the home during an emergency without assistance.

## Definitions

### Ambulatory:

able to walk without assistance.



### Self-preservation:

The ability to respond to a fire alarm without additional cues and to reach a point of safety without assistance.

## Resident room location

- Resident bedrooms should be on the ground level of the house.
- The only residents who are allowed to sleep in bedrooms located on the second story, or the basement, must be:
  - ambulatory.
  - capable of self-preservation.
  - Able to exit the home during an emergency without assistance.
- If a resident has impaired mobility, is not able to walk, or is not capable of self-preservation for physical or cognitive reasons, their bedroom must be located on the ground floor.  
*(MCAR 023-100-830)*
- No bedrooms for sleeping may be located above the second floor, for either residents or household member.  
*(MCAR 023-100-832)*
- Residents must demonstrate their capability to self-exit even if they have access to a lift or elevator.  
*(MCAR 023-100-435)*
- Resident bedrooms must be close enough to the provider in charge to alert staff to nighttime needs or emergencies.
- A call bell or intercom may be installed.  
*(MCAR 023-100-425)*

# General Bedroom Requirements

- Bedrooms must have been constructed for use as a bedroom when the home was built.
  - Rooms remodeled to be bedrooms must have permits.
- Bedrooms must have a finished interior.
- Walls must be of standard construction and extend from floor to ceiling.
- There must be **70 square feet** of usable floor space for one resident or **120 square feet** for two residents.
  - This excludes any area where a sloped ceiling does not allow a person to stand upright.
- At least one half of the ceiling must be at least **7 feet 6 inches high**.  
*(MCAR 023-100-405)*
- Bedrooms must have a permanent source of heat.  
*(MCAR 023-100-445)*
- A resident may choose to share a bedroom with one other resident. This is not a popular option.  
*(MCAR 023-100-423)*



Single bed in standard size and good condition.



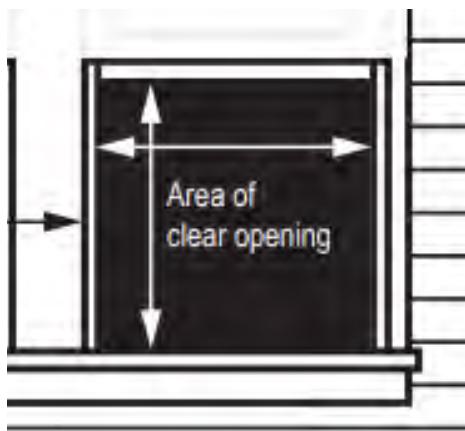
Bedroom door opening to hallway and common use area.

## Bedroom Doors and Locks

- Bedroom doors must open directly to a hallway or common use room.
  - The door cannot pass through another bedroom or common bathroom.
- All bedroom doors must be lockable for privacy.
- Doors must have a locking device on the inside, released by a single action lever.
  - The lock must have a personalized key that will unlock only the lock on that door.
- Residents must have keys for their bedrooms.  
*(MCAR 023-100-608)*

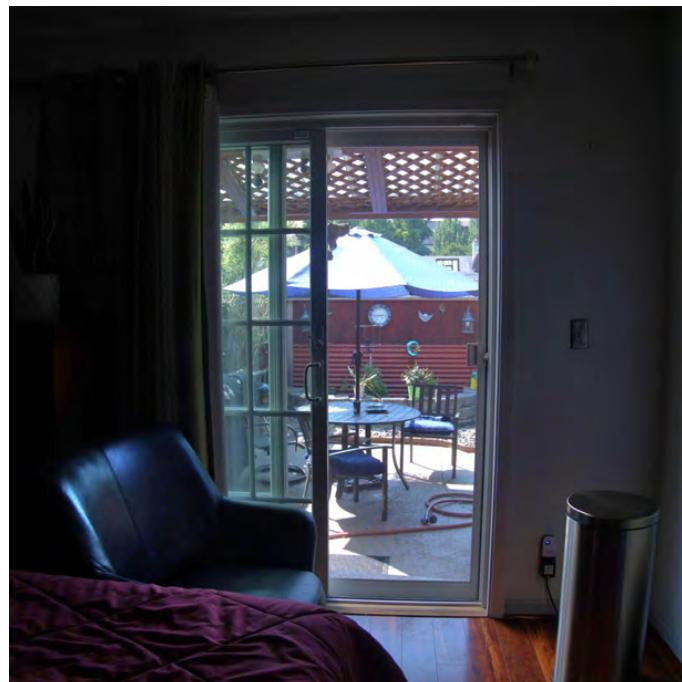
# Bedroom Windows and Secondary Exits

- Residents' bedrooms must have at least one openable window or secondary exit door leading directly to the outside ground level of the home. [\(MCAR 023-100-832\)](#)
- The window or secondary exit door must:
  - Be easy to open from the inside without the use of keys, tools, or any special knowledge or effort.
  - Be free of any obstacles that would interfere with the use of the window as an emergency exit.
  - Provide a clear opening of at least **5.7 square feet (821 square inches)**.
  - The "area of clear opening" dimensions must be either:
    - Height of at least **24 inches by 34.25 inches** wide.
    - Or width of at least **20 inches by 41.125 inches** high.
- (MCAR 023-100-465)
- The finished sill height must be no more than **44 inches** from the floor.



## Definition

**secondary exit:**  
an alternate to the common/  
primary exit. Secondary exits include  
doors, stairways, halls or approved windows.



An exterior door in a ground level bedroom leading directly outside.

- The secondary exit, window or door must meet fire regulations.
- No cracks or holes are allowed in the window panes.
- The window sash (part of the window that opens) must be in good repair and condition.
  - The sash must fit weather-tight within its frames.
- Window frames must keep rain and wind from entering the home.

**29.30.090 Windows**  
[link.multco.us/portland.code.windows](http://link.multco.us/portland.code.windows)

- Windows must have drapes, shades, blinds or other window coverings.
  - Covering must be in good condition and allow privacy for residents.
- (MCAR 023-100-455)
- No ladders, rope, chain ladders or other devices may be used as a secondary exit.
- Secondary exits that are 6 feet above the ground outside have more requirements. See page 10.
- See page 13 for bedroom window exceptions.

# Resident Window on Second Floor or More Than 6 Feet

There must always be a safe secondary exit directly to the outside.

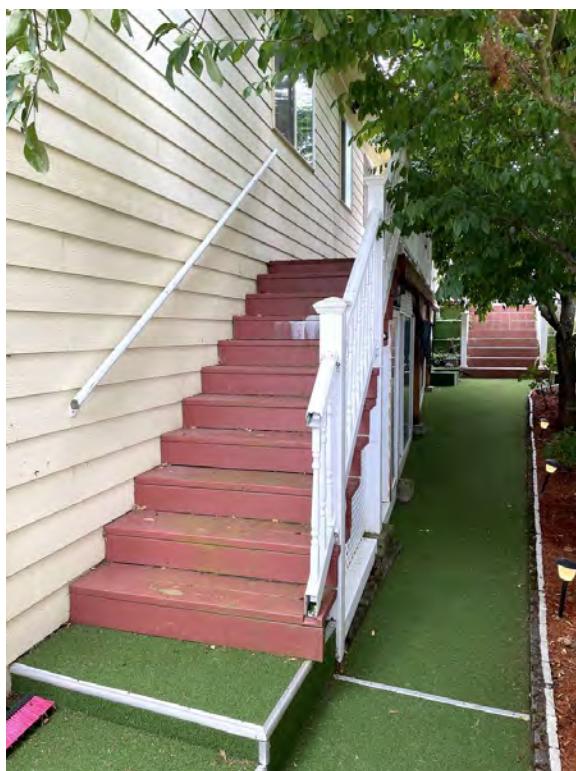
Resident bedrooms that are located on the second story have additional requirements. Bedrooms that have a secondary exit that is **6 feet** (72 inches) or more above the ground outside also have additional requirements.

- The secondary exit must lead to exterior stairs or a ramp to the ground level.
- The exit must meet all local and ADA requirements.
- The exit must have a landing that is at least **36 inches by 36 inches**.
- The landing cannot be more than **44 inches** below the exterior window sill.

(MCAR 023-100-440)



Outside stairs lead to resident bedroom window on second floor. Residents are ambulatory and capable of self-preservation in this class 1 home.



Outside stairs lead to resident bedroom windows on second floor. Residents are ambulatory and capable of self-preservation in this APD class 2 home. First floor indoor rooms extend to edge of stairs and landing, providing extra space inside.



# Window Fall Prevention

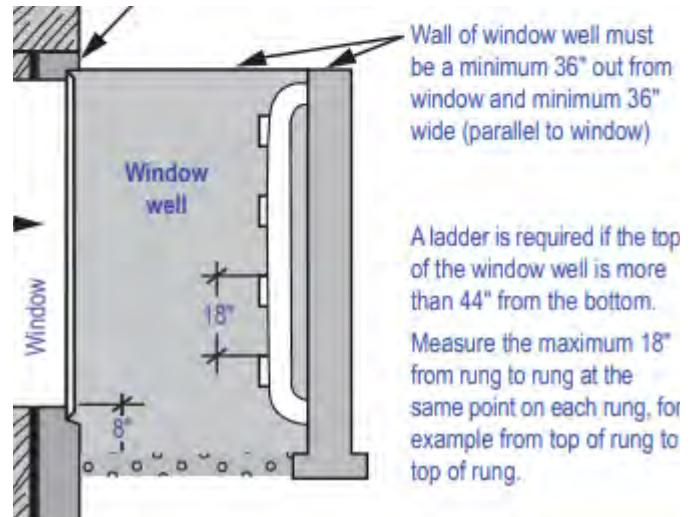
- Some windows may need limited opening sizes to prevent someone from falling through. This applies when:
  - The window is less than **24 inches** above the floor.
  - Windows are more than **72 inches** above the outside ground below.
  - These windows must not open more than **4 inches**.
- Any fall prevention devices must be in compliance with the **ASTM F2090 standard**.
- Fall prevention devices cannot reduce the **5-5.7 square feet** clear opening for windows.

## Window Fall Prevention Guide

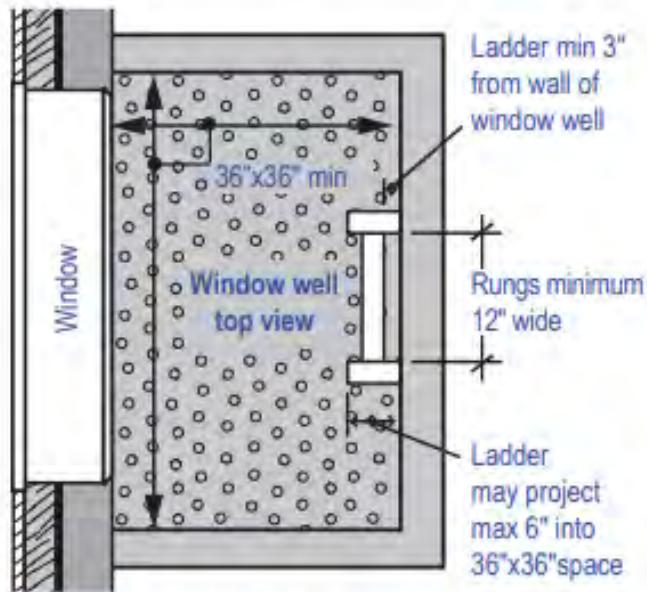
[link.multco.us/fall.prevention](http://link.multco.us/fall.prevention)

# Basement Window Well Illustration

[Residential Windows Permitting Brochure \(Portland\)](#)  
[link.multco.us/portland.windows](http://link.multco.us/portland.windows)



Window well top view – page 3 Residential Windows Permitting Brochure



# Basement Window Wells

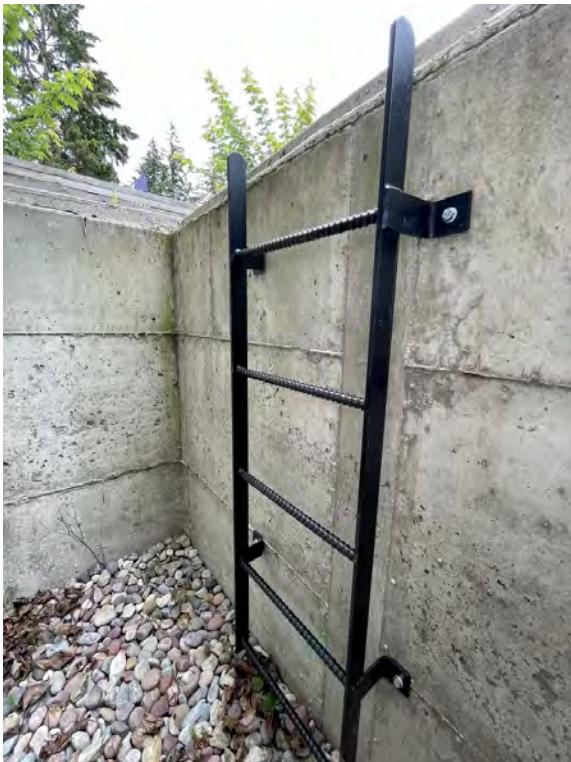
- Windows at the basement level (below ground level) must have a window well.
- The window well must:
  - Be the full width of the window.
  - Be constructed of permanent materials.
  - Have a **3 foot by 3 foot** clearance in front of the window, measured perpendicular to the outside wall.
- If the bottom of the window well is over **44 inches** below the ground level, there must be permanent steps or a ladder.
  - The ladder or steps may project **6 inches** into the 3 foot by 3 foot clear space required for the window well.
  - The steps or ladder cannot restrict the window opening.

## 29.30.230 a Emergency Exits (Portland)

[portland.gov/code/29/30/230](http://portland.gov/code/29/30/230)

Window well ladder – page 3, Residential Windows Permitting Brochure

# Basement Window Examples



This large window well is covered with an unlocked grate. A metal ladder provides safe emergency exit. Window screen is easy to remove. Residents are ambulatory and capable of self-preservation in this APD class 2 home.



Basement window with wooden ladder. Residents in this behavioral health home are ambulatory and capable of self-preservation.

# Bedroom Window Exceptions

Some houses have unique window designs that may qualify for an exception. Exceptions are not guaranteed. They may be provided only if all requirements are fulfilled.

- Windows with a clear opening of at least **5 square feet (720 square inches)** or a **48 inch sill height** may be accepted.
  - The window must have the approval of the state fire marshal or designee.
  - An exception must be granted by the ACHP.
- An exception may be granted by the ACHP for a window with a finished sill height between **44 and 48 inches** from the floor. The window must meet applicable code requirements at the time the bedroom was constructed.
- For sill heights above **48 inches**, an exception request may be submitted to install a permanently attached step under the window.
  - The width of the step must be at least **30 inches**.
  - the rise must be **4-8 inches**.
  - The sill height must be no more than **44 inches** from the top of the step.
  - Steps and mobility aids must be easily accessible and not used for storage.
  - The resident of the room must demonstrate that they can evacuate with the steps and aid.
  - Residents who are non-ambulatory or have limited mobility cannot use a bedroom with a window step.

**(MCAR 023-100-465)**

# Bedroom Furniture

- Each resident must have an individual bed with a frame at least **36 inches** wide (a single bed).  
**(MCAR 023-100-460)**
- Residents must have their own closet space, a private dresser and secure storage.
- They must have enough storage for:
  - Clothing and personal items.
  - Hygiene and grooming supplies.
- Residents are allowed and encouraged to keep and use personal belongings.  
**(MCAR 023-100-450)**



Resident bedroom with personal television on top of dresser.



## Did You Know?

- Resident bedrooms cannot contain furnaces, washers, dryers, freezers, dishwashers, electrical panels or water heaters.
- There cannot be any communally-used household equipment in resident bedrooms.
- Items that do not belong to a resident cannot be stored in their bedroom.

**(MCAR 023-100-410)**

# Monitors and Intercoms

Video monitors are not allowed within adult care homes, including bedrooms and common areas.

Monitors, intercoms and call bells must be audio-only. They may not have a video function. They must:

- Not violate the residents' right to privacy.
- Be able to be turned off when requested by residents.
- Use a secure feed.

Their location and use must be disclosed in the home's residency agreement. They can only be used with resident's consent. Operators must get written consent from each resident and anyone else affected by the monitor or intercom.

If residents do not want monitors used, the operator must develop a safe alternative plan so that resident needs are met.

(MCAR 023-080-205, MCAR 023-100-185,  
MCAR 023-100-425)



Call bell button.

## Non-Resident Bedrooms

- The adult care home operator must live in the licensed adult care home, or hire an approved resident manager to live in the home.
  - There must be at least one bedroom for the operator or resident manager.
- The operator, providers or their family members cannot sleep in common living areas or rooms not approved as bedrooms.
- Bedrooms on the third story or above cannot be used for sleeping.  
(MCAR 023-100-832)
- Only one or two occupants allowed per bedroom.
  - More than two occupants are allowed if they are children under five years old.  
(MCAR 023-100-420)
- Operators, providers or their family members must not share bedrooms with residents.  
(MCAR 023-100-415)



### Did You Know?

- If a caregiver sleeps in the home, a bedroom must be available for the caregiver's use.
- Bedrooms used by providers or caregivers must have direct access to residents through an interior hallway or common use room.

# Bathrooms

- Bathrooms must have a finished interior.
- The floors, walls, tubs/showers, toilets, sinks and mirrors must be in good repair.  
**(MCAR 023-100-320)**
- The home must have at least one toilet, one sink, one tub or shower, and one mirror for each six household occupants. Occupants include everyone who lives in the home, including the operator's family.
- A sink must be near each toilet.
- A toilet and sink must be on each floor occupied by residents.  
**(MCAR 023-100-310)**
- Appropriate racks or hooks must be available for drying towels.  
**(MCAR 023-100-345)**



Ventilation system on bathroom ceiling.

## Cleanliness

- Bathrooms must be clean and free from objectionable odors. **(MCAR 023-100-305)**
- They must have a window that can open, or other way to ventilate the room.  
**(MCAR 023-100-325)**
- Ventilation systems may need repair or replacement if there is visible growth of mildew.  
**29.30.120 Interior Dampness (Portland)**  
[portland.gov/code/29/30/120](http://portland.gov/code/29/30/120)

## Water Supply

- There must be enough hot water to meet the needs of the residents.
- Hot water temperature must be at least **105 degrees Fahrenheit (41.5 degrees Celsius)**.
- Water temperature must not exceed **120 degrees Fahrenheit (49 degrees Celsius)**.  
**(MCAR 023-100-335)**
- Water pressure must be at least 15 psi.  
**29.30.170 Plumbing Facilities (Portland)**  
[portland.gov/code/29/30/170](http://portland.gov/code/29/30/170)

## Privacy and Access

- Bathrooms must allow for privacy and have a single action lockable door that opens to a hall or common use room.
  - A lock is not required if the bathroom door opens into a resident's private bedroom.
- A resident must be able to access a bathroom without having to walk through another person's bedroom.  
**(MCAR 023-100-330)**

## Surfaces

- Shower enclosures must have nonporous surfaces.
- Glass shower doors must have tempered safety glass.
- Tubs and showers must have non-slip floor surfaces.
- Shower curtains must be clean and in good condition. ([MCAR 023-100-340](#))
- Every bathroom surface must be water resistant, including the floor. [29.30.110 Interior Walls, Floors, and Ceilings. \(Portland\)](#)  
[portland.gov/code/29/30/110](http://portland.gov/code/29/30/110)



Bathroom floor surface.

## Mirrors

It is important that the bathroom mirrors are at an appropriate height to be useable by everyone.

### Definitions



#### Reflecting surface:

All of the mirror except for the frame.



Mirror and sink at the right height for woman using a wheelchair.

### ADA 603 Mirrors



#### Mirrors above sinks or countertops:

- The highest that the bottom edge of the **reflecting surface** can be is **40 inches** from the floor.

#### Mirrors not above sinks or countertops:

- The highest that the bottom edge of the reflecting surface can be is **35 inches** above the floor.

#### More people can use a single **full-length mirror**:

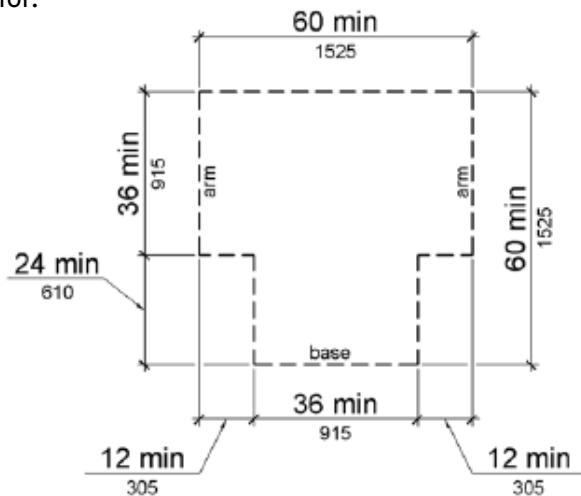
- The top edge of mirrors should be **74 inches** from the floor or ground.

# Knee and Toe Clearance

There should be enough space for a mobility aid at a sink or counter.

## Turning Space

When a resident has a mobility aid, the space they need to turn in the bathroom should be accounted for.



ADA 304.3.2, T-shaped turning space.



### ADA 304 Turning Space

**Circular Space:** The turning space must have at least a **60 inch diameter**.

- The space must include knee and toe clearance. (304.3.1)

**T-Shaped Space:** A T-shaped turning space must include a square space of at least **60 inches**.

- The arms and base of the T-shape must be at least **36 inches wide**.
- Each arm of the T must have a clear space of at least **12 inches** in each direction.
- The base must have a clear space of at least **24 inches**.
- The space must include knee and toe clearance only at the end of either the base or one arm. (304.3.2)



### ADA 306.3 Knee Clearance

- Knee clearance:** The space under an element between **9-27 inches** above the floor.
- Maximum Depth:** up to **25 inches** at most under an element at **9 inches** above the floor.
- Minimum Depth:** Where knee clearance is under an element.
  - At least **11 inches** deep at **9 inches** above the floor.
  - At least **8 inches** deep at **27 inches** above the floor.
- clearance reduction:** the knee clearance can reduce at a rate of **1 inch** in depth for each **6 inches** in height.
- Width:** Knee clearance must be at least **30 inches** wide.

### ADA 306.2 Toe Clearance

- Toe clearance:** the space under an element between the floor and **9 inches** above the floor.
- Depth:** Toe clearance must extend **17-25 inches** under an element like a sink.
- Width:** Toe clearance must be at least **30 inches** wide.



### Quick Links

[Clear Floor or Ground Space and Turning Space \(US Access Board Technical Guide\)](#)  
[link.multco.us/floor.space](http://link.multco.us/floor.space)

# Bathroom Accessibility and Safety

- Bathrooms must have barrier-free access to the toilet, bathtub and shower.
- Bathtubs, showers and toilets must have appropriate grab bars for residents' safety.

(MCAR 023-100-315)



Accessible shower with foldable shower seat and grab bar.



Grab bars on wall and toilet safety rail.



Grab bar on wall next to toilet.



## ADA 610 Seats

### Bathtub seat:

- The depth of a removable in-tub seat must be **15-16 inches**.
- The seat must be capable of secure placement.

(610.2)

### Shower compartment seat:

- A folding seat can be installed on the:
  - side wall next to the faucet.
  - back wall.
  - front wall opposite the back wall.
- The top of the seat must be **17-19 inches** above the bathroom floor.

(610.3)

## ADA 609 Grab Bars

- Grab bars must be in a horizontal position.
- They must be **33-36 inches** above the floor, measured to the top of the gripping surface.

# Kitchen

- If the home does not have a dishwasher, then utensils, dishes and glassware must be washed in hot, soapy water, rinsed, air dried and stored to prevent contamination. (MCAR 023-080-850)
- Kitchen appliances must be clean and in good repair. (MCAR 023-080-855)
- Kitchen counters must have smooth, nonabsorbent and cleanable surfaces.
- Kitchen must be free from clutter, garbage and offensive odors.
- Walls, ceilings and floors must be finished to permit frequent washing, cleaning or painting. (MCAR-023-100-125)
- Every home must have a kitchen sink apart from the bathroom sink.
- Every wall, floor, ceiling and cabinet must be:
  - clean, sanitary, safe
  - in structurally sound condition
  - free of:
    - large holes and serious cracks
    - loose plaster or wallpaper
    - flaking, peeling or scaling paint
- The kitchen floor surface must be constructed and maintained to be resistant to water.
  - Floor must be kept clean and sanitary.

**29.30.110 Interior Walls, Floors, and Ceilings. (Portland)** [portland.gov/code/29/30/110](http://portland.gov/code/29/30/110)



Easy-to-clean countertop and backsplash, made of smooth material.



Kitchen and appliances are clean and tidy.

- Every home must have approved service connections for refrigeration and cooking appliances.
- **29.30.160 Kitchen Facilities (Portland)** [portland.gov/code/29/30/160](http://portland.gov/code/29/30/160)
- All kitchen sinks must have hot and cold running water.

**10.30.035 Property Maintenance Code, 505.1 General (Gresham)**  
[link.multco.us/gresham.code](http://link.multco.us/gresham.code)



## Quick Links

**Choosing the Best Countertop**  
[link.multco.us/countertop](http://link.multco.us/countertop)

# Home Office

A home office is a place where the adult care home operator can complete record keeping, make phone calls and conduct business in private to protect residents' confidential information. The home office should not be located in a common area like a living room or dining room.

- All resident records must be stored in a locked location.

(MCAR 023-090-215 and MCAR 023-090-210)



# Laundry Room

Each home must have a clothes washer and dryer in working order at all times.



Basement laundry room with washer and dryer.

Operators must store soiled linens and clothing in closed containers kept separate from:

- bedrooms
- the kitchen
- dining and food preparation areas
- food
- medication storage areas

(MCAR 023-100-225)



# Hallways and Stairs

- The home must be accessible to residents. Generally homes without stairs are most accessible for residents.
- Rooms, stairways and exit-ways must be free of barriers that prevent evacuation.

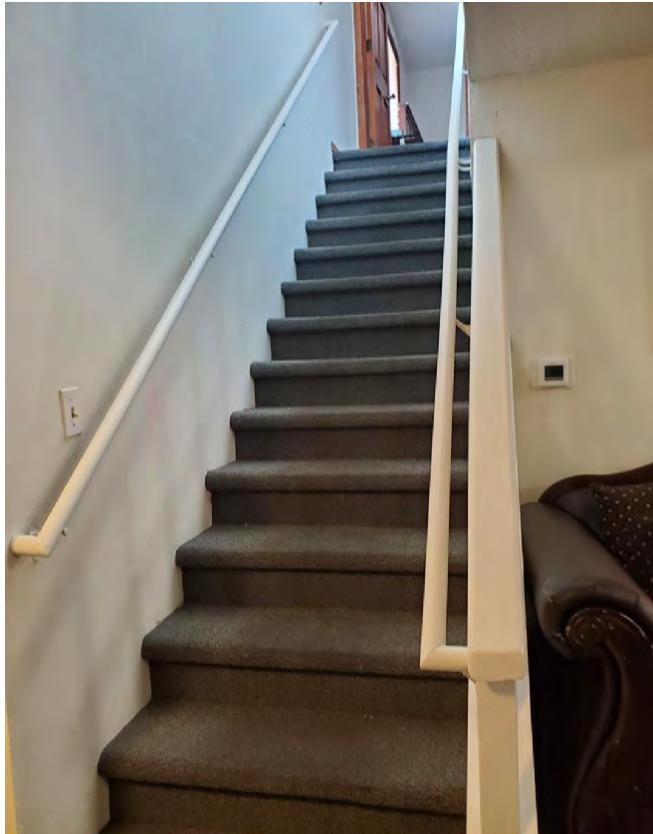
(MCAR 023-100-140)



## ADA 405.3.1 Clear Width

The clear width of any walking surfaces must be at least **36 inches**.

This includes hallways, stairs, ramps and other floor or ground surface.



## Hallways

- Hallways must be at least **36 inches** wide.
- The space must be wide enough for wheelchairs or walkers to pass through if they are used by residents.

(MCAR 023-100-140)



Wheelchair easily passes through hallway.

## Stairs

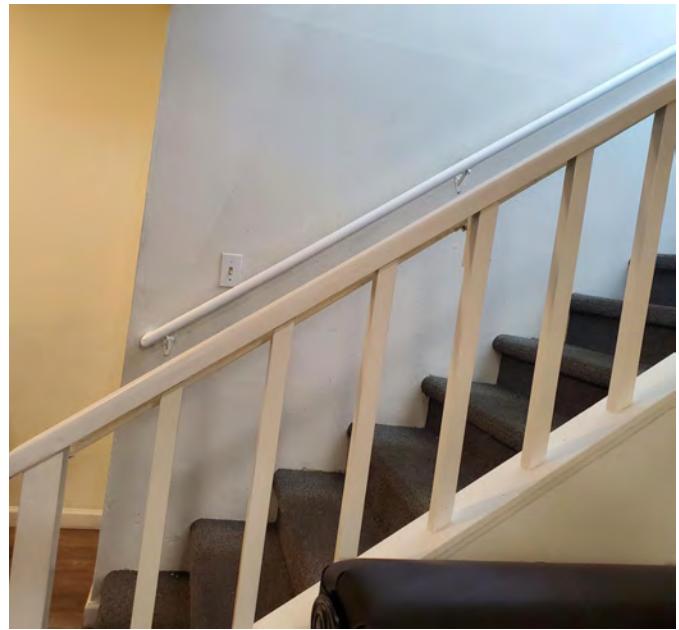
- Prospective operators should look for homes that do not require residents to use stairs.
- Areas of the home that are accessed by stairs should primarily be used by family members and caregivers.
- Stairways must be equipped with working lights and kept adequately lighted.



## Quick Links

[Stair and Residential Building Permits](#)  
[link.multco.us/portland.code.stairs](http://link.multco.us/portland.code.stairs)

[ADA Standards: 505 Handrails](#)  
[link.multco.us/ada.handrails](http://link.multco.us/ada.handrails)



Guardrail with vertical pattern.

## Guardrails and Handrails

- Interior and exterior stairways and steps of the home must have properly installed handrails on both sides. [\(MCAR 023-100-135\)](#)
- The space between both handrails must be at least **36 inches** to provide clear width for walking.
- Handrails on the open side of a stairway must meet guardrail requirements.
- A guardrail keeps someone from falling when they are more than **30 inches** above the floor or ground below.
- Guardrails must be at least **36 inches** high.
  - Guardrails may be **34 inches** at the open sides of stairways.
- Guardrails must have some kind of a **vertical or horizontal pattern**, with less than **5 inches** between the bars.
  - Guardrails along landings must measure less than **4 inches** between the bars.
  - At the bottom edge of a guardrail along a series of steps, the space must measure less than **6 inches** between the bars.

1 and 1/2 inch clearance to hold onto handrail.

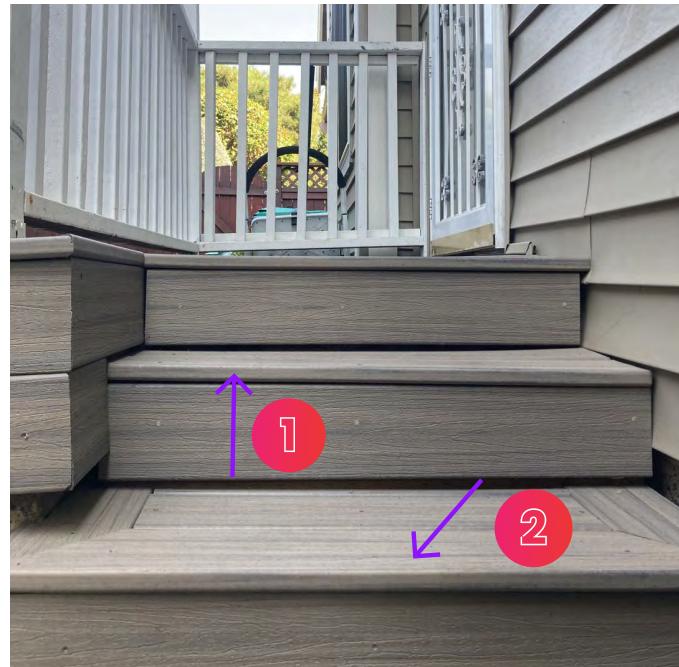


## ADA 505 Handrails

Find an ADA Design checklist on page 40 that outlines all requirements for handrails. These requirements apply to handrails for both stairs and ramps.

# Stairway Risers & Treads

- Stairs must have a riser height between **6-8 inches**.
- The tread width depth must be between **9-11 inches**.  
**(MCAR 023-100-835)**  
**ADA 504.2 Treads and Risers**  
[link.multco.us/ada.stairs](http://link.multco.us/ada.stairs)
- Stairs and attachments must be replaced when there is excessive warping, loosening or other damage.
  - This includes flooring, treads, risers and stringers.**29.30.070 Stairs and Porches. (Portland)**  
[link.multco.us/portland.code.stairs](http://link.multco.us/portland.code.stairs)



**1** Stair riser height of exterior stairway

**2** Tread surface width of exterior step

# Stairway Landings

- Stairway landings must be equal to the width of the stairway or **48 inches**.
- When a door is fully open, it should not be more than **7 inches** into the landing.

**011.6 Stairway Landings, Portland Fire Code**  
[link.multco.us/portland.fire.code](http://link.multco.us/portland.fire.code)



Stairway landing between two flights of stairs, equal to the width of the stairs.

## Definitions



**Riser:** each individual step in a stairway.

**Riser height:** height of each step.

**Tread:** Flat surface on top of each step.

**Tread width depth:** the width of the tread surface from top to bottom.

**Landing:** the area between each flight of stairs.

# Fire Safety

- The design and construction of the home must help limit the spread of flames and smoke. This includes basements, attics and garages.
- All interior walls must meet the smoke barrier design requirements.
- Walls and ceilings must be made of finished materials. Homes are typically built with approved finished materials.
  - In the Oregon Fire Code, adult care homes are listed as R-3 occupancy. They must meet Class C (III) for finished materials.
- **No more than 10%** of wall and ceiling areas in a sleeping room or exit-way of the adult care home can have readily combustible materials.
  - This includes materials such as wood paneling or acoustic tiles.
  - Such materials can be treated with an approved intumescent surface coating or be removed. (MCAR 023-100-130)
  - Look for "ASTM E-84" on product label.



## Smoke alarms

Smoke alarms must:

- Be installed according to the manufacturer's specifications.
- Be maintained in active working condition.
- Be equipped with:
  - A sensor that warns of a low battery.
  - Or a battery back-up if the alarm is hard-wired.
- Be located in:
  - every bedroom.
  - hallways or access areas between bedrooms.
  - family room or living room.
  - basement.
  - top of each stairway.
- Ceiling placement is recommended.

(MCAR 023-100-710)

(OR Fire Code R108: Smoke Alarms)



A smoke alarm hardwired into the ceiling.



A combination carbon monoxide and smoke alarm with a strobe light in the middle.

## Carbon Monoxide Alarms

- Carbon monoxide alarms must:
  - Comply with **ANSI/UL 2034**.
  - Be installed and maintained according to the manufacturer's instructions.
  - Be installed in each bedroom or within **15 feet** outside of each bedroom door, on every level of the home where bedrooms are located, at the height recommended by the manufacturer.
- Carbon monoxide alarms may be hard wired, plug in or battery operated.
  - Hard-wired and plug-in alarms must be equipped with a battery backup.
  - Battery-operated alarms must be equipped with a device that warns of a low battery.
- Combination carbon monoxide/smoke alarms can be used instead of carbon monoxide alarms.  
**(MCAR 023-100-712)**  
**(OR Fire Code R109: Carbon Monoxide Alarms)**

## Hearing Impaired

- Bedrooms used by hearing impaired residents must have a smoke and carbon monoxide alarm with additional audio/visual or vibrating alerts.
- The alarm must be capable of alerting the resident.
- Alarms can have flashing strobe lights or a pillow/bed shaker.

**(MCAR 023-100-720)**

**(OR Fire Code R108.3 Hearing impaired)**

## Alarm Volume

- All smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms must have a sounding device, or be interconnected with other alarms.
- The volume must be loud enough to wake up occupants in all bedrooms.
- The alarm must be loud enough to hear from inside the bedrooms when the doors are shut.
- Intercoms and room monitors cannot be used to amplify alarms.

**(MCAR 023-100-715)**

**(OR Fire Code R108.2 Connections)**



### Quick Links

[NFPA-Smoke Alarm Safety Tips](#)  
[link.multco.us/smoke.alarms](http://link.multco.us/smoke.alarms)

# Fire Extinguishers

- At least one **2A-10BC fire extinguisher** must be on each level of the home, including basements.
- The fire extinguisher must be securely mounted in a visible and easily accessible location.
  - The top of the extinguisher cannot be more than **5 feet** above the floor.
- All fire extinguishers must be tagged with the date of the last inspection and/or service.  
**(MCAR 023-100-730)**  
**(OR Fire Code R110: Portable Fire Extinguishers)**

## [Portable Fire Extinguisher Guide](#)

[link.multco.us/portland.fire.extinguisher](http://link.multco.us/portland.fire.extinguisher)



Mounted fire extinguisher between bedroom doors.

# Fire Alarm System

- Homes may be required to have a complete fire alarm system installed if:
  - They are more than five miles from the nearest fire station.
  - The house has unusual construction.
- The system must meet the requirements of the NFPA 72A and 72E.
- Approved automatic reporting will go to the local fire department.

**(MCAR 023-100-860)**



## Did You Know?

Adult care homes providing ventilator assisted care must have a functional sprinkler system, and maintenance must be completed as recommended by the manufacturer.

- Operator must still ensure that staff can evacuate the residents and all other occupants within three minutes.

**(MCAR 023-110-575)**

# Automatic Fire Sprinklers System

Currently adult care homes are not required to have automatic sprinkler systems installed. The state legislature extended the deadline for adult care homes to install automatic sprinkler systems to July 1, 2028.

The legislature will most likely review the subject again in the 2027 legislative session. If this bill is passed, it will only apply to new homes. It will not be affect currently-licensed homes.

# Installation and Parts for Existing Sprinkler Systems



## R107.1 Installation

- Automatic sprinkler systems must be installed according to NFPA 13D or as approved by the building official.

### R107.1.1. Water Supply

- There must be at least one automatic water supply for sprinkler systems.
- If common supply pipes serve both fire sprinkler and domestic use, they must follow the requirements of NFPA 13D.

### R107.1.2 Valves

- If there is separate shut off valve from the domestic supply, the control valve must:
  - Be locked.
  - Monitored by a supervising station.
  - Or provide an audible signal at a local constantly attended location.

### R107.1.3 Drain

- There must be at least a half inch drain on the system side of the control valve.

## R107.1.4 Fire Department Connection

- A Fire Department Connection is not required. If it is installed, it should be approved by the fire chief.

## R107.1.5 Wet Pipe Systems

- A wet pipe system can be used where all piping is installed in areas that won't freeze in winter.
- This includes areas that are insulated to maintain 40°F.
- Freeze protection, including the antifreeze system, must follow NFPA 13D.

## R107.1.6 Dry Pipe Systems

- For dry pipe systems, a pressure gauge must be installed to show system air pressure.
- Water must be delivered to the most remote sprinkler within 15 seconds.

## R107.2 Location

- Follow NFPA 13D for areas where sprinklers must be installed or can be omitted.

## R107.3 Monitoring

- Central station monitoring is not typically required.
- An exterior water flow device may be required by the building official.

(OR Fire Code R107 Automatic Sprinkler System)



### Quick Links

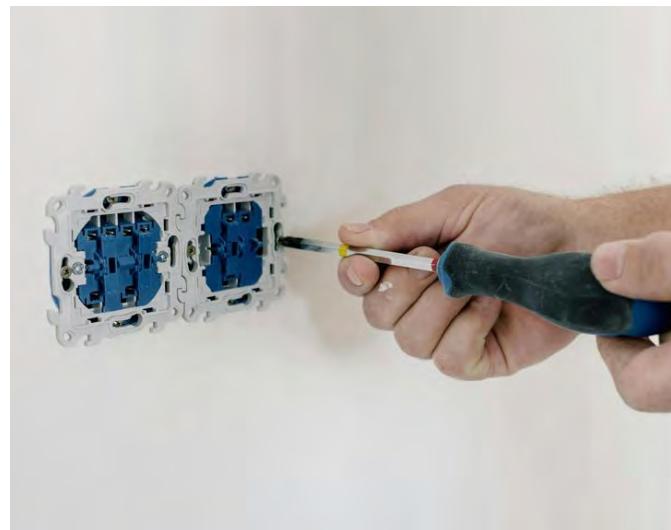
[Fire Sprinkler Omissions in Homes](#)  
[link.multco.us/sprinkler.omissions](http://link.multco.us/sprinkler.omissions)

[FAQs on Sprinkler Installation](#)  
[link.multco.us/sprinkler.installation](http://link.multco.us/sprinkler.installation)

# Electric, Heating and Cooling

The ACHP may request adult care home inspections from local fire department representatives, the county health department, and city building and electrical inspectors.

- Electrical, heating and cooling equipment must be installed according to manufacturer's specifications.
- Equipment includes:
  - wall heaters
  - baseboard heaters
  - wood stoves
  - pellet stoves
  - furnaces
  - central air systems
- Equipment must be used and maintained properly in good repair.
- Documentation must be on file to verify annual equipment inspections.  
**(MCAR 023-100-505)**
- Installation and maintenance must also follow:
  - [Oregon Mechanical Specialty Code](http://link.multco.us/or.mecanical.code)
  - [2023 Oregon Residential Specialty Code](http://link.multco.us/or.residential.code)



## Permitting

- Permits and inspections are needed for all mechanical and electrical work.
  - Mechanical work includes heating, air conditioning, ventilating, gas piping and wood stoves.

[10.60.090 Electrical Installations, \(Gresham\)](#)  
[10.60.110 Mechanical Installations. \(Gresham\)](#)  
[link.multco.us/gresham.code](#)

- **Licensed contractors need to perform all electrical work under valid permits.**
  - The property owner exemption of Oregon Revised Statute 479.540(1) does not apply to Adult Care Homes.
  - [Adult Foster Care Inspection Standards](#)  
[link.multco.us/portland.inspection.standards](#)



### Did You Know?

The operator must document installation and maintenance of electrical, heating and cooling systems in the home's business records.

# Electrical Equipment

- An electrical panel must be properly labeled for each circuit [National Electrical Code 408.4  
link.multco.us/switches.code](http://National Electrical Code 408.4 link.multco.us/switches.code)
- All panel board covers, and junction and outlet boxes must be in place.
- All openings in electrical equipment must be properly closed. [National Electrical Code 110.12  
www.teces.org/docs/568.pdf](http://National Electrical Code 110.12 www.teces.org/docs/568.pdf)



## Outlets

- Every electric outlet and fixture must be maintained and safely connected to an approved electrical system.
- Every room must have at least two working electric outlets or one outlet and one electric light fixture.
- Every bathroom must have one electric light fixture and one outlet.
- Every laundry, furnace room and other non-habitable spaces must have one electric light fixture.

[29.30.190 Electrical System, Outlets, and Lighting \(Portland\)  
portland.gov/code/29/30/190](http://29.30.190 Electrical System, Outlets, and Lighting (Portland) portland.gov/code/29/30/190)

- New outlets must be **GFCI protected** and have test/reset buttons to safely check outlet function.
- All receptacles must have proper polarity wiring.



Close up of test and reset buttons for a GFCI outlet.

Electrical panel box with room labeling.



### Quick Links

Oregon Electrical Specialty Code is based on the National Electrical Code. Oregon created a Table of Amendments that is designed to be used with the National Electrical Code. (There is no integrated Oregon codebook.)

[Oregon Building Codes Division,  
Electrical Code Program,  
link.multco.us/or.electrical](http://Oregon Building Codes Division, Electrical Code Program, link.multco.us/or.electrical)

[Free Guide From Home Depot on the  
National Electrical Code, NFPA 70  
link.multco.us/electrical.code](http://Free Guide From Home Depot on the National Electrical Code, NFPA 70 link.multco.us/electrical.code)

# Lighting



Each room, stairway and exit-way must be equipped with working lights.

- There must be adequate lighting, based on the residents' needs.



## Did You Know?

Lightbulbs must be shatterproof or protected with appropriate covers.  
(MCAR 023-100-145)

# Extension Cords



Relocatable power taps with six sockets, also called a power strip or power bar.

- Extension cords or multi-plug adapters are not allowed to be used in place of permanent wiring.
- UL-approved, relocatable power taps (RPTs) with circuit-breaker protection are allowed to be used indoors if they:
  - Have no more than six electrical sockets.
  - Are directly connected to an electrical outlet.
  - Are installed and used according to the manufacturer's instructions.
  - Are never connected to another relocatable power tap or to an extension cord.

(MCAR 023-100-520)

# Temperatures

- Room temperatures should be safe and comfortable for the residents at all times.
- When residents are home, the temperature must be:
  - no less than **68 degrees Fahrenheit** during waking hours.
  - no less than **65 degrees Fahrenheit** during sleeping hours.
  - no more than **78 degrees Fahrenheit** at any time.
- Variations from the required temperatures must be based on resident care needs or preferences.
- Variations are prohibited unless they are addressed in the resident's care plan.
- If the temperature can be controlled in a resident's bedroom, then the room can be kept at the resident's preferred temperature.

(MCAR 023-100-510)

# Cooling

To ensure the comfort and safety of residents:

- During extreme heat, there must be reasonable efforts to keep the residents comfortable.
  - Ventilation, fans or air conditioning must be used.
  - Precautions must be taken to prevent resident exposure to stale, non-circulating air.
  - If required temperatures can't be maintained, air conditioning may be required.
- If the home is air conditioned, the system must be functional and must be inspected annually.
  - Filters must be cleaned or changed as needed.

(MCAR 023-100-510)

**Portable air conditioners** may be used under the following conditions. The unit:

- Cannot block the exit window.
- Must be **UL listed** (determined by UL to meet safety standards).
- Used only according to the manufacturer's instructions.

(MCAR 023-100-525)

**Window air conditioners** are allowed only if the room has another window or external door for emergency exit.

**Fans** are encouraged for cross room ventilation.

- They must not block doorways or exit routes, including emergency exits.

# Space Heaters

- Bedrooms must be adequately heated with a permanent source of heat.
 

(MCAR 023-100-445)
- Unvented portable oil, gas, propane or kerosene heaters are not allowed.
- Sealed electric transfer heaters, or electric space heaters with tip-over shut-off capability, are allowed only if these meet the state fire marshal's guidelines.
 

(MCAR 023-100-515)
- Portable electric heaters must be plugged directly into an approved outlet and may not be used with electric extension cords.
 

(OR Fire Code R111.4 Power source)

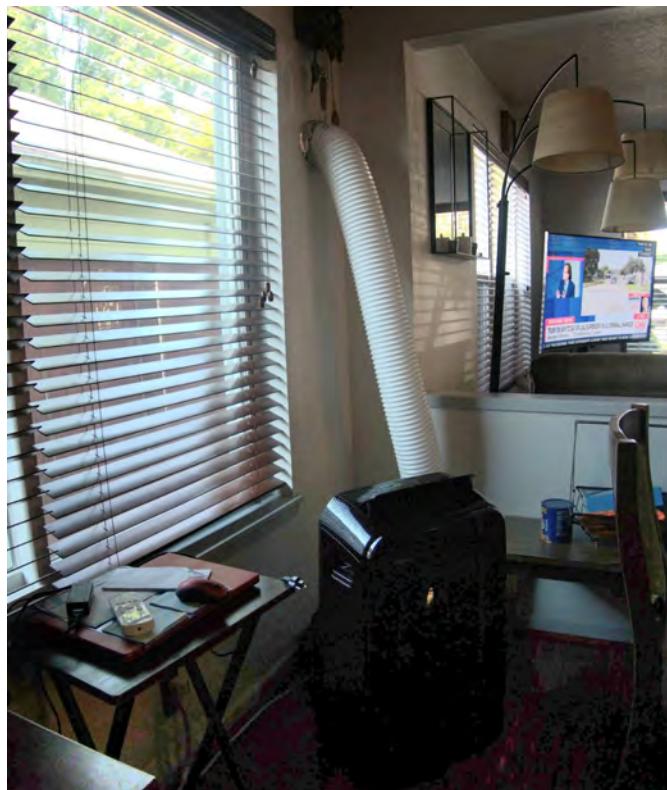


## Did You Know?

Using a camping stove indoors for any purpose is illegal.



Air conditioner units do not block the resident's window, which is the secondary exit.



Portable air conditioner with hose going through wall does not block window.

# Wildfire Smoke's Effect on Air Conditioners

- **Central HVAC system:** find out if it has a fresh air intake. If it does, find out how to close it or turn the system to recirculate mode. Make sure the HVAC filter is in good condition, fits snugly in the filter slot, and is replaced as recommended by the manufacturer. Consider upgrading to a MERV 13 or higher rated filter if your system can accommodate it.



## Quick Links

[EPA Wildfires and Indoor Air Quality](https://www.epa.gov/wildfires-and-indoor-air-quality)  
[link.multco.us/wildfire.smoke](https://link.multco.us/wildfire.smoke)

- **Window air conditioner:** Find out how to close the outdoor air damper. If you cannot close the damper, consider preparing other cooling options like a fan. Make sure that the seal between the air conditioner and the window is as tight as possible.
- **Evaporative cooler:** Avoid using it in smoky conditions because it can result in more smoke being brought inside. Consider other cooling options like fans or window air conditioners.
- **Portable air conditioner with a single hose:** Typically vented out of a window, do not use it in smoky conditions because it can result in more smoke being brought inside. Consider other cooling options.
- **Portable air conditioner with two hoses:** Make sure that the seal between the window vent kit and the window is as tight as possible.

## Generators

The ACHP recommends generators to assist adult care homes during weather events. Generators, battery backup or other backup power systems are also recommended for residents who rely on powered equipment, such as CPAP machines or pressure-alternating mattresses.

Homes that provide ventilator care to residents are required to have a functional, emergency back-up generator. The generator must be adequate to maintain electrical service for resident needs for a minimum of 72 hours.

(MCAR 023-110-565)

- If hard-wired, standby generators must be installed by a licensed electrician.
- If the generator is powered by liquid or propane gas, operators must follow rules on storing flammable gas.

(MCAR 023-100-900)



Generator connection.

# Outside the House

## Clean and in Good Repair

- The outside of the home must be accessible and appropriate to the needs of the residents, including the yard. **(MCAR 023-100-135)**
- The home must be of sound construction and kept clean and in good repair, including outbuildings, the home's patios, decks and walkways.
- The grounds must be well maintained. Keep the front and backyard landscaped, and free of clutter or garbage. **(MCAR 023-100-115)**



Well maintained backyard and bushes. Gazebo provides seating for residents. Wide sidewalks and ramps provide accessibility.

## Overgrowth and Weeds

- Vegetative growth within **5 feet** of a structure or within **5 feet** of a property line must be removed.
  - Brush, vines, overgrowth and other vegetation may be a barrier during an emergency.
  - Excessive growth could prevent emergency personnel from getting into the home on time.
- Property must be free from invasive weeds.  
**29.20.010 Outdoor Maintenance Requirements (Portland)** [portland.gov/code/29/20/010](http://portland.gov/code/29/20/010)
- Property must be free from invasive weeds.  
**10.30.035 Property Maintenance Code, 304.2 Weeds (Gresham)** [link.multco.us/gresham.code](http://link.multco.us/gresham.code)



### Did You Know?

Operators must routinely inspect and correct potential hazards around the home.

- Consider weather events that have the potential to create hazards.
- For example: downed or sagging cables, fallen tree branches or events that create slippery floors, steps and ramps.

## Video Monitors

- Video monitors are not allowed inside the home as they take away from the homelike environment.
- Exterior video surveillance or monitors may be used for security.
  - An ODHS Monitoring Device Notice must be posted. Request this notice from the ACHP. **(MCAR 023-100-180)**
  - The location of the video monitors must be included in the home's residency agreement.



Sign for exterior security video monitoring.

## Address Numbers

- The address number must be at least **four inches** high and made of reflective material.
- The numbers must contrast with the background, for example, black numbers on a white background.
- The address numbers must be visible from the street, in daylight and at night.

(MCAR 023-100-170)



### Did You Know?

If the home is set back further from the road and the address is not clearly visible, then the address must also be posted where the driveway meets the road. In most cases, the house numbers are posted on the mailbox at the edge of the road where they can be clearly seen.

## Address Requirements

- Address numbers must be Arabic numerals or alphabet letters.
- The stroke width for the numbers must be at least **0.5 inches**.
- Gresham Fire and Emergency Services may require address numbers to be at least **6 inches** high.

[10.25.070 Amendments to the Fire Code. 5.](#)

[Address Numbers \(Gresham\)](#)

[link.multco.us/gresham.code](#)

- The address numbers posted must be the same listed on the County Assessment and Taxation Records.

[29.30.010 Display of Address Number](#)

[\(Portland\)](#)

[portland.gov/code/29/30/010](#)



The address is posted on the house and the gated entrance, visible from the street. The black numbers contrast with the white background.

## Outdoor Common Space

- There must be an accessible outdoor area that is available to residents all year long.
- A part of the outdoor area must be covered and have an all-weather surface, such as a patio or deck.

(MCAR 023-100-153)

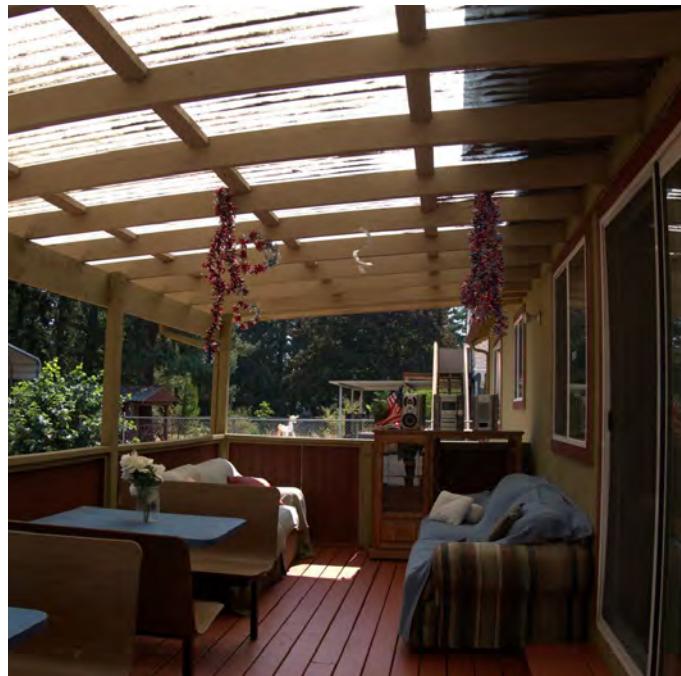
## Safety Barriers and Guardrails

- Safety barriers and devices are needed to prevent accidental injury or unsupervised access when that access may pose a risk to the residents. They are needed in the outdoor common space for patios, decks, stairways and walkways, and fire pits.

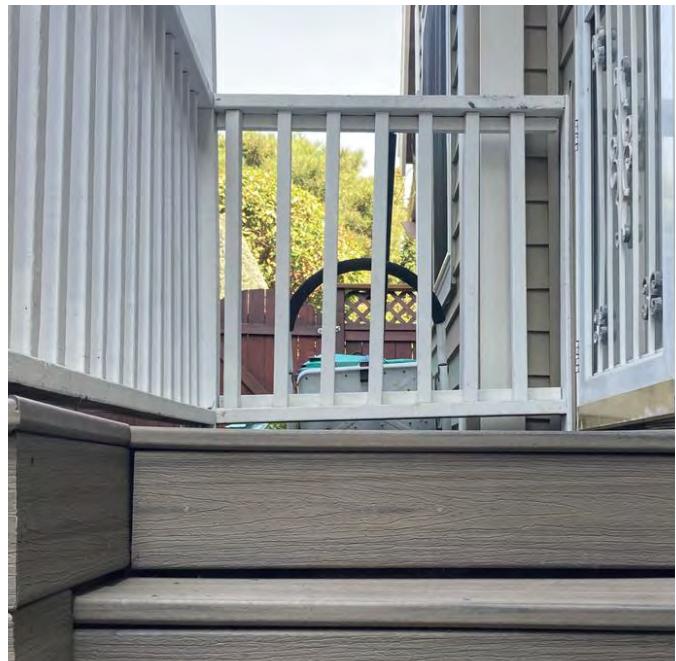
(MCAR 023-100-160)

- Raised floor surfaces need **guardrails** when they are **30 inches above the ground** below.
- This includes porches, decks, balconies, stairways or other raised floor surfaces.
- See page 22 of this guide for more guardrail requirements.

**29.30.080 Handrails and Guardrails (Portland)**  
[portland.gov/code/29/30/080](http://portland.gov/code/29/30/080)



Covered deck with seating.



Guardrails with vertical pattern on exterior stairs.



### Quick Links

[Fences, Decks and Outdoor Residential Projects](#)  
[link.multco.us/portland.fences](http://link.multco.us/portland.fences)

[Stairs and Residential Building Permits \(guardrails page 3\)](#)  
[link.multco.us/portland.permit.stairs](http://link.multco.us/portland.permit.stairs)

# Ramps

- If non-ambulatory residents live in the home, a ramp is required to allow entry to the house.
  - Most APD homes have ramps.
- The ramp will allow everyone to safely enter and exit the home, particularly when wheelchairs, walkers and other mobility aids are used.  
**(MCAR 023-100-855)**
- A licensed, bonded contractor must build the ramp.
- All ramps, existing or new construction, must follow the U.S. Department of Justice's 2010 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards for Accessible Design. [ADA 405 Ramps](#)  
[link.multco.us/ada.ramps](http://link.multco.us/ada.ramps)
- New ramps require a building permit and must follow the Oregon Residential Specialty Code.

## 2023 Oregon Residential Specialty Code

[codes.iccsafe.org/content/ORRC2023P1](http://codes.iccsafe.org/content/ORRC2023P1)

- Building a new ramp? Have your building contractor use the ramp checklist on page 38 and handrail checklist on page 40 to make sure your ramp meets ADA guidelines.



Additional slip resistance added to the floor.

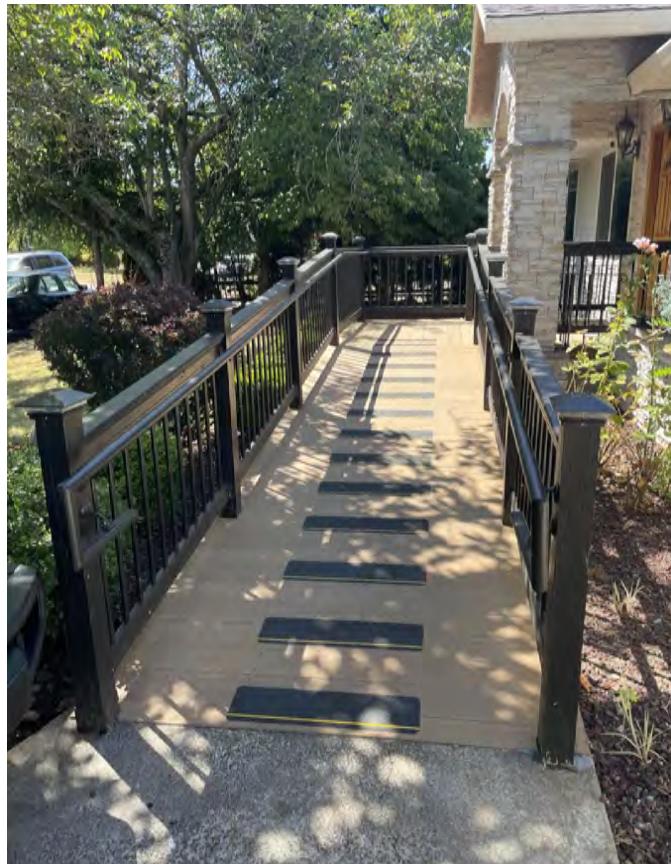
## Definitions



**Ramp run:**  
the distance of ramp before each landing.

**Slope:**  
the rate at which a surface goes up in height.

**Rise:**  
the height from ground level ramp run.



Ramp leading to front entrance.



## Ramp Checklist

**Slope no steeper than 1:12**

For every 1 inch of rise, there must be at least 12 inches of run.\* (ADA 405.2)

**Rise (height) of 30 inches or less for each run**

If a ramp must reach a height greater than 30 inches, then more than one run must be used. The ramp must have flat landings between the runs. (ADA 405.6)

**Width of at least 36 inches**

The clear width between handrails must be a minimum of 36 inches. (ADA 405.5)

**Landings of at least 60 inches long**

The flat surfaces at the top and bottom of ramp, and the landings between ramp runs, must be at least 60 inches long. (ADA 405.7)

- If a doorway is located next to a ramp landing, the required maneuvering clearance may overlap the required landing area.
- Landings must prevent the accumulation of water.
- The surface must be non-skid, stable, firm and slip resistant. (ADA 302.1)

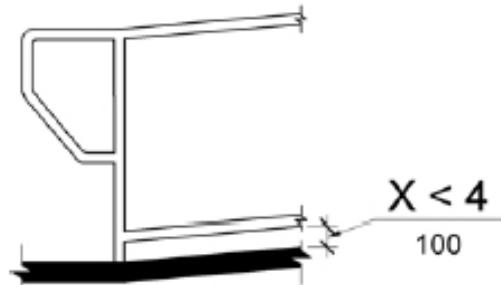
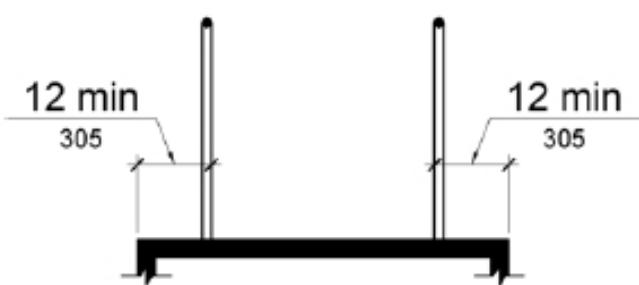
**Edge Protection**

Must be on each side of ramp runs and at each side of ramp landings. (ADA 405.9.1)

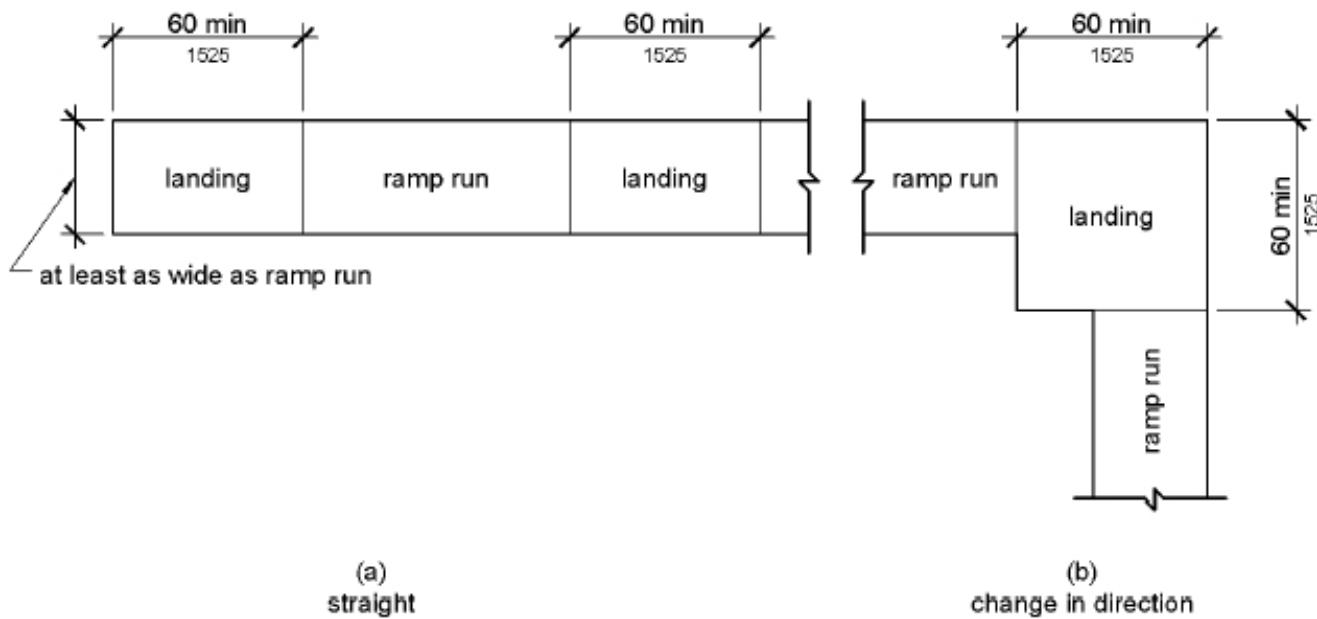
Choose one edge protection option:

- A curb or barrier with less than 4 inches between the barrier and the ramp's floor.
- The ramp's floor extends 12 inches beyond the inside face of the handrail.
- Edge protection must be used on landings too.

*\*A slope exception can be made for existing structures with space limitations, but only for a rise of 6 inches or less. Steeper than 1:10 but not steeper than 1:8 for maximum 3 inch rise. Steeper than 1:12 but not steeper than 1:10 for maximum 6 inch rise. A slope steeper than 1:8 is prohibited.*



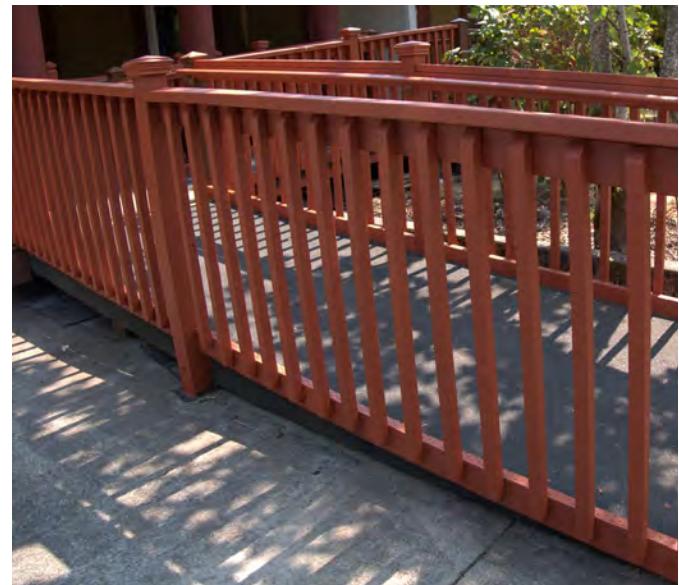
ADA 405.9.1: Choose one edge protection option, either extended ramp floor, or curb/barrier less than four inches from the ramp floor.



ADA 405.7: Ramp landings must be **60 inches** long. When there is a change in direction, landing must be at least **60 inches by 60 inches** to be able to maneuver the turn.



Edge protection barrier from guardrails to ramp floor.  
Edge protection is flush to the ground, meeting the ADA requirements.

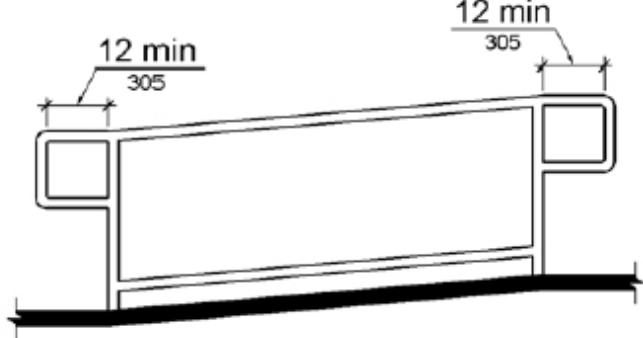


Side of a ramp showing a steady rise in slope.

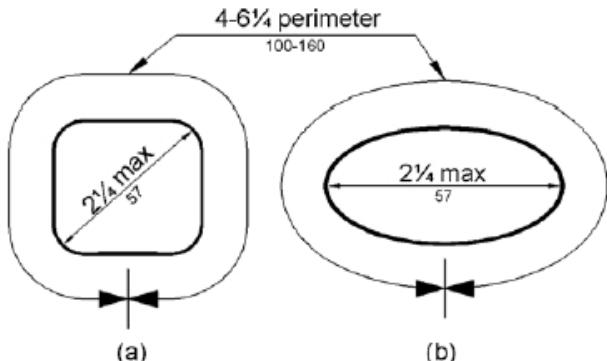


## Handrail Checklist

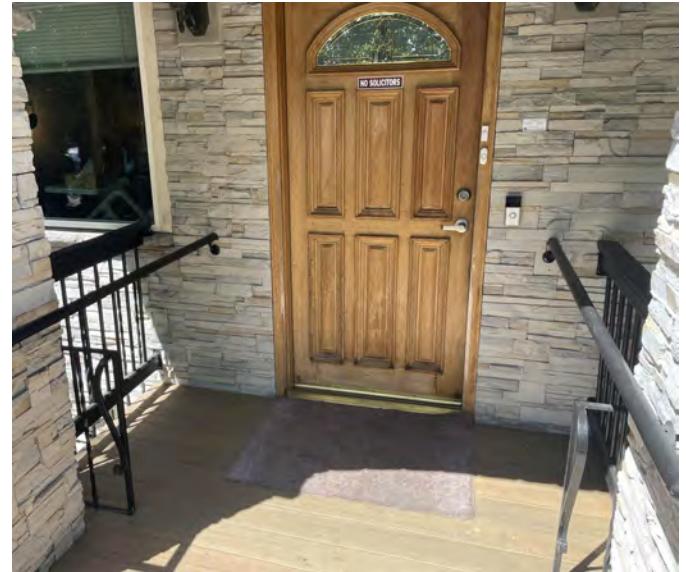
- Required for rise of 6 inches or greater**
- Height of gripping surface must be between 34 and 38 inches above ramp floor**
  - Handrails must be at a consistent height above ramp floor. (ADA 505.4)
- At least 1 and 1/2 inches between handrail and adjacent surfaces (ADA 505.5)**
- Handrail gripping surfaces must be continuous along the length of the ramp runs**
  - There must not be obstacles along the tops or sides.
  - Along the bottom, there must not be obstacles for more than 20 percent of the length. (ADA 505.6)
  - The surface of the handrail and the surfaces next to them must not have sharp or rough elements.
  - The handrail must have rounded edges. (ADA 505.8 )
- Must be stable**
  - Handrails cannot rotate within their fittings. (ADA 505.9)
- Must be the correct width**
  - Circular cross section: the outside diameter must be 1 1/4–2 inches. (ADA 505.7.1)
  - Non-circular cross section: the outside perimeter dimension will be 4–6 1/4 inches.
  - The cross-section dimension will be up to 2 1/4 inches. (ADA 505.7.2)
- Extensions must be at the top and bottom of the ramp runs**
  - Handrails must extend horizontally above the landing for at least 12 inches on both ends. (ADA 505.10)
  - Each extension will return to a wall, guard or the landing surface.
    - Or each extension will be continuous to the handrail of the ramp next to it.



ADA 505.10: Handrail extend 12 inches.



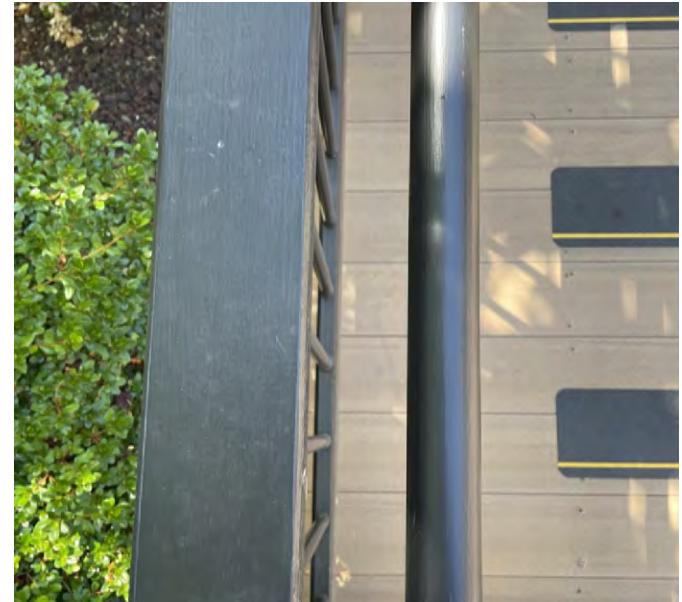
ADA 505.7: Non-circular and circular cross section measurements.



Handrails are at a consistent height, even when they reach the porch column barrier. Both ramp landing and space in front of door are large enough to maneuver a wheelchair.



The handrail is screwed into its fitting, keeping it stable. Fittings located below handrail.



Handrails must be smooth with rounded edges along the whole length. There must be clearance to hold onto the handrail.

# Pool Barrier or Fencing

- A swimming pool must have a safety barrier or fence surrounding it that is at least **4 feet** in height.
- No more than **2 inches** of clearance can be between the ground and bottom of the barrier.
- Openings in the barrier must be less than **4 inches**.
- The pedestrian access gate is the entrance in the barrier people can walk through.
  - The gate must open outward, away from the pool.
  - The gate must be self-closing and have a self-latching device.
- The wall of the home itself may serve as the fourth side of the barrier when it is next to the pool.
  - Any doorways through the wall must have self-closing and self-latching devices.
  - For doors leading out to the pool, a door alarm can be installed to alert providers and caregivers of residents exiting.

## [Safety Barrier Guidelines for Residential Pools](#)

## [Swimming Pool Projects](#)

[link.multco.us/portland.pools](http://link.multco.us/portland.pools)



Covered pool with fencing.



Pool fencing gate hardware.

# Safety

- Residents must not be able to access swimming pools, hot tubs, spas, saunas or water features unsupervised.  
**(MCAR 023-100-160)**
- Operators must know any warnings for hot tub or sauna use for resident medications, and must inform other providers and residents when medication warnings exist.  
**(MCAR 023-080-125)**
- Spas, jacuzzis and hot tubs must be properly grounded and GFCI protected.
- Electrical, plumbing and mechanical work requires a permit.

## [Hot Tubs, Ponds, Swimming Pools, and Water Features](#)

[link.multco.us/portland.hot.tub](http://link.multco.us/portland.hot.tub)

## Definitions



### **Self-closing:**

The hinges will close the gate on its own when someone lets go of it.

### **Self-latching:**

The latch will fall into place on its own after the gate closes.

# ADA Accessible Pool Entry



## ADA 242.2 Swimming Pools

- There must be two accessible means of entry for swimming pools.
- One means of entry must be a pool lift or sloped entry.

## ADA 1009 Pools and Spas

**Pool lift:** A mechanized seat that can lift someone in and out of a pool.

- There are a variety of seat types and weight capacities. (1009.2)

**Sloped entry:** One end of the pool must have a depth of **24–30 inches**.

- This entryway should also include a landing and handrails. 1009.3)

**Transfer wall:** A wall with one or two grab bars.

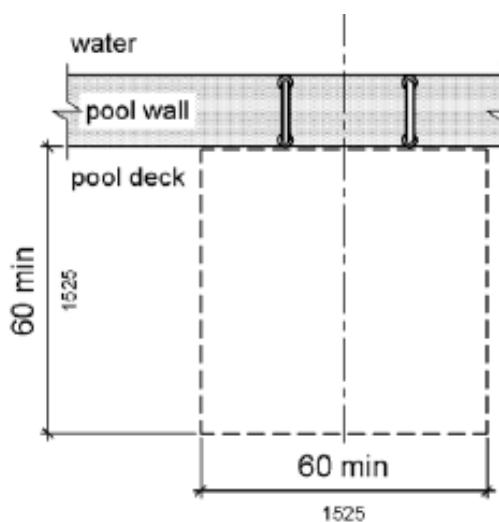
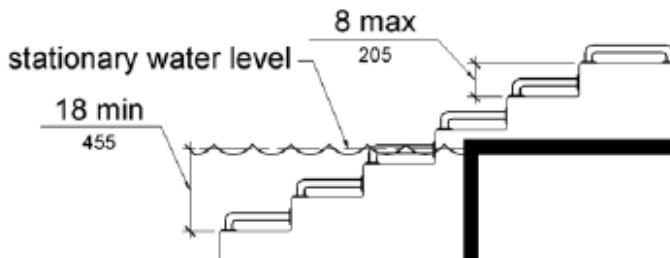
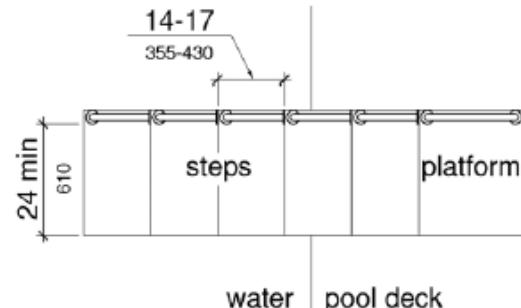
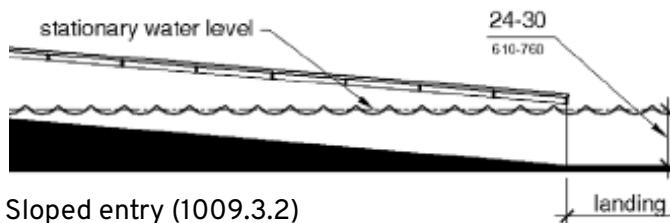
- This entryway is centered on the pool deck. (1009.4)

**Transfer system:** A transfer platform and a series of transfer steps that go into the water.

- At the platform, a resident leaves their mobility device and gets into the pool with the steps. (1009.5)

**Pool stairs:** steps with handrails leading out to pool deck.

- These help the resident get into a standing position when leaving the pool. (1009.6)





## Quick Links

Start or stop water service:

- [Portland Start, Stop, or Transfer your Sewer, Stormwater, Water Service](#)  
<link.multco.us/portland.water.service>
- [Gresham Utilities](#)  
<link.multco.us/gresham.water.service>
- [Wood Village Utility Services](#)  
<link.multco.us/wood.village.water>
- [Troutdale Start or Stop Water and Sewer Service](#)  
<link.multco.us/troutdale.water>
- [Fairview Start/Stop Utility Services](#)  
<link.multco.us/fairview.water>



Compost and garbage containers.

## Garbage Service

- If the operator owns the home, they are responsible for setting up and paying for garbage service.
- Garbage must be stored in readily cleanable, rodent-proof, covered containers. Garbage must be taken out of the home at least once a week.  
(MCAR 023-100-220)

## Water Supply

- Homes must use a public water supply if available.
- If a non-municipal (private) water source is used, such as a well, the water must be tested annually.  
(MCARS 023-100-205)

## Septic Tanks and Waste

- Septic tanks or other non-municipal sewage disposal systems must be in good working order.  
(MCARS 023-100-210)
- Infectious waste must be disposed of in compliance with the rules of the [Department of Environmental Quality](#)  
<link.multco.us/deq.waste>  
(MCARS 023-100-223)



## Quick Links

Start or stop garbage and recycling service:

- [Portland Garbage, Recycling & Compost](#)  
<link.multco.us/portland.garbage>
- [Gresham Garbage and Recycling](#)  
<link.multco.us/gresham.garbage>
- [Troutdale Recycling & Solid Waste](#)  
<link.multco.us/troutdale.garbage>
- [Fairview Recycling & Solid Waste](#)  
<link.multco.us/fairview.garbage>
- [Wood Village Garbage & Recycling](#)  
<link.multco.us/woodvillage.garbage>

# Building Changes and Remodeling

The Oregon Residential Specialty Code applies to all new houses being built in the state of Oregon. This code also applies to repairs, additions and alterations. It's important to be familiar with this code when you are making building changes and remodeling.

[2023 Oregon Residential Specialty Code](https://codes.iccsafe.org/content/ORRC2023P1)  
[codes.iccsafe.org/content/ORRC2023P1](https://codes.iccsafe.org/content/ORRC2023P1)

## Permits

Permits are required to construct, alter, repair or change the adult care home or other structures on the property. This includes changes that increase the occupancy number in the home.

- This applies to all changes, including electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing systems.

### Before the home is licensed by the ACHP:

All changes to the home must be completed with permits. All permits must be finalized before the ACHP will issue an adult care home license.

- The ACHP will not inspect a prospective home until all permits are finalized.

### After the home is licensed by the ACHP:

To make any permitted changes to the structure of the home, the ACHP must be informed 15 days in advance.

- The revised floor plan must be submitted to the ACHP before remodeling work can begin.  
**(MCAR 023-100-175)**
- Work to the home cannot begin until the city issues the appropriate building permit.
- The homeowner or the licensed contractor doing the work will be responsible for obtaining any necessary permits.
- **Work can only be done by the permit holder.**



## Quick Links

[Portland: Do You Need A Permit?](https://portland.gov/ppd/do-you-need-permit)  
[portland.gov/ppd/do-you-need-permit](https://portland.gov/ppd/do-you-need-permit)

[Gresham Building Permits & Inspections](https://greshamoregon.gov/Building-and-Permits)  
[greshamoregon.gov/Building-and-Permits](https://greshamoregon.gov/Building-and-Permits)

[Troutdale Applications & Forms](https://tlink.multco.us/troutdale.forms)  
[tlink.multco.us/troutdale.forms](https://tlink.multco.us/troutdale.forms)

[Wood Village Building Permits & Inspections](https://link.multco.us/woodvillage.permits)  
[link.multco.us/woodvillage.permits](https://link.multco.us/woodvillage.permits)

[Fairview Building Permits](https://fairvieworegon.gov/305/Forms)  
[fairvieworegon.gov/305/Forms](https://fairvieworegon.gov/305/Forms)

# Work Inspections

- All work being done is subject to inspection.
- Multiple inspections may be required for each phase of the project.
- The permit holder is responsible for requesting all inspections.
- Work must remain accessible and exposed for inspection purposes.
- The permit holder must remove or replace any material required for proper inspection.

## [10.05.170 Inspections \(Gresham\)](#)

[link.multco.us/gresham.code](http://link.multco.us/gresham.code)

- **Gresham also provides their building services to other areas within East Multnomah County.**
  - This includes Fairview, Wood Village and Troutdale.
    - Permit applications and inspection requests are processed through the home's city.
    - Gresham provides the building inspection and plan review services needed.



Thank you to all adult care home operators who allowed the ACHP to photograph their home for this guide!

# City and State Codes

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## [Portland Title 29 Property Maintenance Regulations](#)

[portland.gov/code/29](#)

## [Gresham Chapter 10 Buildings and Housing](#)

[link.multco.us/gresham.code](#)

## [State of Oregon Building Codes](#)

[link.multco.us/oregon.codes](#)

## [Wood Village Title 15-Buildings & Construction](#)

[link.multco.us/woodvillage.codes](#)

## [Fairview Municipal Code: Title 15-Buildings & Construction](#)

[link.multco.us/fairview.codes](#)

## [Troutdale Building Division](#)

[link.multco.us/troutdale.building](#)

# Other Sources

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## [Appendix R Oregon Fire Code](#)

[link.multco.us/oregon.fire.code](#)

## [2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design](#)

[ada.gov/law-and-regs/design-standards](#)

## [Free Guide From Home Depot on the National Electrical Code, NFPA 70](#)

[link.multco.us/electrical.code](#)

## [2023 Oregon Residential Specialty Code](#)

[codes.iccsafe.org/content/ORRC2023P1](#)

## [Multnomah County Administrative Rules \(MCAR\)](#)

[link.multco.us/MCAR](#)

# Adult Care Home Program

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Oregon is a pioneer of the adult care home model for Medicaid. In May 1986, the Multnomah Board of County Commissioners established the Adult Care Home Program to license and inspect adult care homes. Operators run homes independently as small businesses. Care homes accept both Medicaid and private pay residents.

In 1986 there were fewer than 100 licensed homes in Multnomah County. Today that number has grown to more than 400, with 1985 beds available. The majority of homes

serve older adults and people with physical disabilities. A small number of homes serve people with behavioral health needs. In January 2026 the ACHP stopped licensing adult care homes that serve people with developmental disabilities.

The Adult Care Home Program provides three main services:

- Licensing operators and inspecting homes to ensure high quality care and safety.
- Providing education for adult care home operators and caregivers.
- Connecting community members to adult care homes and placing residents.

The ACHP must “meet or exceed” the state of Oregon’s regulations. The program also provides unique services, including:

- One-on-one coaching for new operators.
- Continued in-person licensing support visits with all operators.
- Placement support for community members, and assisting with resident placements.

The Adult Care Home Program is part of the Multnomah County Aging, Disability and Veterans Services Division.





**Multnomah  
County**

## Adult Care Home Program

PHONE	503-988-3000
FAX	503-988-5722
EMAIL	<a href="mailto:advsd.adult.carehomeprogram@multco.us">advsd.adult.carehomeprogram@multco.us</a>
ADDRESS.	600 NE 8th St. Suite 100 Gresham, OR 97030
WEBSITE	<a href="http://multco.us/adult-care-home-information">multco.us/adult-care-home-information</a>