481—58.2(135C) Variances. Variances from these rules may be granted by the director of the department of inspections and appeals for good and sufficient reason when the need for variance has been established; no danger to the health, safety, or welfare of any resident results; alternate means are employed or compensating circumstances exist and the variance will apply only to an individual nursing facility. Variances will be reviewed at the discretion of the director of the department of inspections and appeals.

58.2(1) To request a variance, the licensee must:
- a. Apply for variance in writing on a form provided by the department;
- b. Cite the rule or rules from which a variance is desired;
- c. State why compliance with the rule or rules cannot be accomplished;
- d. Explain alternate arrangements or compensating circumstances which justify the variance;
- e. Demonstrate that the requested variance will not endanger the health, safety, or welfare of any resident.

58.2(2) Upon receipt of a request for variance, the director of inspections and appeals will:
- a. Examine the rule from which variance is requested to determine that the request is necessary and reasonable;
- b. If the request meets the above criteria, evaluate the alternate arrangements or compensating circumstances against the requirement of the rules;
- c. Examine the effect of the requested variance on the health, safety, or welfare of the residents;
- d. Consult with the applicant if additional information is required.

58.2(3) Based upon these studies, approval of the variance will be either granted or denied within 120 days of receipt.

481—61.2(135C) Variances. Procedures for requesting a variance in rules 481—58.2(135C) and 481—59.2(135C) are incorporated by reference as part of this chapter. Certain resident populations, conditions in the area, or the site may justify variances. In specific cases, variances to the rules may be granted by the director after the following conditions are met:
1. The design and planning for the specific property shall offer improved or compensating features which provide equivalent desirability and utility;
2. Alternate or special construction methods, techniques, and mechanical equipment shall offer equivalent durability, utility, safety, structural strength and rigidity, sanitation, odor control, protection from corrosion, decay and insect attack, and quality of workmanship;
3. The health, safety or welfare of any resident shall not be endangered;
4. Variations are limited to the specific project under consideration and shall not be construed as establishing a precedent for similar acceptance in other cases;
5. Occupancy and function of the building shall be considered; and
6. Type of licensing shall be considered.

481—61.7(135C) Service area.
m. The food service area shall be at least 10 square feet per resident bed. Variances to this rule may be granted on the basis of equipment and serving methods used. (III) (Exception 4)