



CODE APPLICATION NOTICE

Health and Safety Code §129851

CAN: 2-407.2.2

SUBJECT

Nurse Stations

Effective: 04/21/2009

Revised: 10/31/2024



CODE SECTIONS

Title 24, California Code of Regulations, Including the 2022 Supplement effective July 1, 2024

2022 California Building Code, Part 2

Chapter 4 SPECIAL DETAILED REQUIREMENTS BASED ON OCCUPANCY AND USE

Section 407.2.2 Nurse stations.

Chapter 9 FIRE PROTECTION AND LIFE SAFETY SYSTEMS

Section 903.2.6.1 Group I-2.

Section 907.2.6.2.2 Automatic fire detection.

Chapter 12 INTERIOR ENVIRONMENT

Section 1224.14.2.1 Nurse station(s).

Section 1225.4.1.1 Nurse station.

Section 1225.4.1.1.1 Components.

Title 19, California Code of Regulations

Section 3.11 Exits, Aisles, Ramps, Corridors and Passageways

For reference only.

Appendix – 2022 California Building Standards Code, Title 24, California Code of Regulations, code citation(s) related to this Code Application Notice (CAN).

Acronyms and Definitions assist the user in recognizing and identifying various acronyms and terms generally used in this CAN. Please refer to the "[Master Glossary of Acronyms and Definitions – Acronyms and Definitions Used in OSHPD Published Documents](#)" which is posted on the HCAI website at <https://hcai.ca.gov/document/master-glossary-of-acronyms-and-definitions/>. Other definitions may also be found in the [California Building Standards Code](#), Title 24, California Code of Regulations.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Code Application Notice is to clarify and coordinate the fire and life safety requirements for Group I-2 care providers', supervisory staff, doctors' and nurses' charting areas, administrative areas, communications stations and related clerical areas where such areas are open to the corridor.

BACKGROUND

Sections 407.2.2, 1224.14.2.1, and 1225.4.1.1 of the California Building Code (CBC) create concerns with Section 3.11, Title 19, California Code of Regulations. Although Sections 1224.14.2.1 and 1225.4.1.1 require nurse stations in health facilities and Section 407.2.2 allows the nurse stations to be open to the corridor, Section 3.11 prohibits the installation or placement of any combustible material or equipment in or exposed to any exit. These provisions have resulted in inconsistent designs and inconsistent code enforcement.

INTERPRETATIONS

The following items and equipment required for treatment and health care are permitted to be located in care providers', supervisory staff, doctors' and nurses' charting areas, administrative areas, communications stations and related clerical areas that open directly onto a fire-resistance rated exit access corridor:

- A. File cabinets and wall-mounted cabinets for records and/or medication use and storage in quantities necessary for the function of the station.
- B. A maximum of two (2) under-counter refrigerators or one (1) upright refrigerator limited to the storage of patient medications or patient foods. See CAN 1224.4.4.4 Self-contained Medication Dispensing Units (MDU) for additional information.
- C. Information technology, patient monitors and patient or emergency communication systems necessary for the function of the nurse station. This includes desktop printers, facsimile machines and personal "all-in-one" printer/copier/scanner/fax combination machines.

Note: Monitoring of security cameras is not generally considered a function of the nurse station and as such is not permitted in a nurse station unless it can be demonstrated that it is essential to patient care (for example, psychiatric nursing unit, newborn intensive care unit, pediatric unit, prenatal unit, etc.). It is not the intent to allow the nurse station to function as a security station or a location for the monitoring of consoles or switchboards for the operation of Centrex, PBX, or similar systems. Alarm panels such as Medical Gas and Generator Remote Alarms are permitted at Nurse Stations.

- D. Mobile or fixed medication dispensing units classified as unit dose machines. See CAN 1224.4.4.4 Self-contained Medication Dispensing Units for additional clarification on the types and permitted location of MDU.
- E. Chairs in a quantity sufficient to accommodate the needs of the nurse stations. Upholstered chairs shall meet the fire-retardant criteria of the Bureau of Household Goods and Services, Technical Bulletin 117-2013, Requirements, Test Procedure and Apparatus for Testing the Smolder Resistance of Materials Used in Upholstered Furniture.

- F. Trash containers constructed of noncombustible materials, or a fire-retardant type listed by an Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) approved testing laboratory.
- G. A minimum of one (1) 2A:10BC fire extinguisher shall be provided at all nurse stations in an unobstructed and readily accessible location.

Refrigerated vending machines, commercial copy machines, automatic teller machines, ice making machines, coffee makers, toasters, toaster/ovens, microwave ovens, portable heaters, and similar equipment shall not be permitted in nurse stations, nor shall they be located in or exposed to fire-resistance rated exit access corridor systems.

Care providers', supervisory staff, doctors' and nurses' charting areas, administrative areas, communications stations, and related clerical areas located in suites that meet the requirements of Section 407.4.4 of the CBC are not considered open to a fire-resistance rated exit access corridor system and are not subject to this CAN.

In existing buildings without an automatic sprinkler system, care providers', supervisory staff, doctors' and nurses' charting areas, administrative areas, communications stations, and related clerical areas shall be protected by an automatic sprinkler system in accordance with CBC Section 903.2.6.1.

A minimum of one (1) smoke detector interconnected to the facility fire alarm system shall be installed in a central location at all new and altered Group I-2 care providers', supervisory staff, doctors' and nurses' charting areas, administrative areas, communications stations, and related clerical areas in accordance with CBC Section 907.2.6.2.2.2.

Original signed	10/31/2024
Chris Tokas, Deputy Director	Date

APPENDIX

2022 California Building Standards Code, Title 24, California Code of Regulations

A viewable copy can be found on the California Building Standards Commission website (<http://www.dgs.ca.gov/en/BSC/Codes>)

2022 California Building Code, Part 2
Chapter 4 SPECIAL DETAILED REQUIREMENTS BASED ON OCCUPANCY AND USE
Section 407.2.2 Nurse stations.

407.2.2 Nurse stations. Space for care providers', supervisory staff, doctors' and nurses' charting, communications and related clerical areas shall be permitted to be open to, *or located within* the corridor, *provided the required construction along the perimeter of the corridor is maintained.* *Construction of nurse stations or portions of nurse stations, within the envelope of the corridor is not required to be fire-resistive rated. Nurse stations in new and existing facilities see the California Code of Regulations, Title 19, Division 1, Chapter 1, Subchapter 1, Article 3, Section 3.11(d) for storage and equipment requirements.*

In detention or secure mental health facilities, the provisions above applies to enclosed nurse stations within the corridor.

Chapter 9 FIRE PROTECTION AND LIFE SAFETY SYSTEMS
Section 903.2.6.1 Group I-2.
Section 907.2.6.2.2 Automatic fire detection.

903.2.6.1 Group I-2. *In an existing, unsprinklered Group I-2, nurse station open to fire-resistive exit access corridors shall be protected by an automatic sprinkler system located directly above the nurse station. It shall be permitted to connect the automatic sprinkler system to the domestic water service.*

907.2.6.2.2 Automatic fire detection. *Smoke detectors shall be provided in accordance with this section.*

...

2. *Group I-2 nurse stations. A minimum of one (1) smoke detector shall be installed at the nurse station and centrally located.*

...

Chapter 12 INTERIOR ENVIRONMENT
Section 1224.14.2.1 Nurse station(s).
Section 1224.4.4.2 Anteroom doors.
Section 1225.4.1.1 Nurse station.
Section 1225.4.1.1.1 Components.

1224.14 NURSING SERVICE SPACE.

...

1224.14.2 Support Areas.

...

1224.14.2.1 Nurse station(s). *Nurse station(s) shall be provided in each nursing unit and shall comply with Section 1224.4.4.2.*

...

1224.4.4.2 Nurse station(s). *This area shall have space for counters and storage and at least one hand-washing station shall be located in or directly accessible to the nurse station. It may be combined with or include centers for reception, charting and communication.*

...

1225.4.1 NURSING SERVICE SPACE.

...

1225.4.1.1 Nurse station. *A nurse station in free-standing skilled nursing and intermediate-care facilities shall be provided within each nursing unit. Nurse stations shall be designed to serve no more than 60 beds.*

1225.4.1.1.1 Components. *Nurse stations shall be provided with a cabinet, a desk, space for records, a bulletin board, a telephone, a specifically designated, lockable and illuminated medicine storage compartment, and a handwashing station. If a separate medicine room is provided, it shall have a lockable door and a sink. This sink cannot replace the required nurse station handwashing fixture.*

...

Public Safety, Title 19, California Code of Regulations

Division 1, Chapter 1, Subchapter 1, Section 3.11. Exits, Aisles, Ramps, Corridors and Passageways.

(a) No person shall install, place or permit the installation or placement of any bed, chair, equipment, concession, turnstile, ticket office or anything whatsoever, in any manner which would block or obstruct the required width of any exit.

(b) No person shall install, place or permit the installation or placement of any combustible material or equipment in or exposed to any exit.

Exceptions:

(1) Furniture or equipment constructed of wood or other material of similar combustibility may be permitted in an exit or exposed to an exit when approved by the enforcing agency.

(2) When approved by the enforcing agency, combustible materials may be permitted in exit foyers and lobbies.

(c) No person shall install, place or permit the installation or placement of any storage material of any kind in any exit regardless of the required width of such exit.

Exception: Personal material located in metal lockers in Groups B and E Occupancies as defined in California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 2.

(d) Aisles shall not be occupied by any person for whom seating is not available.

REVISION HISTORY

- 10-31-2024 Reformatted to the new CAN format. Code citations are updated to the 2022 edition of Title 24. Removed references to 1224.4.4.2 Anteroom because that section is not germane to this CAN. Removed references to 1228.4.4.2 because this section was repealed and reserved for future use in the 2021 Triennial Code Adoption Cycle. Interpretation, item D is amended and removes the statement requiring mobile or fixed MDU outside the nurse station be in a recessed alcove. This clarification is now in CAN 2-1224.4.4.4 Self-contained Medicine Dispensing Unit. The full text of Section 3.11, Title 19 is shown for clarification.
- 07-08-2020 First revision. Code sections were updated to reflect current code requirements. Code sections added to the CAN for clarity. Interpretations edited to match new code requirements.
- 04-21-2009 First Issued