

2021 Virginia Construction Code

CHAPTER 3 USE AND OCCUPANCY CLASSIFICATION

SECTION 308 INSTITUTIONAL GROUP I

308.1 Institutional Group I.

Institutional Group I occupancy includes, among others, the use of a building or structure, or a portion thereof, in which care or supervision is provided to persons who are or are *incapable of self-preservation* without physical assistance or in which persons are detained for penal or correctional purposes or in which the liberty of the occupants is restricted. Institutional occupancies shall be classified as Group I-1, I-2, I-3 or I-4.

308.2 Institutional Group I-1.

This occupancy shall include buildings, structures or portions thereof for more than 16 persons, excluding staff, who reside on a 24-hour basis in a supervised environment and receive *custodial care*. Buildings of Group I-1, shall be classified as the occupancy condition indicated in Section 308.2.1 or 308.2.2. Assisted living facilities licensed by the Virginia Department of Social Services shall be classified as one of the occupancy conditions indicated in Section 308.2.1 or 308.2.2.

308.2.1 Condition 1.

This occupancy condition shall include buildings in which all persons receiving *custodial care* who, without any assistance, are capable of responding to an emergency situation to complete *building* evacuation. Not more than five of the residents may require physical assistance from staff to respond to an emergency situation when all residents who may require the physical assistance reside on a level of exit discharge and the path of egress to the exit does not include steps.

308.2.2 Condition 2.

This occupancy condition shall include buildings in which there are persons receiving *custodial care* who require assistance by not more than one staff member while responding to an emergency situation to complete *building* evacuation. Five of the residents may require physical assistance from more than one staff member to respond to an emergency.

308.2.3 Six to 16 persons receiving custodial care.

A facility housing not fewer than six and not more than 16 persons receiving *custodial care* shall be classified as Group R-4.

308.2.4 Five or fewer persons receiving custodial care.

A facility with five or fewer persons receiving *custodial care* shall be classified as Group R-3 or shall comply with the *International Residential Code* provided an *automatic sprinkler system* is installed in accordance with [Section 903.3.1.3](#) or [Section P2904](#) of the *International Residential Code*.

308.3 Institutional Group I-2.

This occupancy shall include buildings and structures used for medical care on a 24-hour basis for more than five persons who are incapable of self-preservation.

308.3.1 Occupancy conditions.

Buildings of Group I-2 shall be classified as one of the occupancy conditions specified in [Section 308.3.1.1](#) or [308.3.1.2](#) and shall comply with [Section 407](#).

308.3.1.1 Condition 1.

This occupancy condition shall include facilities that provide nursing and *medical care* but do not provide emergency care, surgery, obstetrics or in-patient stabilization units for psychiatric or detoxification, including but not limited to *nursing homes* and *foster care facilities*.

308.3.1.2 Condition 2.

This occupancy condition shall include facilities that provide nursing and *medical care* and could provide emergency care, surgery, obstetrics or in-patient stabilization units for psychiatric or detoxification, including but not limited to *hospitals*.

308.3.2 Five or fewer persons receiving medical care.

A facility with five or fewer persons receiving *medical care* shall be classified as Group R-3 or shall comply with the *International Residential Code* provided an *automatic sprinkler system* is installed in accordance with [Section 903.3.1.3](#) or [Section P2904](#) of the *International Residential Code*.

308.4 Institutional Group I-3.

Institutional Group I-3 occupancy shall include buildings and structures that are inhabited by more than five persons who

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are under restraint or security. A Group I-3 facility is occupied by persons who are generally *incapable of self-preservation* due to security measures not under the occupants' control. This group shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Correctional centers
- Detention centers
- Jails
- Prerelease centers
- Prisons
- Reformatories

Buildings of Group I-3 shall be classified as one of the occupancy conditions specified in [Sections 308.4.1 through 308.4.5](#) and shall comply with [Section 408](#).

308.4.1 Condition 1.

This occupancy condition shall include buildings in which free movement is allowed from sleeping areas, and other spaces where access or occupancy is permitted, to the exterior via *means of egress* without restraint. A Condition 1 facility is permitted to be constructed as Group R.

308.4.2 Condition 2.

This occupancy condition shall include buildings in which free movement is allowed from sleeping areas and any other occupied *smoke compartment* to one or more other *smoke compartments*. Egress to the exterior is impeded by locked exits.

308.4.3 Condition 3.

This occupancy condition shall include buildings in which free movement is allowed within individual *smoke compartments*, such as within a residential unit composed of individual *sleeping units* and group activity spaces, where egress is impeded by remote-controlled release of *means of egress* from such a *smoke compartment* to another *smoke compartment*.

308.4.4 Condition 4.

This occupancy condition shall include buildings in which free movement is restricted from an occupied space. Remote-controlled release is provided to permit movement from *sleeping units*, activity spaces and other occupied areas within the *smoke compartment* to other *smoke compartments*.

308.4.5 Condition 5.

This occupancy condition shall include buildings in which free movement is restricted from an occupied space. Staff-controlled manual release is provided to permit movement from *sleeping units*, activity spaces and other occupied areas within the *smoke compartment* to other *smoke compartments*.

308.5 Institutional Group I-4, day care facilities.

Institutional Group I-4 occupancy shall include buildings and structures occupied by more than five persons of any age who receive *custodial care* for fewer than 24 hours per day by persons other than parents or guardians; relatives by blood, marriage or adoption; and in a place other than the home of the person cared for. This group shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Adult day care
- Child day care

Exception: Family day homes under [Section 313.3](#).

308.5.1 Classification as Group E.

A child day care facility that provides care for more than five but not more than 100 children $\frac{2}{2}$ years or less of age, where the rooms in which the children are cared for are located on a *level of exit discharge* serving such rooms and each of these child care rooms has an *exit* door directly to the exterior, shall be classified as Group E.

308.5.2 Within a place of religious worship.

Rooms and spaces within *places of religious worship* providing such care during religious functions shall be classified as part of the primary occupancy.

308.5.3 Five or fewer persons receiving care.

A facility having five or fewer persons receiving *custodial care* shall be classified as part of the primary occupancy.

308.5.4 Five or fewer persons receiving care in a dwelling unit.

A facility such as the above within a *dwelling unit* and having five or fewer persons receiving *custodial care* shall be classified as a Group R-3 occupancy or shall comply with the [International Residential Code](#).

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