

Fire Inspection Guide

Foster Family Home

Apartment Building

[A building or portion thereof containing three or more dwelling units with independent cooking and bathroom facilities.]



PURPOSE

The purpose of this guide is to provide further information to inspectors and prospective foster parents on how to successfully complete a foster home inspection and ensure that the apartment is safe for all members of the family.

Prospective foster parents should review this guide and perform a self-inspection **before** scheduling an inspection with their fire department.

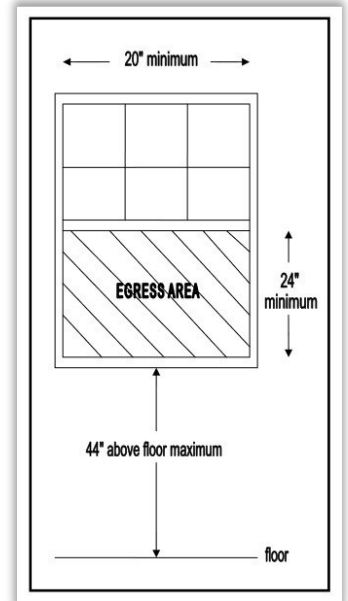
The requirements for a fire inspection of a foster home are set by statute. Please contact your local fire department for any questions regarding the requirements or the inspection process.

Requirements

- 1. The apartment shall have working smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms.**
 - Refer to State Fire Marshal's Office *Informational Bulletin* on Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms.
<https://www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/firesafety/bulletins/index.html>
- 2. The apartment shall have at least two ways out from each floor level.**
 - Apartment units shall be permitted to have access to a single exit, provided that one of the following conditions is met:
 - The apartment unit has an exit door opening directly to the street or yard at the finished ground level;
 - The apartment unit has direct access to an outside stair that serves not more than two units, both located on the same story; or
 - The apartment unit has direct access to an interior stair that serves only that unit and is separated from all other portions of the building by fire barriers having a minimum 1-hour fire resistance rating, with no opening therein.
- 3. No living spaces shall be accessible only by ladder or folding stairs.**
 - This does not include bunk beds.

4. **A window in the designated sleeping room of the apartment shall open to a size that allows an occupant to escape and firefighter to enter. (If the building is under four (4) stories in height).**

- Windows in existing apartments must open to a minimum of 4.5 square feet.
- The height of the window opening can be no less than 24” and the width of the opening can be no less than 20” (only the clear opening that an occupant could fit through without breaking or removing components of the window should be measured).
- The sill of the window can be no higher than 44” above the finished floor (a step can be constructed at the base of the window to meet this requirement).



5. **All the doors in the travel path to an exit shall be a minimum of 28” in width.**

6. **All the closet doors in the apartment shall be operable from the inside.**

7. **All electrical outlets, switches, and junction boxes shall have covers.**

8. **GFCI Outlets (or circuits) shall be installed by all sinks, showers, and bathtubs.**

- The National Electrical Code requires any outlet within 6’ of a water source to have GFCI protection.

9. **The apartment building shall be identified by a street number and the individual unit shall be identified by a unit number.**

- The numbers can be placed on the mailbox or the residence itself as long as they are visible from both directions of travel.
- A minimum of 4” numbers of a color that contrasts with the background is highly recommended.



The Following are Best Practice and Required to Complete Licensing:

- The apartment building shall have a fire alarm system that meets the requirements and is inspected as per NFPA 72 when applicable or the building shall have hardwired smoke and CO detectors if a fire alarm system is not required.**
- The apartment buildings fire sprinkler system shall meet the requirements and be inspected as per NFPA 13 or NFPA 13R when applicable.**
- All heating sources shall be installed and maintained in a safe manner. The applicant will verify the proper installation and maintenance with the licensing agency.**
 - The home owner/landlord shall offer proof that the heating system has been serviced and inspected by a professional within the last 365 days.
 - Minimum distance to combustibles must be maintained to manufacturer’s specifications.
- The home shall have a written evacuation and disaster plan.**
 - The plan shall include primary and secondary means of escape from each floor/area, and a designated meeting place outside the home. The plan should be reviewed and practiced with all members of the home.
 - The plan shall designate an emergency location where the family can be located if there is a disaster that requires them to leave the home.