



**SUBJECT**

Nurses' Stations

**CAN: 2-407.2.2**

**Effective: 04/21/2009**

**Revised: 07/08/2020**



**CODE SECTIONS**

Sections 407.2.2, 903.2.6.1, 907.2.6.2.2.2, 1224.14.2.1, 1224.4.4.2, 1225.4.1.1, 1225.4.1.1.1 and 1228.4.4.2.  
 2019 California Building Code (CBC)

For reference only (enforced by Office of the State Fire Marshal)  
 Section 3.11(b)  
 Title 19, California Code of Regulations (C.C.R.)

**California Building Code**

**407.2.2 Nurses' 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 nurses' stations or portions of nurses' stations, within the envelope of the corridor is not required to be fire-resistive rated. [SFM] Nurses' 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 for storage and equipment requirements.

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

**903.2.6.1 Group I-2.** In an existing, unsprinklered Group I-2, nurses' station open to fire-resistive exit access corridors shall be protected by an automatic sprinkler system located directly above the nurses' 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.

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

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**1224.14 NURSING SERVICE SPACE.**

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**1224.14.2 Support Areas.**

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**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.*

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**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.*

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**1225.4.1 NURSING SERVICE SPACE.**

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

**1225.4.1.1.1 Components.** *Nurses' 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 nurses' station handwashing fixture.*

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**1228 ACUTE PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITALS**

**1228.4.4 Support areas for patients.**

**1228.4.4.2 Administrative center(s) or nurse station(s).** *Refer to Section 1224.4.4.2.*

**Title 19, California Code of Regulations**

Section 3.11. Exits, Aisles, Ramps, Corridors and Passageways.

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(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.

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## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Code Application Notice is to clarify and coordinate the fire and life safety requirements for Group I-2 and I-2.1 care providers', supervisory staff, nurses' stations, 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, 1225.4.1.1 and 1228.4.4.2 of the CBC create concerns with Section 3.11(b), Title 19, C.C.R. Although Sections 1224.14.2.1, 1225.4.1.1 and 1228.4.4.2 require nurses' stations in health facilities and Section 407.2.2 allows the nurses' stations to be open to the corridor, Section 3.11(b) 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, nurses' stations, 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.
- C. Information technology, patient monitors and patient or emergency communication systems necessary for the function of the nurses' 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 nurses' station and as such is not permitted in a nurses' 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 nurses' 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. If located outside nurses' stations, the unit shall be in a recessed alcove.
- E. Chairs in a quantity sufficient to accommodate the needs of the nurses' 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 nurses' 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 nurses' stations, nor shall they be located in or exposed to fire-resistance rated exit access corridor systems.

Care providers', supervisory staff, nurses' stations, 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, nurses' stations, 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, nurses' stations, doctors' and nurses' charting areas, administrative areas, communications stations, and related clerical areas in accordance with CBC Section 907.2.6.2.2.2.

<u>Original signed</u>	<u>7/08/2020</u>
Paul Coleman	Date