



DDSN Residential Settings Fire and Health Inspection Protocol

July 1, 2024

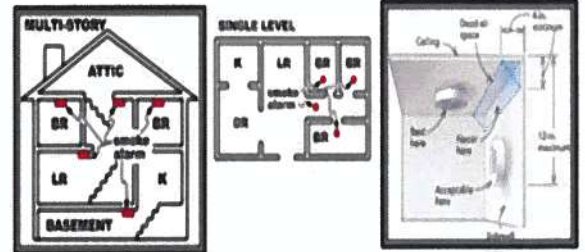


The SC Office of State Fire Marshal will perform inspections of SCDDSN Licensed Residential Services locations upon request of DDSN or its approved third party contracted providers. The scope of the inspection will be limited to the following items:

1. SCDDSN Licensed residential settings shall meet the South Carolina Building and Fire Codes adopted and enforced by the local Building and Fire Code Officials in accordance with South Carolina Code of Laws Section 6-9. A Certificate of Occupancy (CO) or Certificate of Completion (CC) from the local officials is required prior to the initial licensing inspection conducted by the SC Office of State Fire Marshal. For annual inspections, residential settings shall comply with the requirements of the currently adopted South Carolina Fire Code.
2. The setting must be designed and constructed with the intent to be used as a dwelling (home) per applicable statutes, regulations and state adopted building codes.
3. The setting shall have approved address numbers placed in a position that is plainly legible and visible from the street. When numbers placed on the home are not visible from the street, numbers may be required to be placed on a mailbox or address sign that is visible from the street.
 - a. Address numbers shall be visible from either direction of approach.
 - b. Address number shall be a minimum of 3 inches high with a minimum stroke width of 0.5 inch and shall contrast with their background.



4. Each residential setting shall maintain the means of egress as provided at the time of original construction.
 - a. Hallways, doorways, and walkways must be maintained free of obstructions that could impair its use.
 - b. Opening the door must take no more than 3 separate actions.
 - c. Locks that require keys, tools, or special knowledge to open from the inside of the setting are not allowed.
 - d. Security latches, chains, and all other locks must be installed no more than 48" from the floor.
5. Listed smoke alarms shall be installed and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's installation instructions and in the following locations:
 - a. On the ceiling or wall outside of each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of bedrooms; and
 - b. In each room used for sleeping purposes; and
 - c. In each habitable story within a dwelling.



6. Listed smoke alarms shall be powered from one of the following:
 - a. the electrical system of the home as the primary power source and a battery as a secondary power source.
 - b. a maintenance free, tamper resistant, battery rated for a 10-year life,
 - c. replaceable batteries when the alarm is part of a listed, wireless interconnected smoke alarm system.

A "Listed Smoke Alarm" has been tested to ensure it meets minimum industry standards. "Listed" alarms will have either the UL or ETL mark on them. To learn more about where to install smoke alarms, watch this video: <https://youtu.be/8UNzcS02l8w?si=zLrTnf4XLsV6QHZj>



7. At least one portable fire extinguisher with a minimum classification of 2A:10BC shall be located near cooking areas of the home.
 - a. The fire extinguisher should be located in a permanent location, along a path of travel towards an exit, and not so near the stove that you would not be able to reach it if the stove top is on fire.



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South Carolina
Department of Disabilities
and Special Needs

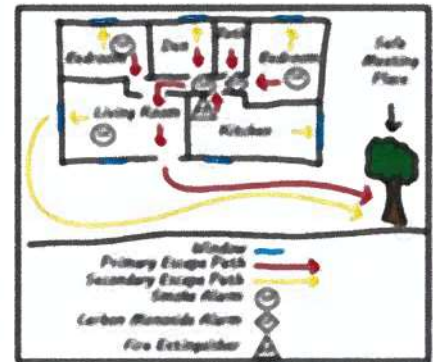
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- b. The fire extinguisher must be visually inspected at least every 3 months to verify that it is in its permanent location and that the needle is "in the green."
- c. The fire extinguisher must be replaced or serviced by a SC Licensed Fire Equipment Dealer at least each 6 years from the manufactured date, and anytime the needle is found to be not "in the green."

The correct size, 2A:10BC, is larger than the 10BC and 1A:10BC fire extinguishers and it typically has a flexible hose and nozzle which requires 2 hands to operate. You can operate the fire extinguisher by remembering the acronym PASS- Pull, Aim, Squeeze and Sweep. To watch a video on how to operate a fire extinguisher, click here:
<https://youtu.be/GVBamXXVD30?si=jv3rvU4li-WAmLVC>

8. A fire escape plan consisting of a sketch of the floor plan of the home that shows 2 ways out of each bedroom and a safe meeting place outside, must be developed. The plan must be posted in the home where it can easily be viewed.

- Plan two ways out of every room, including windows as a method of escape. Discuss closing a bedroom door and going out of the window to avoid passing through the smoke.
- Identify a meeting place outside of the home. Discuss not going back into the home to look for other people, valuables, or pets.
- Mark the locations of smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, and fire extinguisher.



9. A fire escape drill shall be conducted to include all occupants within 24 hours of a new admission to the home and at least every 3 months thereafter. The fire drill must practice the immediate evacuation of the home when a smoke alarm sounds. The occupants should meet at the designated meeting space. The staff and the home's occupants should discuss how to avoid passing through smoke by closing a bedroom door and using a window to evacuate. The date, time, number of occupants evacuated, and an evaluation of the drill must be documented.
10. Documentation must be maintained until the next fire inspection and as required by SCDDSN. If the home has fuel-fired appliances, a fireplace, wood stove, or an attached garage, then listed carbon monoxide alarms shall be installed and maintained outside of each separate sleeping area and on each level of the home. If a bedroom contains a source of carbon monoxide, then a listed carbon monoxide alarm must be installed in that bedroom also.

Carbon Monoxide Alarms are required when the home contains a source of carbon monoxide, such as a fireplace, wood stove, fuel-fired (gas) appliances, or an attached garage.



11. All heating appliances and devices must be listed and installed per the manufacturer's instructions.
 - a. Electric space heaters must be equipped with a tip-over safety switch, be plugged directly into an electrical outlet, and be positioned at least 3 feet away from combustible objects and materials on all sides.
 - b. Fireplaces shall be equipped with screens, partitions, or other means to contain embers and protect children from burns.
 - c. Portable unvented fuel-fired heating equipment shall be prohibited in all foster homes.



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12. Each bedroom must have an operable door that closes to provides compartmentation that will protect occupants from smoke and heat in case of a fire event. Side hinged, swinging doors must latch. Barn doors, pocket doors or similar doors that do not latch must close tightly to prevent the passage of smoke around the edges. All bedrooms below the fourth story shall have at least one window or door that opens from the inside and leads directly outside. This window or door must be accessible and available for immediate use for emergency escape and rescue and must provide a clear opening space of at least 24 inches or greater in height, 20 inches or greater in width, and provide at least 5.0 square feet when on the first floor or 5.7 square feet when on the second floor or higher.

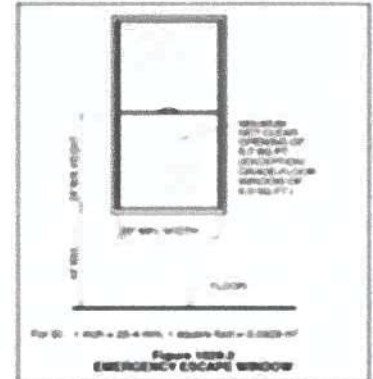
Measure the clear opening width of the space available to crawl through when the window is fully opened. Measure the clear opening height of the space available to crawl through when the window is fully opened.

_____ inches (width) X _____ inches (height) = Sq Ft

Window must provide:

- 5.0 ft² (of opening space on grade level.
- 5.7 ft² of opening space otherwise.

Or The home must have interconnected smoke alarms.



Exception: If the window does not meet the minimum size requirements described above, the window can still qualify as an emergency escape window provided that it opens to provide a large enough space for a typical adult to escape and the home has interconnected smoke alarms in all of the required spaces.

13. The home shall be free of dangers that constitute an obvious fire hazard, such as faulty electrical cords, overloaded electrical outlets, or an excessive accumulation of combustible materials, flammable liquids, or similar hazards.
14. All fire protection systems present must be maintained, to include fire alarm panels, sprinkler systems, emergency lifts, and suppression hoods. The operating agency will need to remove equipment that is no longer required or in use. Remaining equipment must be operable.

A fire protection sprinkler system installed in accordance with the requirements of either the SC Residential Code, NFPA 13D, NFPA 13R, or NFPA 13 is required for homes licensed after August 23, 2013.

15. The following health and sanitation requirements will be verified.
- a. The temperature of the potable hot water shall be between 100°F and 120°F.
 - b. If food is stored and prepared on site, refrigerators must have a thermometer, and the temperature must be below 45°F. Freezers must maintain a temperature below 32°F.
 - c. No evidence of pest/rodent infestation.



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Fire Code Requirements Based on Occupancy Type

The Classification for a residential setting is SC Fire Code, Chapter 2.

Settings licensed by SCDDSN and operated by its contracted providers may be considered Congregate Living Facilities.

Congregate Living Facility	A building or part thereof that contains sleeping units where residents share bathroom and/or kitchen facilities. Settings providing Residential Habilitation for two or more participants in the home may be considered a Congregate Living Facility.
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Code requirements are based on the occupancy type as defined in SC Fire Code Chapter 2, and described below:

Group R-3 – Five or Fewer persons - Occupants Primarily Permanent in Nature	Care facilities within a dwelling. Care facilities for five or fewer persons receiving care that are within a single-family dwelling are permitted to comply with the <i>International Residential Code</i> provided an <i>automatic sprinkler system</i> is installed in accordance with Section 903.3.1.3 or Section P2904 of the <i>International Residential Code</i> .
Group R-3 Minimum Requirements <i>(Not to be construed as an all-inclusive list)</i>	
SCRC R319 - Premise identification	
SCRC P2904 - Automatic Fire Sprinkler System – Required in South Carolina since 08/23/13	
SCRC R310 - Emergency Escape and Rescue openings	
SCRC R314 - Interconnected Smoke Alarms	
SCRC R315 - Carbon Monoxide Alarms	
SCRC R311 - Egress Door (readily openable from the inside without the use of key, special knowledge or effort)	
SCRC M1502 - Dryer Exhaust	
SCRC M1503 - Range Hood	
South Carolina Code of Laws §§40-3-290 or §§40-22-280 requires a design professional.	