



Advocates For People With Developmental Disabilities
P.O. Box 1692 White Plains, NY 10602

POSITION PAPER ON FIRE SAFETY

GOAL: All residences should be constructed and staffed to ensure the safe evacuation of all of its residents within three minutes of a fire alarm.

STAFF/STAFFING:

1. All direct care staff should be required to undergo periodic unannounced random, mandatory alcohol and drug testing.
2. All staff must be trained in the particular fire evacuation plan for each residence before working in said residence.
3. All staff must be trained in uniform fire safety procedures.
4. There should be enough staff to ensure the safe evacuation of all of its residents within 3 minutes.
5. No resident should be left unattended either on the inside or outside of the building.
6. Staff should be the last to leave the facility.
7. NO SMOKING on or anywhere near the facility.

CONSTRUCTION:

1. All new construction should be done under a Uniform Institutional Code under the jurisdiction of OFPC.
2. Existing facilities should be upgraded to meet this code.

3. EXITS:

- There should be multiple exits to the outside.
- Where residents sleep on multiple levels there should be direct access to the outside on each level.
- Exits need to remain unblocked.

4. SAFE ROOMS:

- Where a safe room is warranted that room needs to be completely fire and smoke proof.
- Fire department officials need to be aware of the location of such rooms, as well as having ready access to floor and evacuation plans of the residence.

FIRE DRILLS and FIRE EVACUATION PLANS:

1. Fire drills should be periodically conducted by the local fire department.
2. Fire drills should be unannounced.
3. All staff members should know which residents they are responsible for.
4. Family members, legal guardians, service coordinators and any other designated party should have full access to the fire evacuation plan and the most recent fire drill report.
5. Alarms should be sent directly to the local fire authorities.

FACILITIES WITHIN APARTMENT HOUSE COMPLEXES:

With the move towards more integrated/less supervised settings GROW is particularly concerned about fire safety for those persons with developmental disabilities who reside in apartment complexes, and we would like to work with OMRDD and OFPC to ensure their safety.

There should never be an instance where an individual, otherwise suited for a residence, is excluded from that residence because of an inability to evacuate in a timely fashion. Rather, accommodations should be made for this individual to live safely in the residence.