NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
DIVISION OF CODES AND STANDARDS
BUREAU OF HOUSING INSPECTION

TECHNICAL BULLETIN NO. 4

SUBJECT: Protection of Interior Exits

DATE: March 27, 2019
(supersedes bulletin dated June 2, 2004)

GOVERNING CODE: State of New Jersey Uniform Fire Code

CODE REFERENCE: N.J.A.C. 5:70-4.13

This Bulletin addresses the protection of interior exits including stairways, to provide a protected path of travel for all occupants to egress the building safely in case of fire emergencies. There are a few options or a combination of options that provide safety for the occupants.

One of the options is to provide two (2) independent means of egress for all occupants. The most effective way of accomplishing this is by providing, in addition to the interior stairway, a secondary exit or a fire escape directly accessible from within the dwelling unit or sleeping room. When there are two (2) interior exits that can be accessed from the same hallway, the exits must be separated by a fire- resistive rated assembly to prevent the spread of fire and smoke from one stair to the other. In some cases, emergency escape and rescue windows from within the dwelling units can also be used as the second independent means of egress in case of fire emergency.

Another option that provides protection for the occupants exiting the building is fire rated exit enclosures. This protection can be accomplished by separating and enclosing the exit in a fire rated assembly, which includes protecting the window and door openings. The door openings will be equipped with listed door closing devices.

Automatic fire sprinkler systems can also be a very effective option in providing for safe exiting of occupants. Minimum requirements include a fire sprinkler system provided in all common areas used for exiting and at least one sprinkler head within each dwelling unit centered above the entrance door.

Because no building is fire proof and the occupants have a limited time to exit the building, the travel distance to exit the building is limited.

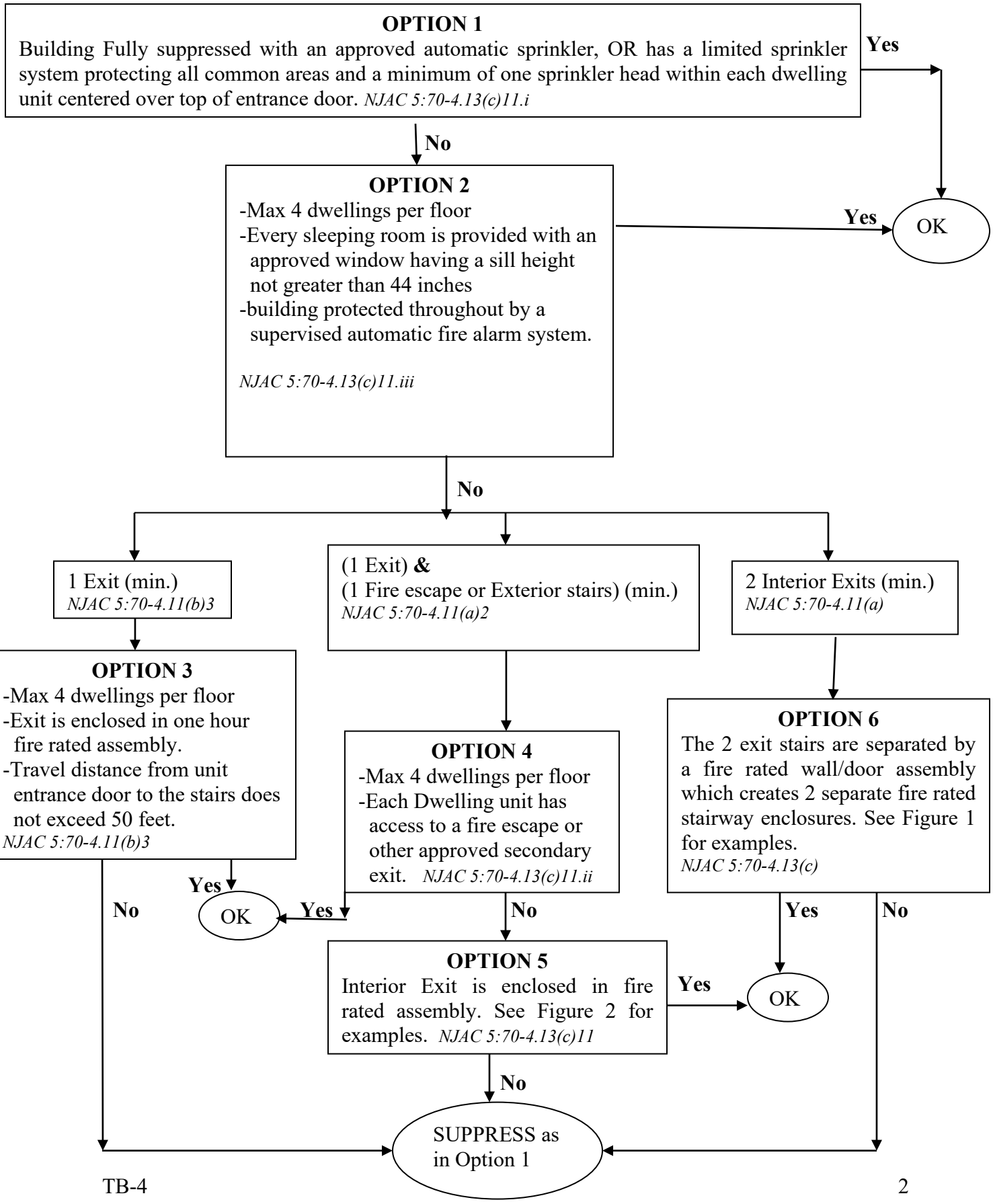
When referencing N.J.A.C. 5:70-4.13 of the Uniform Fire Code for inspections involving the protection of interior exits including interior stairways and corridors, Bureau of Housing Inspection staff will use the attached procedures and outlines, which are in chart form and are supplemented by sketches and notes.

If the existing construction does not comply, the State or SLCHIP inspectors will cite violations referencing N.J.A.C. 5:70-4.13. However, if the owner applies any of the abatement options from the guidelines described above, inspectors will not cite violations referencing N.J.A.C. 5:70-4.13, as the existing construction is considered to be in compliance. In this case the owner will sign the "Certification in Lieu of Affidavit" on page 7, and the violation will be considered abated upon the reinspection if an option was followed correctly.

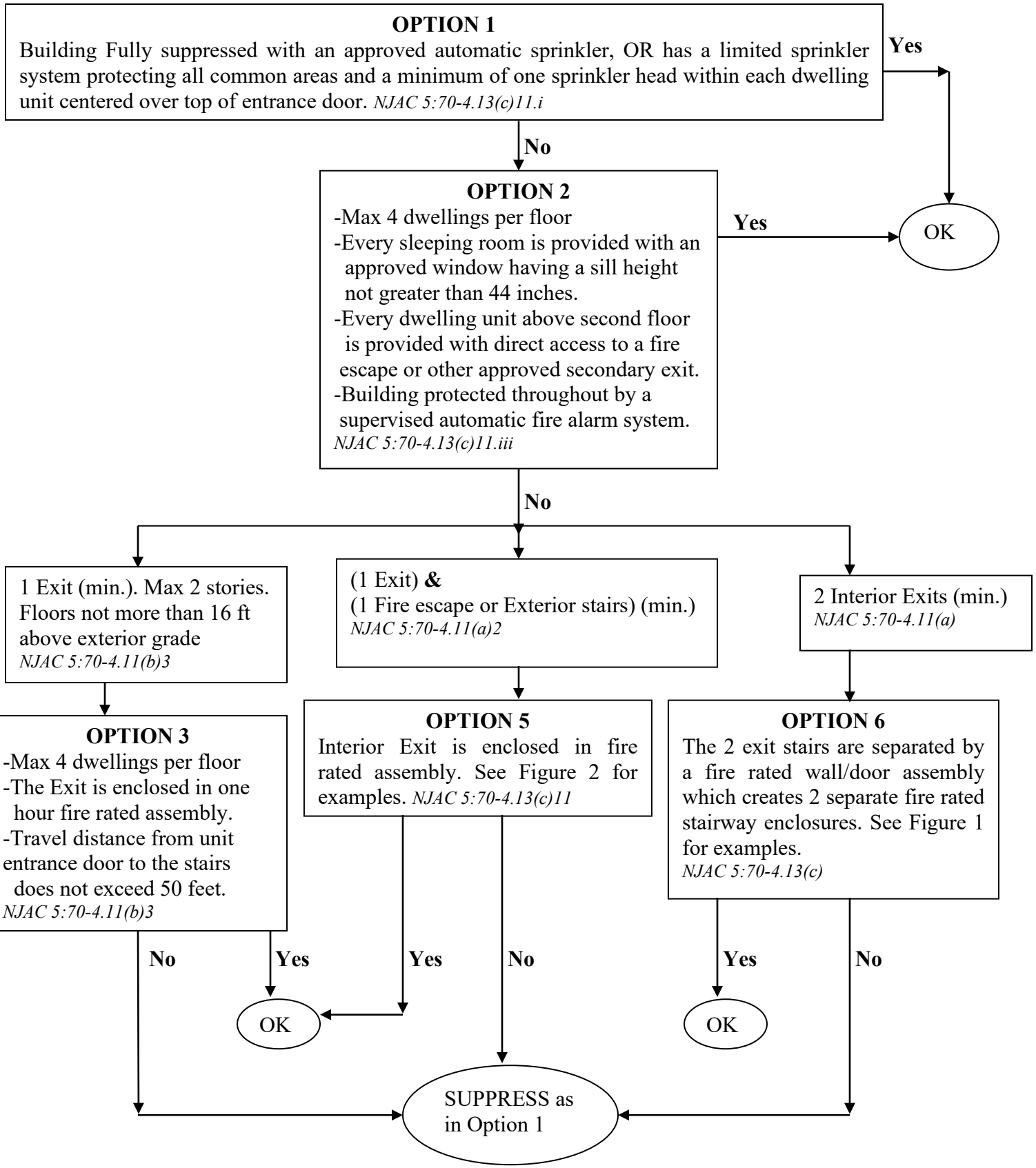
If you have questions, please contact the Bureau at 609-633-6227 or email BHIInspections@dca.nj.gov.

FAYEZ FANIK, PE
Supervisor of Enforcement, Inspections
Bureau of Housing Inspection

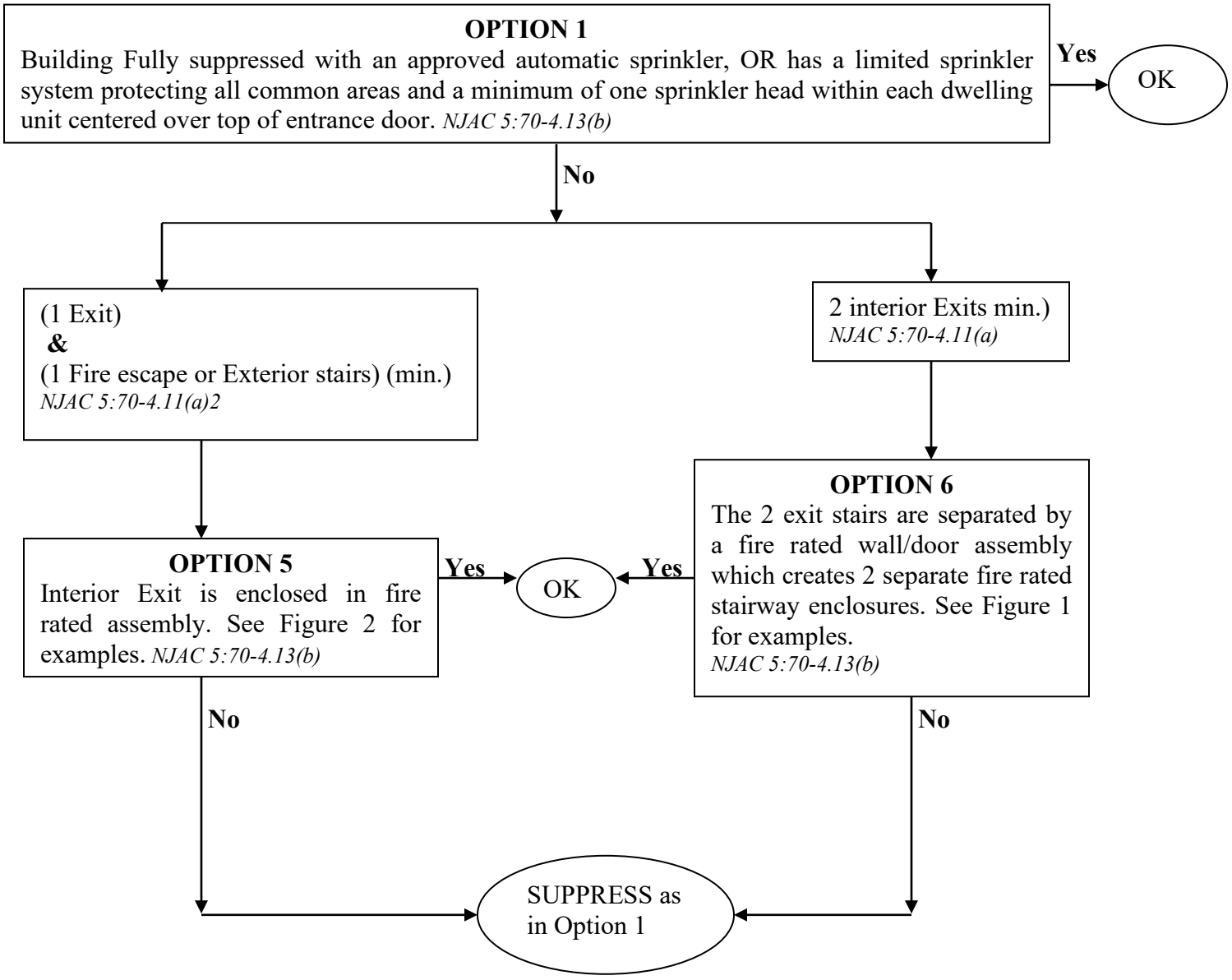
Multifamily dwellings, Use Group R-2
2 connecting floor levels



Multifamily dwellings, Use Group R-2
3 connecting floor levels



Multifamily dwellings, Use Group R-2
4 to 6 connecting floor levels



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
DIVISION OF CODES AND STANDARDS
LICENSING AND INSPECTION ELEMENT
BUREAU OF HOUSING INSPECTION

STATE OF NEW JERSEY)
SS.
COUNTY OF_____) Registration No.: _____

CERTIFICATION IN LIEU OF AFFIDAVIT

I, _____ being 18 years of age or older, do solemnly certify and say:
(Signer of Certification)

1. I own or exercise control over the premises located at_____,
(Address of Premises)

in the Municipality of _____, County of_____,
in the State of New Jersey.

2. The above premises is currently being occupied as a Multiple Dwelling as defined in Section 3 of the New Jersey Hotel and Multiple Dwelling Law.

3. The building has _____connecting floor levels.

4. I have read and understand the requirements of the March 27, 2019 dated Bureau of Housing Inspection "Protection of Interior Exits" memorandum.

I certify that the above building's configuration will qualify it for compliance with option No. ____ as outlined in the March 27, 2019 dated Bureau of Housing Inspection "Protection of Interior Exits" memorandum, and that I will acquire the necessary construction permits and final approvals (if required) from the local construction official to execute this work.

I certify that the forgoing statements made by me are true. I am aware that, if any of the foregoing statements made by me are willfully false, I am subject to punishment per N.J.S.A. 55:13A-19.

_____
Signature of Certifier

_____
Printed Name of Certifier and Title

_____
Date

_____
Address of Certifier

NOTE: The above Certification must be fully completed, signed, and dated.

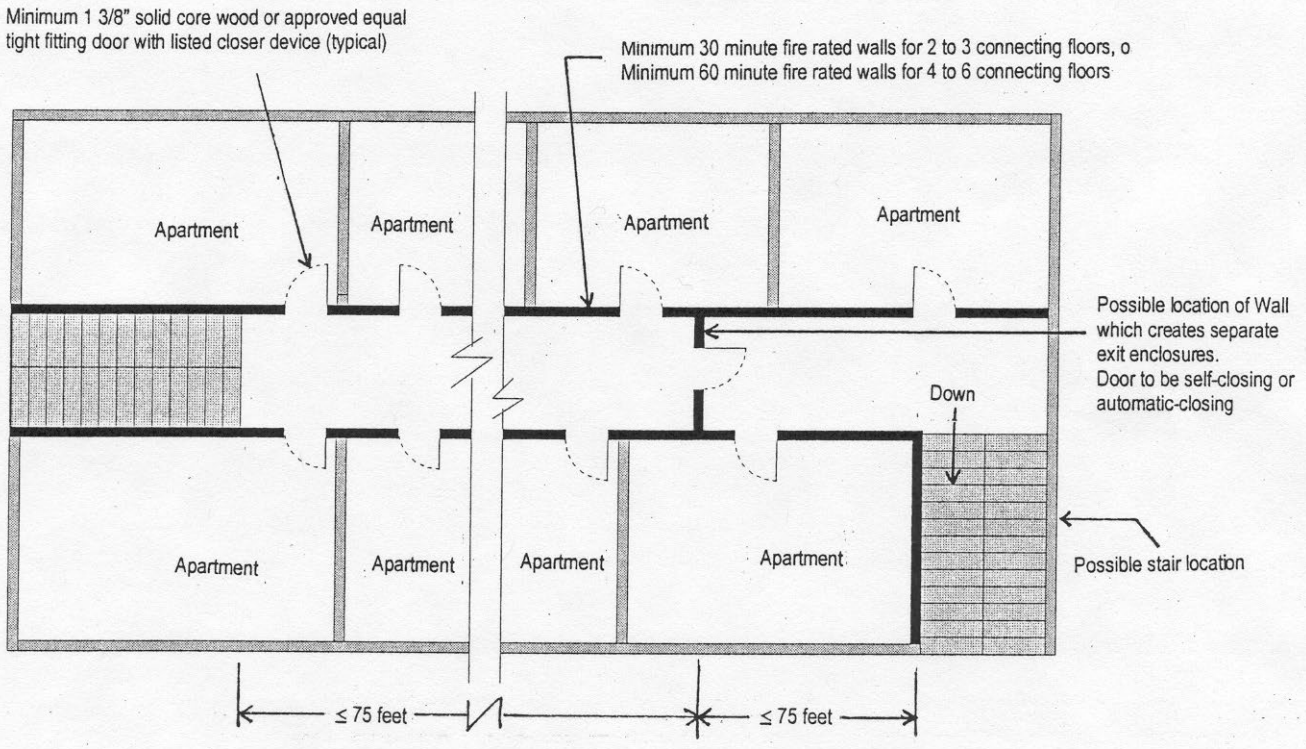


FIGURE 1. Two interior exits.

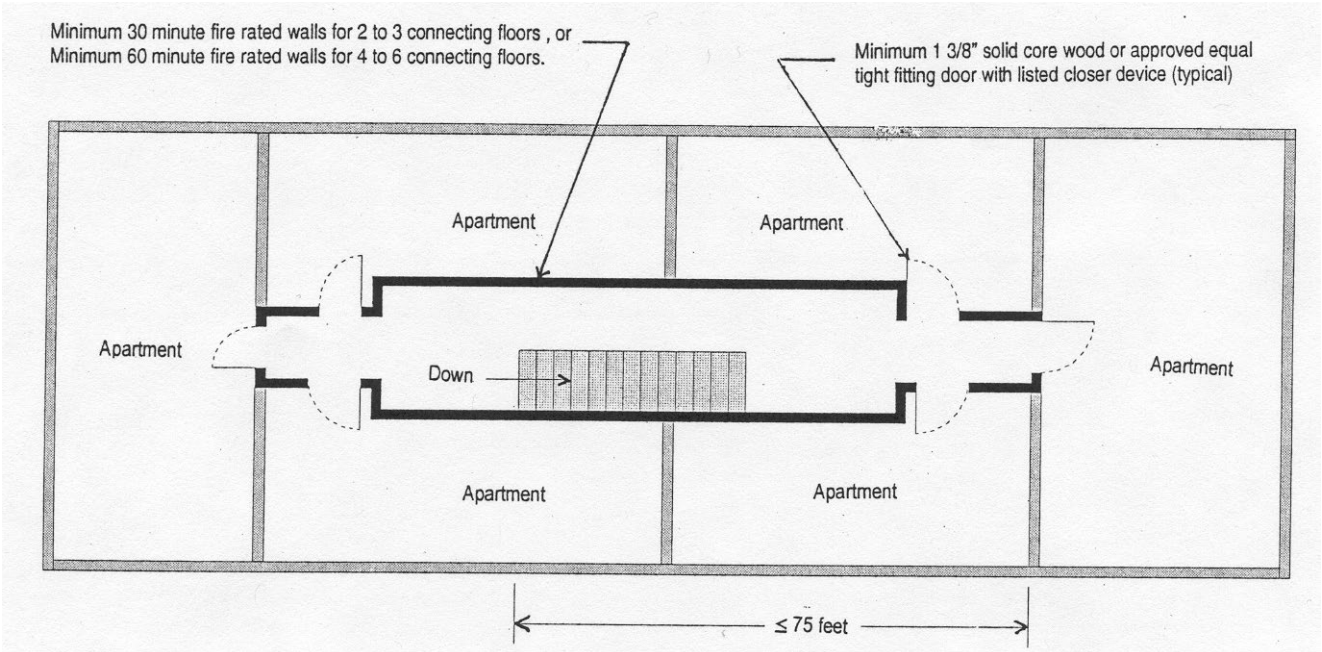


FIGURE 2A. Interior exit enclosure for a building with one interior exit and one fire escape or exterior stair.

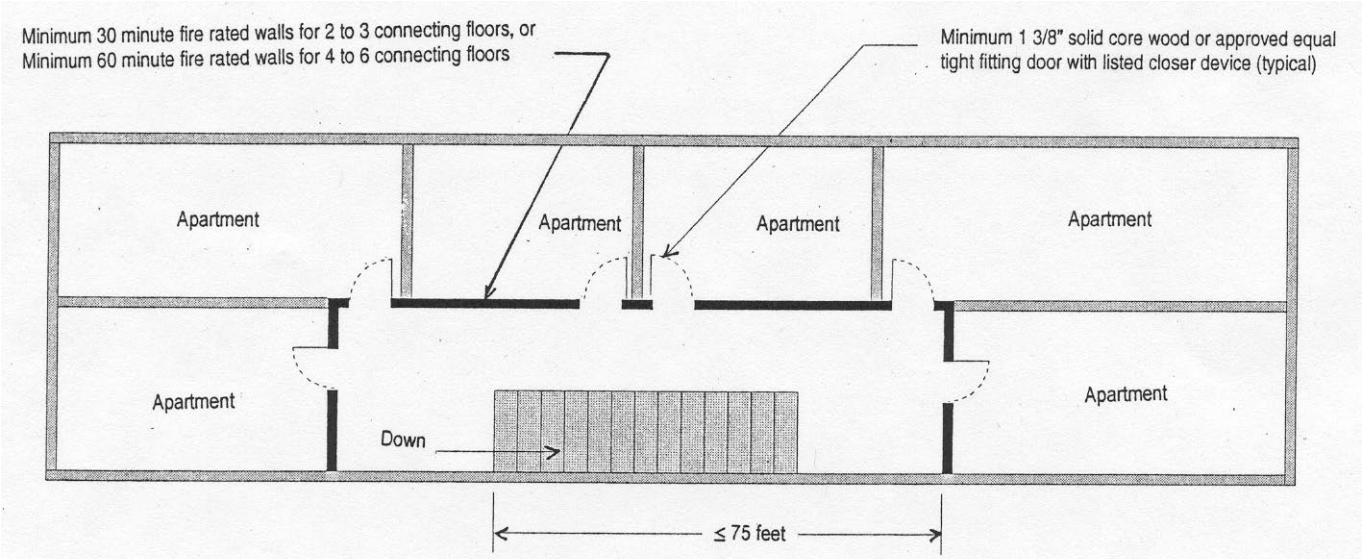


FIGURE 2B. Interior exit enclosure for a building with one interior exit and one fire escape or exterior stair.

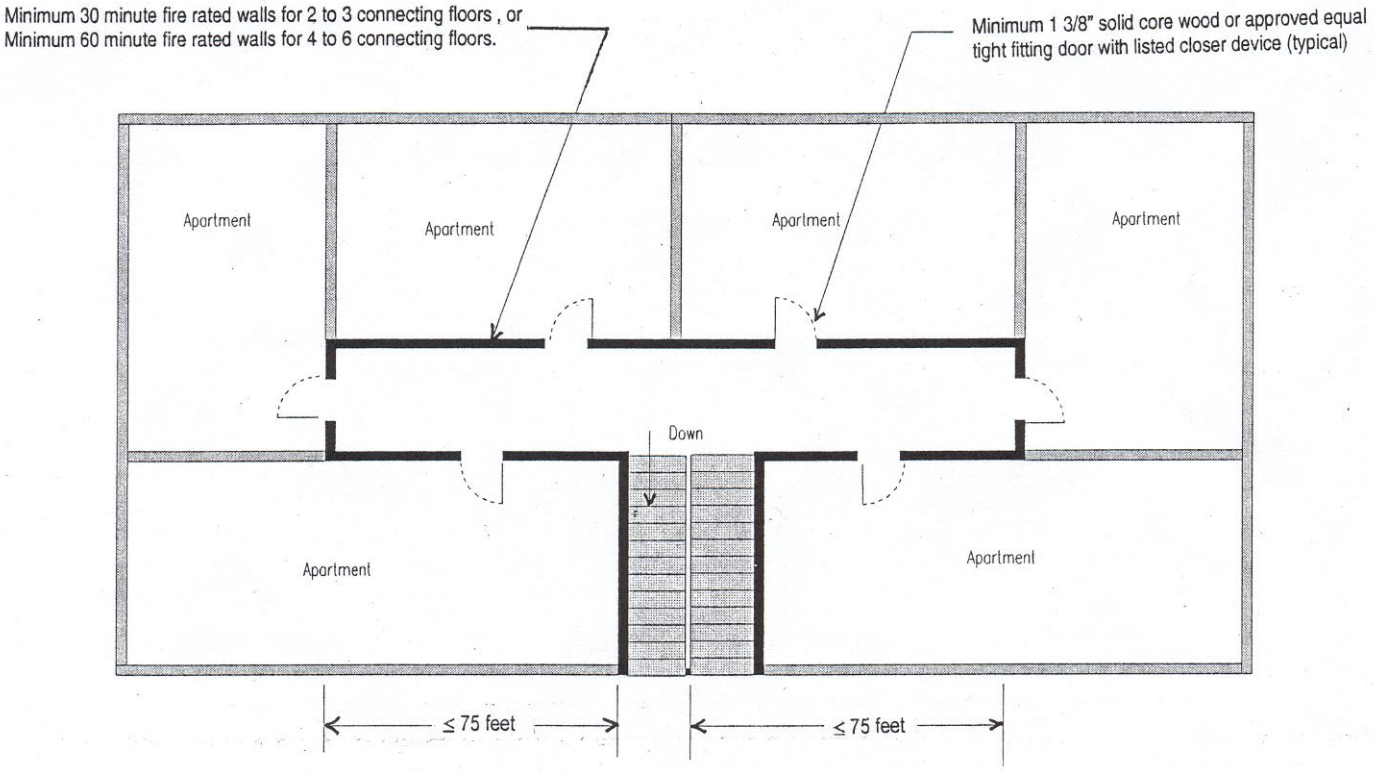


FIGURE 2C. Interior exit enclosure for a building with one interior exit and one fire escape or exterior stair.

Fire resistance ratings for various types of partition wall construction

Construction	Fire resistance rating
Wood frame covered (both sides) with:	
1/2-inch fiberboard	10 minutes
1/2-inch fiberboard, flame proofed	10 minutes
1/4-inch plywood	10 minutes
3/4-inch T&G boards	20 minutes
3/8-inch gypsum wallboard	25 minutes
1/2-inch gypsum wallboard	40 minutes
5/8-inch gypsum wallboard (type X)	60 minutes
Cement asbestos board 3/16-inch thick	10 minutes
3/16-inch cement asbestos board over 3/8-inch gypsum board	60 minutes
Masonry construction:	
4-inch blocks plastered both sides	60 minutes
6-inch blocks	60 minutes
6-inch concrete	240 minutes

Notes

1. Dwelling units at basement level must have a second means of egress or an emergency escape & rescue opening, unless the building is fully suppressed. (*NJAC5:70-4.11(a)7.)*
2. Storage is not permitted in a stairway or under stairs in a stairway enclosure.
3. All fire rated enclosure walls are to have not less than class I flame spread rating finish.
4. 2 to 3 connecting floors fire rated enclosure is to be a minimum of 30 minutes with a minimum 1 3/8 inch solid core wood or approved equal tight fitting door with a listed closer devise, unless noted otherwise.
5. 4 to 6 connecting floors fire rated enclosure is to be a minimum of 60 minutes with a minimum 1 3/8 inch solid core wood or approved equal tight fitting door with a listed closer devise.
6. If the fire resistance ratings of enclosure walls in items 4 & 5 above cannot be verified by the inspector, the owner shall provide evidence or certified documents of fire ratings.
7. The Federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Rehabilitation Guidelines can be used to assess the fire resistive ratings of existing construction.
8. Dwelling unit corridor doors not part of the stairway enclosure need not have listed closers but must have approved closers.
9. “EXIT” is a portion of means of egress that is separated and protected from other interior spaces of the building. Interior EXIT is meant to include the interior stairway and the interior corridor leading to it.