

Elkhart County Planning & Development

Public Services Building | 4230 Elkhart Road, Goshen, Indiana 46526
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REQUIREMENTS FOR EGRESS

R310.1 Emergency escape and rescue required. (675 IAC 14-4.3-27) Every sleeping room shall have at least one openable emergency escape and rescue opening. Where emergency escape and rescue openings are provided they shall have a sill height of not more than 44 inches above the floor. Where a door opening having a threshold below the adjacent ground elevation serves as an emergency escape and rescue opening and is provided with a bulkhead enclosure, the bulkhead enclosure shall comply with Section 310.3. The net clear opening dimensions required by this section shall be obtained by the normal operation of the emergency escape and rescue opening from the inside. Emergency escape and rescue openings with a finished sill height below the adjacent ground elevation shall be provided with a window well in accordance with Section R310.2.

R310.1.1 Minimum opening area. All emergency escape and rescue openings shall have a minimum net clear opening of 5.7 square feet.

Exception: Grade floor openings shall have a minimum net clear opening of 5 square feet.

SECTION R202 - DEFINITIONS: GRADE FLOOR OPENING. A window or other opening located such that the sill height of the opening is not more than 44 inches above or below the finished ground level adjacent to the opening.

R310.1.2 Minimum opening height. The minimum net clear opening height shall be 22 inches.

R310.1.3 Minimum opening width. The minimum net clear opening width shall be 20 inches.

R310.1.4 Operational constraints. Emergency escape and rescue openings shall be operational from the inside of the room without the use of keys or tools.

R310.1.5 Sleeping room replacement window alterations. When replacing existing sleeping room windows, at least one of the replacement windows within that sleeping room shall comply with SECTION R310.5. Replacement windows that do not meet the current emergency escape requirements of SECTION R310, without structural alterations to the dwelling, may be installed as long as they meet the following requirements:

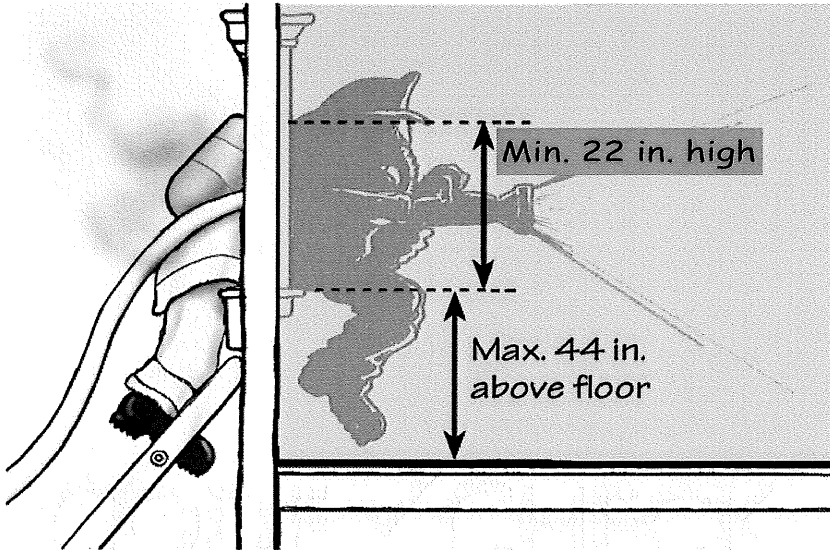
1. Replacement window installation shall not reduce the existing net clear opening by more than 6 inches horizontally and 6 inches vertically, except that awning replacement windows shall not reduce the existing net clear opening by more than 3 inches vertically.
2. In no case shall the replacement window net clear opening height be less than 22 inches and the net clear opening width be less than 20 inches.
3. Double hung or sliding replacement windows shall have both sashes removable without the use of a key or tool. Single hung installations are not allowed by this section.
4. Casement and awning replacement windows may obtain the required net clear opening with the use of egress hardware.
5. If the replacement window cannot meet the minimum requirements listed in subdivisions 1, 2, 3, and 4, the existing window shall be replaced with a like window without reducing the existing net clear opening.



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Bedroom Window Egress: Min. height and width requirements to meet req'd 5.7sq.ft. opening size (in inches)	
Width	20 20½ 21 21½ 22 22½ 23 23½ 24 24½ 25 25½ 26 26½ 27 27½ 28 28½ 29 29½ 30 30½ 31 31½ 32 32½ 33 33½ 34
Height	41 40 39½ 38½ 37½ 36½ 35½ 35 34½ 33½ 33 32½ 31½ 31 30½ 30 29½ 29 28½ 28 27½ 27 26½ 26½ 25½ 25½ 25 24½ 24



Bedroom Window Egress

The second exit required in a bedroom is usually a window. The dimensions of the openings are to ensure the residents an escape route, but equally important, they are designed to allow a firefighter with a backpack to enter.

How to determine minimum dimensions:

Determine the width (in inches) of your window's net clear opening - not the rough opening or over-all size of the window. Look at the table above. The minimum opening height that your window will need to be is the number directly under the listed width.

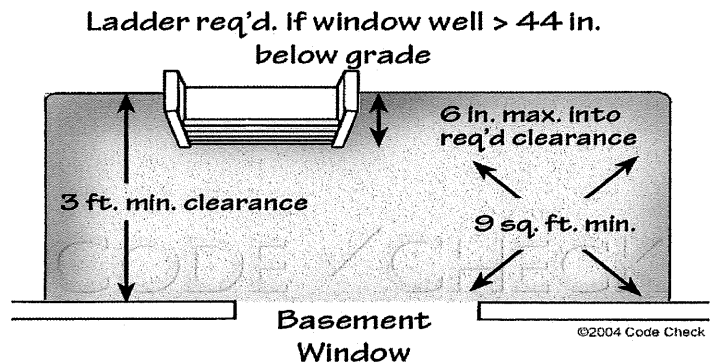
For example: Your window has a net clear opening width of 22 inches. Looking at the chart, you see that the number below 22 inches is 37-1/2 inches. The net clear window opening height will need to be 37-1/2 inches to get the required 5.7 sq. feet.

Another example: Your net clear window height is 27 inches. The minimum net clear width you will have to have is 30-1/2 inches.

R310.2 Window wells. The minimum horizontal area of the window well shall be 9 square feet, with a minimum horizontal projection and width of 36 inches. The area of the window well shall allow the emergency escape and rescue opening to be fully opened.

Exception: The ladder or steps required by Section R310.2.1

R310.2.1 Ladder and steps. Window wells with a vertical depth greater than 44 inches shall be equipped with a permanently affixed ladder or steps usable with the window in the fully open position. Ladders or steps required by this section shall not be required to comply with Sections R311.5 and R311.6. Ladders or rungs shall have an inside width of at least 12 inches, shall project at least 3 inches from the wall and shall be spaced not more than 18 inches on center vertically for the full height of the window well.



Basement Window Egress (plan view)