

290-5-8-.18 Physical Plant Standards.

(1) Requirements under this rule "Physical Plant Standards" will be enforced with the effective date of these regulations EXCEPT that homes holding a valid permit prior to the effective date of these regulations, shall comply with the regulations in effect at the time the home was issued a permit or the plans were approved. Provided however, that any such homes which hold a valid permit prior to the effective date of these regulations must comply with these regulations when improvements or modifications are made within any twelve (12) month period and the cost of such improvements or modifications exceeds a total of twenty percent (20%) of the fair market value of the home. If no such improvements are made, the homes holding a valid permit prior to the effective date of these regulations must then comply with these regulations within fifteen (15) years of the effective date of these regulations. In exceptional cases and upon application to the Department by the governing body of the home, variances may be granted at the discretion of the Department (if it determines that these requirements will place an undue burden or extreme hardship on the home or its occupants), provided that the health and safety of the patients is not jeopardized.

(2) At least two rooms per fifty (50) beds shall be designed for single occupancy (one bed). At least one room designed for single occupancy shall have an adjoining private bathroom, containing a lavatory, water closet and a bathtub or shower equipped with grab bars.

(3) All patient rooms shall open into corridors leading to the exterior of the building. No patient room will be so located as to make it necessary for a patient to pass through another room to gain entrance to a corridor leading to the exterior.

(4) Each patient room shall be an outside room with window space equal to at least one-eighth of the floor area with opening in area large enough to remove patient by mattress.

(5) Patient bedrooms shall contain not less than one hundred (100) square feet of usable floor space in private or single rooms and no less than eighty (80) square feet per bed of usable floor space in multibed rooms. Usable floor space is in addition to area provided for closets, toilet rooms and entry ways.

(6) Not less than three (3) feet of space shall be provided between beds and between the foot of the bed and wall or other obstruction. There shall be sufficient space so beds may be made accessible from both sides for nursing care when needed.

(7) An individual clothes closet or wardrobe with door shall be provided per bed in every patient room. Clothes closets or wardrobes shall be at least twenty-two (22) inches deep and twenty (20) inches wide with at least one shelf above a hanging space equipped with a device for clothes hangers.

(8) Each patient room having more than one bed shall have permanently installed curtain tracks to permit closing each bed with curtains to allow for the privacy of each patient without obstructing the passage of other patients either to the corridor or to the toilet or lavatory adjacent to the patient room. Curtains used for enclosing patient beds shall be rendered and maintained flame resistant.

(9) Employees, staff and visitors shall not use water closets provided for patients. Toilets, including a water closet, lavatory, soap, paper towels and dispensers shall be provided near or adjacent to the following locations:

- (a) Nurses' station or medication area;
- (b) Kitchen;
- (c) Lobby area or waiting room.

(10) Patient bathing and toilet facilities:

- (a) There shall be a general bathing area in each nursing unit. This area shall contain at least one bathtub accessible from three sides, one stall shower equipped with grab bars with adjacent drying space, one lavatory and one water closet. This unit shall be of sufficient size to provide space for dressing, a wheelchair, and an attendant. Unless the bathing fixtures are located in separate rooms, compartments must be provided to permit independent use to afford privacy for each sex. Special institutional tubs or showers may be approved for use if the program of service indicates;
 - (b) At least one enclosed water closet and one lavatory shall be provided for each eight beds or major fraction thereof;
 - (c) At least one bathing facility (bathtub or shower) shall be provided for each fifteen (15) beds, or major fraction thereof, located in patient bedrooms that do not adjoin a toilet room in which a bathing facility is located;
 - (d) Unless bathtubs in bathrooms adjoining patient rooms are located so as to be accessible from three sides, handrails or grab bars on the tub or on the wall by the tub shall be provided;
 - (e) All shower stalls shall be at least four feet by four feet square and must have handrails on three sides, be equipped with curtains and be designed for wheelchair use. Thresholds to showers must be flush with the floor. The floor of the shower shall be designed to drain properly;
 - (f) Grab bars, securely attached to walls and conveniently located, adjacent to all bathtubs, showers and water closets intended for patient use shall be provided.
- (11) A nurses' station shall be provided in each nursing unit. It shall contain a nurses' call system, charting desk and supplies, medicine storage, lavatory with soap, towels and towel dispenser, preparation area and a refrigerator. The nurses' station shall not be more than 120 feet from the entrance of the most remote room served.
- (12) There shall be separate clean and soiled utility rooms in each nursing unit located near the nurses' station. The clean utility room shall contain wall and base cabinets and stain resistant counter top, a small sink set into the counter or with drain boards. The soiled utility room shall contain a counter with a stain resistant top and storage cabinets underneath. In addition, it shall contain a deep service sink with stopper for chemical sterilization of bedpans, urinals and commode pails. The deep service sink with stopper may be omitted if a steam autoclave for sterilizing is available to the home.
- (13) At least one bedpan cleansing device shall be provided in each nursing unit. It may be located in the soiled utility room or in a special bedpan closet conveniently located in each nursing unit. The bedpan cleansing device may be omitted if water closets in patient toilets are equipped with bedpan lugs, spray hose and elevated vacuum breaker.
- (14) Sufficient space shall be provided in each nursing unit for stretcher and wheelchair parking. Such space shall be out of corridor traffic.
- (15) There shall be a floor pantry in each nursing unit located near or adjacent to the nurses' station. The floor pantry shall contain a hot plate, sink, counter, cabinets and a refrigerator that shall not be used to store drugs, biologicals or laboratory specimens.

(16) A drinking fountain which shall not impair any passageway shall be provided in each nursing unit.

(17) There shall be a treatment room convenient to patient rooms containing a treatment table, lavatory equipped with soap, paper towels and dispenser, instrument table and storage cabinet and providing adequate room for transfer of patients. A treatment room may be used for consultation if appropriately enlarged.

(18) There shall be a patient dining and recreation area provided in each home. The minimum total area shall be twenty (20) square feet of floor space per bed. One-half the required space shall be for dining.

(19) A room with sufficient space for patients' active exercise regimens including such equipment as a full-length mirror, parallel bars, a wall-mounted wheel, and an exercise table shall be provided. The room shall also contain a lavatory with gooseneck spout and wrist controls. Soap, paper towels and towel dispenser shall also be provided.

(20) There shall be a lobby and/or waiting room in each home. The size of this area shall be determined in relation to the size of the home and the program of service.

(21) There shall be at least one building exit at ground level and at least one building exit shall be provided with a suitable ramp designed for a stretcher and a wheelchair. There shall be one such exit leading to the outdoor recreation area.

(22) A public telephone shall be located near the lobby. At least one telephone shall be arranged to be convenient for a wheelchair user.

(23) The central kitchen area shall be located to permit efficient service to the dining rooms and the nursing units. It must be arranged and equipped for adequate food storage; preparation and serving of foods in proper sequence; dish and utensil cleaning and storage, and refuse storage and removal. Homes that are a distinct part of another home may utilize the service of a central kitchen provided it is of adequate size and adequately equipped to serve the total patient population. Storage space shall be sufficient to store a 24-hour supply of perishable foods and a 3-day supply of nonperishable foods.

(24) Separate and adequate clean laundry storage and separate and adequate soiled laundry storage rooms shall be provided appropriate to the frequency of deliveries and linen needs.

(25) Janitor's closets shall be provided on the basis of at least one closet for the dietary area and one for the remainder of the home. This room shall be of sufficient size to include racks for equipment, storage space and a service sink.

(26) General storage space for the storage of supplies, furniture, equipment and patients' possessions shall be provided. Such space may be provided in one or more rooms and shall be commensurate with the needs of the home, but not less than five (5) square feet per bed.

(27) Maintenance area or areas commensurate with the needs of the home, including storage space for building and grounds maintenance equipment, tools, supplies and materials and shop space for mechanical, painting and carpentry work shall be provided.

(28) Floor, wall and ceiling finishes shall be smooth, easily cleaned and be wear-resistant appropriate to location. In addition, the floors of the following spaces shall be waterproof: toilets, baths, bedpan rooms, floor of pantries, kitchens, utility rooms, janitors' closets and treatment rooms. Areas subject to wetting shall have nonslip flooring. Carpeting, wall and ceiling finishes shall be approved by the State Fire Marshal.

(29) Stairways, doors and corridors:

- (a) Stairways serving patient areas shall not be less than forty-four (44) inches in clean width;
- (b) Stairs shall be individually enclosed and be separated from any public hall;
- (c) A landing shall be provided at the top and bottom of every stair run. Doors shall swing with exit travel to provide safe exit;
- (d) The minimum dimension of landing shall be as wide as the required width of the stairway it serves. A door swinging into a landing, when open, shall not overlap the required width of the landing;
- (e) The width of stair to risers shall not be less than ten (10) inches plus a one (1) inch nosing;
- (f) Winders and single risers are not acceptable;
- (g) Stairs and landings shall have a non slippery finish;
- (h) Patients' room corridor entrances and all required exits shall be not less than forty-four (44) inches in clean width. All other doors through which patients must pass shall be not less than thirty-six (36) inches in clean width except that doors to toilets in patient bedrooms may not be less than thirty-two (32) inches wide. Doors through which patients or equipment do not pass shall be not less than thirty (30) inches wide, except that doors to patient closets may not be less than twenty (20) inches wide;
- (i) When a door swings out on any platform, balcony, or porch or terrace, the minimum width of the platform, balcony, porch or terrace shall be thirty (30) inches plus the width of the door, measured at right angles to the wall containing the door. Exit doors, other than for living units shall swing in the direction of exit from the structure;
- (j) Corridors in areas used by patients shall not be less than eight (8) feet in clean width. Handrails may project into corridors, but drinking fountains, desk or other projections or obstructions may not reduce the eight (8) foot minimum dimension;
- (k) Ramps shall be not less than forty-four (44) inches wide. Where ramps provide a change of corridor level, the minimum width shall be not less than that of the corridor;
- (l) The maximum slope of ramps shall be not greater than ten (10) percent. Changes in direction, if any, shall be on level landings with a minimum width the same as the ramp width;
- (m) Ramps shall have a nonslip finish. Ramps serving as a required means of egress shall be enclosed or protected as indicated for required stairways;
- (n) Handrails shall be provided on each side of all patient corridors and on each side of stairways and ramps.

(30) Light and Ventilation:

- (a) The total glass area in patient bedrooms shall be not less than one-eighth of the floor area of the room. The ventilating area shall be not less than four (4) percent of the floor area;
- (b) Openings providing required natural light, which open on a covered porch whose depth exceeds four (4) feet, shall be increased in area ten (10) percent per foot of depth over four (4) feet;
- (c) The heads of windows (sash opening) shall not be more than one foot below the finished ceiling unless they are at least six (6) feet eight (8) inches above the finished floor. The lower level of the window glass shall be not more than forty-eight (48) inches

above the floor level;

(d) Ceiling lights shall be not less than eight (8) feet except that seven (7) feet six (6) inches may be used in corridors, halls, toilet rooms and bathrooms;

(e) The lower edge of patient bedroom windows shall in every instance be above grade.

(31) Mechanical:

(a) All bathrooms and toilet rooms shall be provided with mechanical ventilation capable of producing a minimum of ten (10) air changes per hour. Utility rooms, community rooms and corridors shall be provided with not less than four (4) changes per hour with at least two (2) of the air changes being outside air. Ducts ventilating bathrooms or toilet rooms shall not be interconnected with other duct systems but shall be discharged to the outside. Patient rooms shall be provided with at least two (2) air changes per hour of outside air. Corridors and exit halls shall not be used as a plenum for supply or return air to heating or air-conditioning system;

(b) Kitchens, laundries, non-refrigerated garbage storage rooms, and rooms used to store combustible materials, shall be provided with an independent system of mechanical ventilation discharging above the roof and remote from any window. A minimum of ten (10) air changes per hour shall be provided. Exhaust hoods shall be installed over cooking ranges;

(c) All buildings shall be provided with a heating system designed to maintain a temperature of 75 degrees Fahrenheit in all habitable rooms and corridors when the outside temperature is at design level. The heating system should provide warm floors;

(d) All steam-operated equipment such as sterilizers, laundry and kitchen units, shall be provided with steam at temperatures and pressures as recommended by the equipment manufacturers;

(e) The quality and quantity of the water supply and the method of sewage disposal shall have the approval of the Department;

(f) The method employed to heat water shall provide an adequate supply of hot water at necessary temperatures for all purposes, in a safe manner;

(g) Temperature controls shall be provided so that hot water for personal uses shall not exceed 110 degrees Fahrenheit;

(h) Hot water temperatures for other uses shall be as required by the equipment served;

(i) The quantity of hot water for kitchens and laundries shall be adequate to serve the equipment installed;

(j) Wrist control handles shall be provided for sinks or lavatories in floor pantries, medicine preparation rooms, clean utility rooms, soiled utility rooms, treatment or examination rooms, rehabilitation or physical therapy rooms and at handwashing fixtures in the kitchen area;

(k) Gooseneck spouts shall be provided for sinks or lavatories in treatment or examination rooms, physical therapy or rehabilitation rooms and at handwashing fixtures in the kitchen area;

(l) Vacuum breakers shall be provided for any plumbing fixture having a hose or hoses attached or to any plumbing fixture having trim to which a hose may be attached, including shampoo sinks, service sinks, combination hot and cold water outlets at can wash areas. Hose bibs shall be provided for clean-up purposes in the dishwasher area of kitchens;

- (m) Aerators shall not be included as part of trim for plumbing fixtures;
- (n) With relationship to adjacent areas, a positive air pressure shall be provided for clean utility rooms, floor pantries and medicine preparation rooms;
- (o) With relationship to adjacent areas, a negative air pressure shall be provided for soiled utility rooms, physical therapy or rehabilitation rooms, janitor's closets, soiled laundry rooms and bathrooms or toilets. Air from these rooms shall not be recirculated; air shall be exhausted;
- (p) Floor grilles shall not be used for supply or return air openings in heating, air-conditioning or ventilating systems;
- (q) Ventilation openings, such as ports for exhaust fans, etc., shall be equipped with covers that close automatically when the fan is not in operation;
- (r) Intake air ducts shall be designed and maintained so as to prevent the entrance of dust and insects;
- (s) Hot air ducts from the heating system shall not emit temperatures in excess of 150 degrees Fahrenheit.

(32) Electrical:

- (a) All areas shall be adequately lighted as required for duties performed in each space. Bedrooms and combination living-bedrooms shall have a night light, a light for general illumination and a reading light at the head of each bed. The outlets for general illumination and night lights shall be switched at the door. The reading light shall be controlled at the bedside. Each stairway, hall, corridor or general passage shall have five (5) foot candles of illumination, doubled at building and stair entrance, or change of floor level, or at ramps;
- (b) Receptacles appropriate for the designed space use shall be located where plug-in service is required. There shall be not less than one duplex receptacle at the head or near the head of each bed. All other spaces shall have general and special purpose outlets suited to the need of the space; including an outlet in the lobby for an electric clock and receptacles for cleaning and maintenance equipment spaced not more than fifty (50) feet apart in corridors;
- (c) Emergency lighting supplied by an emergency generator or a battery with automatic switch, shall be provided for exits, stairs and corridors;
- (d) Each toilet room and bathroom and each bed location shall be furnished with an electrical or mechanical nurses' call audible or visible at the nurses' station. A duplex unit may be used for two beds.

(33) Elevators and Dumbwaiters:

- (a) Where patients' rooms are located on more than one floor at least one elevator shall be provided. Other elevators shall be provided, depending upon the needs and size of the home;
- (b) At least one elevator in multistory buildings shall be arranged of sufficient size to admit a stretcher and an attendant;
- (c) Elevator doors shall be automatic slide type with safety interlock. Elevators shall be equipped with hand rails and automatic self-leveling control which will automatically bring car platforms level with the landing;
- (d) Dumbwaiter cabs shall be not less than twenty-four (24) by thirty-six (36) inches of steel with one shelf.

Authority Ga. L. 1964, pp. 507, 612, as amended by Ga. L. 1969, p. 715 et seq; and Ga. L. 1972, p. 1015 et seq. **Administrative History.** Original Rule was filed on October 26, 1976; effective November 15, 1976.