

Manitoba Provincial Health and Safety Guidelines – Approved Host Family Homes – Minimum Standards for Residential Care Licensing

A. General Conditions

1. Exterior of the home:

- The exterior of the home must be kept in good repair, including the following:
 - Roof, fascia and soffits, shall be maintained in good repair.
 - Eavestroughs and rainwater piping shall be watertight, in good repair and maintained. All rainwater from the roof of any building shall drain away from the foundation walls to prevent building damage and moisture from entering the building.
 - The foundation, basement walls and floors shall be weather tight, impervious to ground or external moisture. As necessary, the foundation and basement floor system shall drain water from the surface into a properly constructed catch basin to prevent flooding of the floor or foundation, or otherwise create a health hazard.
 - Exterior doors and windows are to be weather-tight, close fitting and maintained in good repair.
 - Exterior doors must be fitted with storm doors where insulated doors are not used.
 - Exterior walkways, stairs and landings shall be slip resistant and kept clear of ice and snow to ensure user safety.
 - The yard must be well maintained and be similar to that of surrounding dwellings (e.g., snow removal, lawns mowed, etc.).

2. Interior of the home:

- The interior of the home must be maintained in good repair with suitable furnishings and have acceptable housekeeping standards that are consistent with public health protection standards.
- Interior partitions, doors, walls and ceilings are to be close fitting, kept in good repair, have surfaces that are smooth and clean and can easily be kept clean.
- All floors are to be level and of such construction, and in such a state of repair, that they can be readily kept clean, and are kept free from major cracks, crevices, depressions or splinters.
- Floor coverings must be in good repair and well fitting, and can easily be kept clean.
- All walls and ceilings are maintained in good repair in a clean condition and are painted or otherwise cleansed and redecorated when necessary.

- The walls and ceilings should be free from major cracks and crevices that may create a condition detrimental to the health of the occupant.
- Any structural changes or alterations require consultation with the licensing authority, and may include consultations with the municipality and local fire authority.
 - Where applicable, all appropriate permits and inspections must be obtained.

3. Garbage:

- Garbage must be stored in pest-resistant and waterproof covered containers (inside and outside of the home), pending removal to waste disposal grounds or for pick up by a collection service.

4. Bedrooms:

- There must be a minimum floor area of 7 m² (75 ft²) per person for single occupancy or 5.6 m² (60 ft²) per person for double occupancy. Floor space calculations exclude closets and bathrooms.
 - Section 23 of the *Residential Care Licensing Regulation* requires separate bedrooms for each sex unless accommodating a spousal unit/couple, or pre-school children.
 - Any bedroom-sharing arrangements must be pre-approved by the supervising program.
- No portion of the floor area that has a ceiling height less than 1.4 m (4 ft. and 6 in.) can be considered in the calculation of the required floor area.
- At least half of the required floor area must have a ceiling height of at least 2.1 m (7 ft.).
- Each bedroom must have a window to the exterior (specified in #11) and a door for privacy.
- Each adult must be provided with a separate bed with a minimum of 1 m (39 in.) in width and adequate in length. For couples, the minimum width of the bed must be 1.4 m (4 ft. and 6 in.) and adequate in length. Mattresses must be supported on bed frames.

5. Heating Systems:

- All fuel fired heating systems (e.g., gas, oil, and wood), fireplaces, chimneys, and flue pipes must be in good repair and inspected annually by a qualified inspector. Heating systems must be capable of heating and maintaining the home to 21°C (70°F) and maintaining this temperature between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m., and maintaining a minimum of 18°C (65°F) between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.

6. Dryers:

- Rigid/semi-rigid metal 100 mm (4 in.) in diameter ductwork is required for exterior exhaust. Plastic or other combustible, easy-to-puncture ductwork is not acceptable.
- Ductwork must be cleaned annually.
- Lint traps must be emptied after each load of laundry.

7. Water:

- Water of *drinking water* quality (provincial standards) must be available in the home, including hot water (minimum 43°C or 109°F) and cold water for washing and bathing purposes.
- Water supplied to fixtures (other than dishwashers and clothes washers) must not exceed 49°C (120°F), preferably through a mixing valve to prevent scalding.
- Wastewater must be disposed of into a municipal sewage system or onsite wastewater management system that is in proper operating order.
- Water wells are to be tested whenever there is a change in the taste, smell, colour or clarity of the well water, or if there is a reason to believe the water quality has changed.

8. Dishwashers:

- Dishwashers require a minimum temperature of 60°C (140°F) for sanitation.
- A regulator is required to meet the requirements of #7 unless the dishwasher has a sani-cycle or a separate hot water tank.

9. Whirlpools and Swimming pools:

- Construction of whirlpools, swimming pools, fencing and guards must comply with Manitoba Building Code, and obtain applicable permits.
- Any existing whirlpools or swimming pools must adhere to local municipal bylaws and standards.
 - Any use of or supervision for a supported individual's use of a pool or whirlpool will require pre-approval by the supervising program.

B. Fire and Life Safety

10. Stairs, Handrails and Guards:

Handrails: A source of grip and means of support that assist people in ascending or descending stairs.

Guards: Barriers that prevent people from falling off the open side of stairs, landings or raised floors.

**Note: In those cases where a stair requires both a guard and a handrail, a reasonable solution is to provide a guard, which also acts as a handrail.*

Exterior:

- Exterior stairs of more than three risers must be equipped with a handrail on at least one side of the stairs.

Interior:

- Handrails must be provided on at least one side of interior stairs that have more than two risers.

Exterior and Interior:

- Steps, floors and other surfaces (e.g., decks, landings, porches, balconies, raised walkways, etc.) with an elevation difference of more than 600 mm (24 in.) between the walking surface and adjacent surface must be equipped with a guard on each side that is not protected by a wall.
- Guards must be a minimum of 900 mm (36 in.) in height.
- Openings in guards cannot be large enough to allow the passage of a spherical object of 100 mm (4 in.) in diameter.
- Where the width of the stair exceeds 112 cm (44 in.) handrails are required on both sides of the stairs.
- Newly constructed stairs, handrails and guards or alterations to existing stairs, handrails and guards must comply with the current Manitoba Building Code.
- The *Dwellings and Buildings Regulation* also requires stairs, railings and landings to be in good repair. In addition to the minimum requirements of this legislation, it is important to note that additional railings, gates and other equipment, specific to the needs of the supported individuals, may be required by the licensing authority. This equipment shall be used and maintained to ensure safety of the individuals.

11. Windows:

- Bedroom windows must provide an unobstructed opening to the exterior with an area not less than .35 m² (3.77 ft²) and no dimension less than 380 mm (15 in.), unless the authority having jurisdiction requires a higher standard. Windows that are 380 mm x 380 mm (15 in. x 15 in.) do not meet this requirement.

**Note: Awning windows may be acceptable, provided they open to a full 90-degree swing free of obstructions. These windows must be able to remain in a fully open position by their own mechanism and not create an obstruction to egress. Any consideration for awning windows will require consultation with the licensing authority and potentially the local fire authority.*

- Other than bedrooms, each habitable room must have a window glass area equal to 10% of the floor area with one window capable of opening for ventilation purposes.
- Single glazed windows require storm windows.
- Windows that open for ventilation must be equipped with screens (May through October inclusive).
 - A mechanical exhaust fan may be substituted for a window in a bathroom.

12. Additional Egress Requirements

- Third storey bedrooms must have a means of egress to ground level outside the bedroom window.
 - Occupants must be capable of safely exiting the building without assistance in the event of a fire or other life-threatening situation.
 - Consultation with the licensing authority is required. Other authorities may also need to be consulted (e.g., fire).

13. Smoke Alarms:

- Smoke alarms (hardwired or approved 10-year tamper-proof lithium battery) are required in all hallways leading to bedrooms and all bedrooms in which supported individuals sleep.
- In addition, a smoke alarm needs to be installed on every floor.
- Smoke alarms must be inspected and tested annually to CAN/ULC-S552 “Standard for the Maintenance and Testing of Smoke Alarms”.
- Smoke alarm testing and maintenance records must be maintained.
- Rental properties must meet the requirements of the authority having jurisdiction for fire.

14. Fire Extinguishers:

- A fire extinguisher (minimum 3A10BC) must be installed on each floor level of the home.
- Extinguishers must be located in, or adjacent to, corridors and aisles that provide access to exits, and easily accessible. Where possible, the extinguisher must be installed on the wall.
- Extinguishers must be inspected annually by a qualified service company.

15. Fire Drills and Fire Evacuation and Procedure Plan:

- A fire evacuation and procedure plan including the annual inspection/maintenance of smoke alarms, fire extinguishers, carbon monoxide detectors and fuel-fired heating systems and appliances is required.
- The fire evacuation and procedure plan must include:
 - Emergency phone numbers.
 - Location of smoke alarms.
 - Location of fire extinguishers.
 - Location of carbon monoxide detectors.
 - Location of heating system(s).
 - Emergency exits.
 - Identifying a safe meeting place outside of the home.
 - The plan must also include a narrative detailing specific evacuation procedures and any additional assistance required by supported individuals. The plan is to be approved by the licensing authority.
- Fire drills must be conducted on a monthly basis and recorded as per licensing standards.

16. Carbon Monoxide Detectors:

- A carbon monoxide detector is required in every home.

17. Basement for Sleeping or Recreational Use:

- Where the basement is used for sleeping or recreational use, two remotely placed means of egress must be provided.
- A readily accessible and clearly visible basement window in an existing building may be used as a second means of egress provided that:
 - The window is able to be opened from the inside without the use of keys/tools or special knowledge, and without the removal of hardware.

- The window provides an unobstructed opening with an area of not less than 0.35 m² (3.77 ft²) and with no dimension less than 380 mm (15 in.).
- Where the window opens into a window well, a clearance of not less than 550 mm (22 in.) must be provided in front of the window and the operation of the sash must not reduce this clearance in a manner that would restrict escape in an emergency.
- The window must be served by a landing when the sill height is more than 900 mm (36 in.) above the floor in order to facilitate exit in the event of an emergency. The landing must be served by steps when the landing height exceeds 900 mm (36 in.) above the floor.
**Note: Built-in furniture may meet this requirement.*
- The occupants are capable of safely exiting the building without assistance in the event of a fire or other life-threatening situation.
- Each existing basement bedroom requires a window meeting the above requirements.
- Basement bedrooms that are being newly established, either in a brand new building or in an existing building that is being renovated, require an egress window that complies with the current Manitoba Building Code. Notably, where the window opens into a window well, a clearance of not less than 760 mm (29.9 in.) must be provided in front of the window.

**Note: Authorities having jurisdiction may require a higher standard for basement windows.*

- Access to an alternate exit may be through a bedroom (provided no locking devices are installed) but must not be through a furnace, storage, service or other similar type room.
- Service equipment (e.g., furnace, hot water tank, etc.) must not be located within a sleeping area. Electrical panels may be located in a sleeping area if they are encased and locked.
- Means of egress must be maintained in good repair and free of obstructions (interior and exterior) at all times.

Additional Information:

- Basement bedrooms must be enclosed by walls separating the sleeping area from the rest of the basement area.
- Basement bedrooms must have floor coverings across the entire floor area.

18. Accessibility:

Exterior:

- Persons requiring the use of a wheelchair may only be accommodated on those floor levels that are suitably designed for persons with a physical disability, as determined by the licensing authority, and are served with a ramp that provides outside egress to the ground level.
- Ramp specifications must be obtained from the authority having jurisdiction.
- New construction or alterations require a permit.

Interior:

- Any accessibility modifications to home, require consultation with the licensing authority, municipality and local fire authority.

19. Additional Health and Safety Measures:

- The licensing authority reserves the right to implement additional safety measures such as sprinklers, life safety equipment specific to disability-related needs, hardwired interconnected smoke alarms, fire alarm systems, additional hand/guard rails, and/or any other equipment necessary for life safety or self-preservation.
- All applicable acts, (e.g., The Smoking and Vapour Products Control Act, The Firearms Act, etc.), regulations and public health protection standards must be followed.
- Where applicable, pets must be maintained in accordance with local bylaws.