

Bedroom Definition Policy

8/27/26

(C. Rittiman & Associates draft policy version)

Intent and Benefit

The intent of this policy is to establish a consistent definition of a bedroom, for use in Environmental Health Department (EHD) occupancy determinations for the purpose of sizing of onsite sewage disposal systems

This policy is intended to be used for the sizing of on-site sewage disposals systems, based on the floor-plan of the structure, relating to the **potential** occupancy of the residence.

Background

The County Planning and Building Services (PBS) does not have a definition for a bedroom and prior to 2007, there was no policy within the EHD, relating to the definition of a bedroom within a residence. Septic system designs prepared prior to 2007 matched the number of rooms reported as bedrooms on a building permit. A policy was adopted to offer EHD guidelines, as to the possible maximum use of the residence, relating to **potential** bedrooms and the sizing of the on-site sewage disposal system.

Statement of the Problem

EHD staff expressed concerns that the use of rooms within a residence, which had been not been labeled as bedrooms by the original owner, were being converted to bedroom use by subsequent property owners, which led to the on-site sewage disposal system being undersized. EHD review of building permits will use this policy to evaluate the potential total number of bedrooms.

Details of Policy Procedures

A bedroom, for purposes of sizing on-site sewage disposal systems, shall be defined as any room with legal egress (as defined by the California Building Code), that is designated as a bedroom on floor plans. Room features must be clearly labeled on the floor plans submitted to the PBS and EHD, to ensure a proper evaluation. Other rooms, not designated as bedrooms on the building permit, **will not** be considered as **potential** bedrooms, if at least one of the following conditions are met:

- 1) A 4-foot wide (minimum) by 6'8" (minimum) opening, without a door
- 2) Use of a half wall or railing along at least one side of the room
- 3) If the space is less than 70 square feet
- 4) If the space is a 'pass through' room to access a bedroom
- 5) If the space does not have legal egress
- 6) If the space is not directly conditioned

Projects and floor plans may be reviewed on a case-by-case based with the EHD, when further discussions regarding potential bedrooms is necessary