

Residential Board and Care Facilities

2006 Life Safety Code Guidelines

PLEASE NOTE: THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS PROVIDED FOR REFERENCE PURPOSES ONLY AND DOES NOT INCLUDE ALL APPLICABLE REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE 2006 LIFE SAFETY CODE AS ADOPTED BY THE STATE OF TEXAS. IT SHOULD NOT BE RELIED ON FOR CODE COMPLIANCE. THE MCFMO RECOMMENDS THAT ALL FACILITIES BE PROFESSIONALLY DESIGNED AND CONSTRUCTED.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

1. When does a home change from a Residential occupancy to Residential Board and Care (RBC) occupancy?

When used for lodging and boarding of four or more residents, not related to the owners or operators, for providing personal, (non-medical) care services. For Medical Care the facility is classified as a health care occupancy. NFPA 101-3.3.168.12

2. What are the different classes of Residential Board and Care (RBC) Facilities?

Small – Not more than 16 residents
Large - 16 + residents

3. What type of smoke / fire alarms does an RBC facility need?

An automatic fire alarm system with manual pull station on each floor will be provided in new RBC facilities and homes converting from residential to RBC occupancy. NFPA 101-32.2.3.4.1 – 2

4. When is a fire sprinkler system required in RBC occupancy?

All new RBC facilities are required to have a fire sprinkler system. Small (16 or less) RBC facilities may have a residential style sprinkler system.

An existing single family residential home converting to a RBC serving 8 or fewer residents **may** be exempt when all occupants have the ability as a group to move reliably to safety within 3 minutes. NFPA 101-32.2.3.5

Existing RBC occupancies serving 8 or fewer residents **may also** be exempt when all occupants have the ability as a group to move reliably to safety within 3 minutes.

5. What kind of locks can be put on the exterior doors? Does each room need a window?

No door may be locked as to prevent escape. (No double keyed locks) In addition, doors must be self or automatic closing in RBC facilities without a fire sprinkler system. All sleeping rooms in new and existing RBC facilities must have a secondary means of escape. If the RBC facility is not protected by a fire sprinkler system, all living areas must also have a second means of escape. NFPA 101 32.2.2

Residential Board and Care Summary of Classification and Fire Protection Requirements

Existing Facilities

# of Residents	Occupancy Type	Smoke / Fire Alarms	Sprinkler System
1 to 3	Residential	Smoke Detectors	Recommended
4 to 16	Small RBC	Fire Alarm System	Required*
16 or more	Large RBC	Fire Alarm System	Required

New Facilities or Conversions from Residential to Board & Care

# of Residents	Occupancy Type	Smoke / Fire Alarms	Sprinkler System
1 to 3	Residential	Interconnected Detectors	Recommended
4 to 16	Small RBC	Fire Alarm System	Required *
16 or more	Large RBC	Fire Alarm System	Required

* Fire Sprinkler system may not be required if there are 8 or less residents and all have ability to move as a group to safety within 3 minutes

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DEPENDENT ON THE SIZE AND SCOPE OF THE PROJECT, STATE LAW MAY REQUIRE THAT IT BE DESIGNED BY A LICENSED DESIGN PROFESSIONAL.

For more information contact the Texas Board of Professional Engineers or go to their website.

http://www.tbpe.state.tx.us/eng_req.htm

For a recent State Fire Marshal Bulletin on RBC occupancies.

<http://www.tdi.state.tx.us/fire/documents/fmcomm4607.pdf>

For Questions about the MCFMO Inspection Process call (936) 538-8288.

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