

SEPARATION OF EXITS

21.03(2) Second Floor Bedroom Egress

Question: If one of the second floor bedrooms has a code-compliant exit door out of the bedroom onto a deck or balcony, can the requirement for egress windows in the other second floor bedrooms be waived?

Answer: Yes, but only if the hardware on the bedroom door, which leads to the second exit is incapable of being locked from the hallway that serves as the exit path from these other bedrooms .See chapter 20.07 for 'EXIT' definition.

21.03(3) Acceptable Exits Above the Second Floor

Small third floor rooms specified under s. Comm 21.03 (3) (b) require only one stairway or ramp that leads to the second floor or lower in the dwelling. If the dwelling is fully sprinklered, only one exit is required from the third floor. Otherwise, only stairways or ramps to the second floor or grade are acceptable to meet the two exit requirements. If an exterior stair is used, access to it from the third floor shall be with a door and if the stairway terminates at the second floor, then there must be a door leading back into the dwelling or a code-compliant egress balcony to complete the exit path.

21.03(3) Exits from Attics

Question: Does the requirement for two exits for floors above the second floor apply to walk-up attics?

Answer: No - it would only apply to habitable spaces including offices, playrooms or other conditioned spaces [see s. Comm 22.10 (3)] that may be occupied. Since attics are not considered habitable spaces they need not have natural light and ventilation nor multiple electrical outlets or lights unless they are used for mechanical equipment or electrical equipment.

21.03(4) Exits from Lofts

A code-complying loft is not subject to the exiting requirements of the other subsections of this section. In other words, a loft open to a first-floor or second-floor below, only requires a single stairway or ladder (depending on area) to satisfy exiting. A loft bedroom or loft level would not require an egress window but would require natural light and ventilation the same as any other habitable space. See s. Comm 20.07(50) of the code and this commentary for a discussion of what is considered "open to the floor below."

21.03(6) Bedroom Exit Windows

Question: Can egress windows be located in sitting or dressing areas of a master bedroom suite?

Answer: This section requires egress windows in some bedrooms. However, it does not specify the location of the window within the bedroom itself. A sitting room or area located in an alcove of a master bedroom is an acceptable location for the bedroom egress window. The alcove can be considered part of the bedroom if there are no doors obstructing communication between the two areas.

Comm 21.03 (6) Egress Window Dimensions

Minimum
20" wide x 24" high
or
24" wide x 20" high

