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-resistant 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 any question, please do not hesitate to call me at 609-633-6216.

FAYEZ FANIK, PE
Supervisor of Enforcement, Inspections
Bureau of Housing Inspection
Multifamily dwellings, Use Group R-2
2 connecting floor levels

OPTION 1
Building Fully suppressed with an approved automatic sprinkler, OR has a limited sprinkler system protecting all common areas and a minimum of one sprinkler head within each dwelling unit centered over top of entrance door. NJAC 5:70-4.13(c)11.1

OPTION 2
- Max 4 dwellings per floor
- Every sleeping room is provided with an approved window having a sill height not greater than 44 inches
- building protected throughout by a supervised automatic fire alarm system.

NJAC 5:70-4.13(c)11.iii

OPTION 3
- Max 4 dwellings per floor
- Exit is enclosed in one hour fire rated assembly.
- Travel distance from unit entrance door to the stairs does not exceed 50 feet.

NJAC 5:70-4.11(b)3

OPTION 4
- Max 4 dwellings per floor
- Each Dwelling unit has access to a fire escape or other approved secondary exit.

NJAC 5:70-4.13(c)11.ii

OPTION 5
Interior Exit is enclosed in fire rated assembly. See Figure 2 for examples.

NJAC 5:70-4.13(c)11

OPTION 6
The 2 exit stairs are separated by a fire rated wall/door assembly which creates 2 separate fire rated stairway enclosures. See Figure 1 for examples.

NJAC 5:70-4.13(c)

SUPPRESS as in Option 1
Multifamily dwellings, Use Group R-2
3 connecting floor levels

OPTION 1
Building Fully suppressed with an approved automatic sprinkler, OR has a limited sprinkler system protecting all common areas and a minimum of one sprinkler head within each dwelling unit centered over top of entrance door. NJAC 5:70-4.13(c)11.i

OPTION 2
- Max 4 dwellings per floor
- Every sleeping room is provided with an approved window having a sill height not greater than 44 inches.
- Every dwelling unit above second floor is provided with direct access to a fire escape or other approved secondary exit.
- Building protected throughout by a supervised automatic fire alarm system. NJAC 5:70-4.13(c)11.iii

OPTION 3
- Max 4 dwellings per floor
- The Exit is enclosed in one hour fire rated assembly.
- Travel distance from unit entrance door to the stairs does not exceed 50 feet. NJAC 5:70-4.11(b)3

OPTION 5
Interior Exit is enclosed in fire rated assembly. See Figure 2 for examples. NJAC 5:70-4.13(c)11

OPTION 6
The 2 exit stairs are separated by a fire rated wall/door assembly which creates 2 separate fire rated stairway enclosures. See Figure 1 for examples. NJAC 5:70-4.13(c)

1 Exit (min.). Max 2 stories. Floors not more than 16 ft above exterior grade NJAC 5:70-4.11(b)3

(1 Exit) &
(1 Fire escape or Exterior stairs) (min.) NJAC 5:70-4.11(a)2

2 Interior Exits (min.) NJAC 5:70-4.11(a)

OK

OK

SUPPRESS as in Option 1
Multifamily dwellings, Use Group R-2
4 to 6 connecting floor levels

OPTION 1
Building Fully suppressed with an approved automatic sprinkler, OR has a limited sprinkler system protecting all common areas and a minimum of one sprinkler head within each dwelling unit centered over top of entrance door. *NJAC 5:70-4.13(b)*

Yes → OK

No

(1 Exit) & (1 Fire escape or Exterior stairs) (min.) *NJAC 5:70-4.11(a)2*

OPTION 5
Interior Exit is enclosed in fire rated assembly. See Figure 2 for examples. *NJAC 5:70-4.13(b)*

Yes → OK → Yes

No

SUPPRESS as in Option 1

OPTION 6
The 2 exit stairs are separated by a fire rated wall/door assembly which creates 2 separate fire rated stairway enclosures. See Figure 1 for examples. *NJAC 5:70-4.13(b)*

2 interior Exits min.) *NJAC 5:70-4.11(a)*

Yes

No
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 _______________________,
   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 foregoing 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.
Minimum 1 3/8" solid core wood or approved equal tight fitting door with listed closer device (typical)

Minimum 30 minute fire rated walls for 2 to 3 connecting floors, or Minimum 60 minute fire rated walls for 4 to 6 connecting floors

Possible location of Wall which creates separate exit enclosures. Door to be self-closing or automatic-closing

Possible stair location

≤ 75 feet

FIGURE 1. Two interior exits.

Minimum 30 minute fire rated walls for 2 to 3 connecting floors, or Minimum 60 minute fire rated walls for 4 to 6 connecting floors.

Minimum 1 3/8" solid core wood or approved equal tight fitting door with listed closer device (typical)

≤ 75 feet

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.

Minimum 30 minute fire rated walls for 2 to 3 connecting floors, or Minimum 60 minute fire rated walls for 4 to 6 connecting floors.

Minimum 1 3/8" solid core wood or approved equal tight fitting door with listed closer device (typical)

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

Minimum 30 minute fire rated walls for 2 to 3 connecting floors, or Minimum 60 minute fire rated walls for 4 to 6 connecting floors.

Minimum 1 3/8" solid core wood or approved equal tight fitting door with listed closer device (typical)
## Fire resistance ratings for various types of partition wall construction

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

### 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.