



Bulletin: Bedroom Egress Windows

Purpose

Escape Windows from Bedrooms

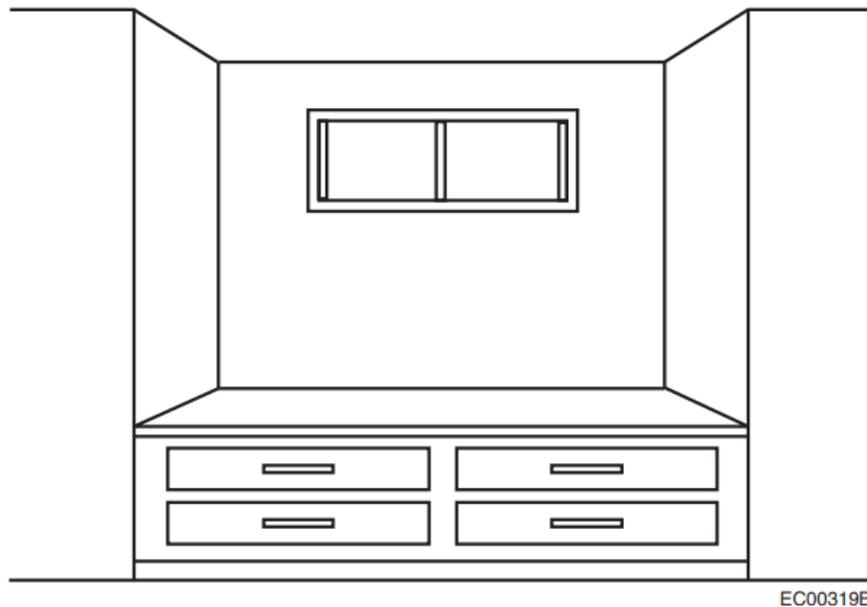
Sentence 9.9.10.1.(1) generally requires every bedroom in an unsprinklered suite to have at least one window or door opening to the outside that is large enough and easy enough to open so that it can be used as an exit in the event that a fire prevents use of the building's normal exits. The minimum unobstructed opening specified for escape windows must be achievable using only the normal window operating procedure. The escape path must not go through nor open onto another room, floor or space.

Where a bedroom is located in an unsprinklered suite in a basement, an escape window or door must be located in the bedroom. It is not sufficient to rely on egress through other basement space to another escape window or door.

Window Height

The Article does not set a maximum sill height for escape windows; it is therefore possible to install a window or skylight that satisfies the requirements of the Article but defeats the Article's intent by virtue of being so high that it cannot be reached for exit purposes.

It is recommended that the sills of windows intended for use as emergency exits be not higher than 1.5 m above the floor. However, it is sometimes difficult to avoid having a higher sill: on skylights and windows in basement bedrooms for example. In these cases, it is recommended that access to the window be improved by some means such as built-in furniture installed below the window



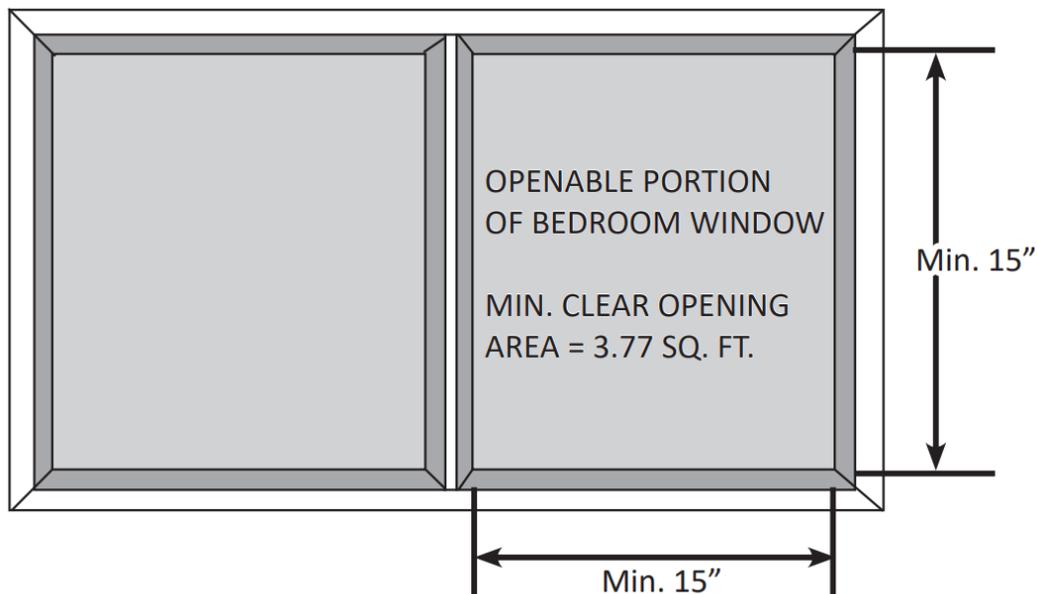
Please note: Building Bulletins are prepared to provide convenient information for clients and should not be considered a replacement for reviewing the bylaw or associated legal documents. If there is any contradiction between this guide and relevant municipal bylaws and/or applicable codes, please refer to the bylaws and/or codes for legal authority.

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Implementation

BCBC – 9.9.10.1.

1. Except where the suite is sprinklered, each bedroom or combination bedroom shall have at least one outside window or exterior door openable from the inside without the use of keys, tools or special knowledge and without the removal of sashes or hardware.
2. The window referred to in Sentence (1) shall:
 - a) provide an unobstructed opening of not less than 0.35 m² (3.77 ft²) in area with no dimension less than 380 mm (15 in); and
 - b) maintain the required opening during an emergency without the need for additional support.

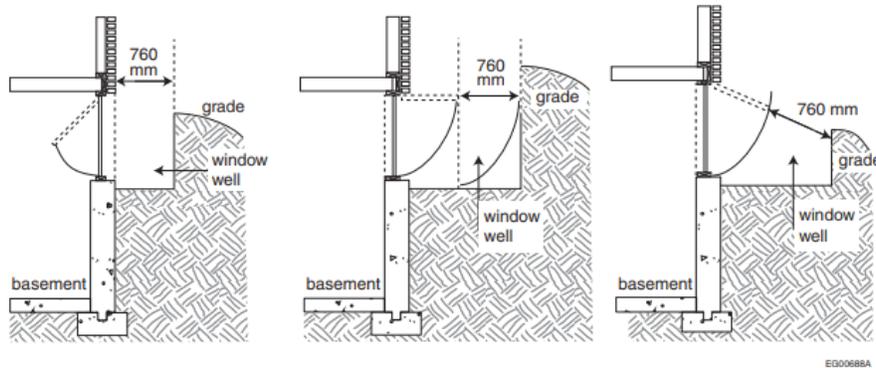


The BC Building Code requires each unsprinklered bedroom to have one outside window or door to be used as an emergency exit. Such windows and doors shall meet the following requirements:

1. Openable from the inside without the use of keys, tools or special knowledge and without the removal of sashes or hardware.
2. Unobstructed opening of not less than 0.35 m² (3.77 ft²) in area with no dimension less than 380 mm (15 in). An opening of 380 mm (15 in) x 920 mm (36 in) or 592 mm (23.3 in) x 592 mm would satisfy both requirements.
3. Maintain the required opening during an emergency without the need for additional support.
4. Where the egress window opens into a window well, a clearance of minimum 760 mm (30 in) must be provided in front of the window to allow a person to escape. Window with outward-opening opening needs additional clearance to provide the required 760 mm beyond the outer edge of the sash. The drawings from the BC Building Code that are reproduced below clarify this requirement.

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5. Where the sash of the window swings towards the window well, the operation of the sash must not reduce the clearance in a manner that would restrict escape in an emergency. Hopper windows (bottom hinged operators) should not be used as egress window where the occupants have to climb over the glass.
6. Where a protective enclosure is installed over the window well the enclosure must be openable from the inside without the use of keys, tools or special knowledge of the opening mechanism.



Contact Information

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