

Decision Tool to Determine Occupancy Classifications for Mixed Occupancies

This is a decision tool to determine whether a building or portion thereof is a healthcare occupancy, an ambulatory healthcare occupancy, or an occupancy other than healthcare and ambulatory healthcare. These questions are based on NFPA 101 (2006 Edition): Sections x.1.1.1; x.1.2; and x.1.3 of Chapters 18/19/20/21; and guidance provided in the Health Care Occupancy Classifier, by James K. Lathrop and David M. Birk, P.E., published in the Healthcare Fire Protection Newsletter, January, 1997.

Question 1

In this portion of the building, are healthcare services and sleeping accommodations provided for four or more occupants who are mostly incapable of self-preservation because of age, physical or mental disability, or because of security measures not under the occupants' control?

If YES: Consider this portion of the building to be a healthcare occupancy.

If NO: Go to Question 2.

Question 2

On a routine basis, are there four or more patients (inpatients, outpatients or a mixture of both) in this portion of the building at the same time who are incapable of taking action for self-preservation under emergency conditions without assistance from others? (Include all incapable inpatients. Include outpatients who are rendered incapable due to the treatment or anesthesia they received in this portion of the building. If emergency or urgent care is provided, include patients who are incapable due to the nature of their injury or illness. Also, note that being confined to a wheelchair does not in itself make a person incapable of taking action for self-preservation.)

If YES: Go to Question 3.

If NO: Go to Question 7.

Question 3

Is this portion of the building contiguous to a healthcare occupancy?

If YES: Go to Question 4.

If NO: Consider this portion of the building to be an ambulatory healthcare occupancy.

Question 4

Is this portion of the building intended primarily for outpatient or non-patient use?

If YES: Go to Question 5.

If NO: Evaluate this portion of the building as a healthcare occupancy, since it is not primarily intended for outpatient or non-patient use.

Question 5

Is this portion of the building separated from the healthcare portions of the building by at least two-hour fire-resistance rated construction?

If YES: Go to Question 6.

If NO: Evaluate this portion of the building as a healthcare occupancy, since it is not properly separated from the healthcare occupancy.

Question 6

On a routine basis, are there four or more inpatients in this portion of the building at the same time who are incapable of taking action for self-preservation under emergency conditions without assistance from others?

If YES: Evaluate this portion of the building as a healthcare occupancy.

If NO: This portion of the building may be evaluated as an ambulatory healthcare occupancy.

Question 7

Is this portion of the building contiguous to a healthcare occupancy or ambulatory healthcare occupancy?

If YES: Go to Question 8.

If NO: This portion of the building may be evaluated as an occupancy other than healthcare or ambulatory healthcare.

Question 8

Is this portion of the building separated from the healthcare portions of the building by at least two-hour fire-resistance rated construction?

If YES: Go to Question 9.

If NO: Evaluate this portion of the building as a healthcare occupancy, since it is not properly separated from the healthcare occupancy.

Question 9

Is this portion of the building separated from the ambulatory healthcare portions of the building by at least 1-hour fire resistance rated construction?

If YES: This portion of the building may be evaluated as an occupancy other than healthcare or ambulatory healthcare.

If NO: Evaluate this portion of the building as an ambulatory healthcare occupancy, since it is not properly separated from the ambulatory healthcare occupancy.