



ADULT FAMILY HOME (AFH) INFORMATION SHEET

Window Requirements

[WAC 388-76-10795:](#)

Windows

(1) The adult family home must ensure at least one window in each resident bedroom meets the following requirements:

(a) The sill height must not be more than forty-four inches above the finished floor.

For homes licensed after July 1, 2007, the department will not approve alternatives to the sill height requirement such as step(s), raised platform(s), or other devices placed by or under the window openings.

(b) The opening area must be a minimum of 5.7 square feet, except that the openings of windows in rooms at grade level as defined by the International Residential Code may have a minimum clear opening of 5.0 square feet. The window must also have:

(i) A minimum opening height of twenty-four inches;

(ii) A minimum opening width of twenty inches; and

(c) The home must ensure the bedroom window can be opened from inside the room without keys, tools, or special knowledge or effort to open.

(d) The window must be free from obstructions that might block or interfere with access for emergency escape or rescue. [**See note below for additional requirements.**]

(2) When resident bedroom windows are fitted with storm windows, the home must equip the storm windows with release mechanisms that:

(a) Easily open from the inside; and

(b) Do not require a key or special knowledge or effort to open.



(3) The home must ensure that each basement window is kept free from obstructions that might block or interfere with access for emergency escape or rescue.

** Beginning March 1, 2026, new homes inspected for licensure must have a 36-inch clearance directly in front of the part of the window that opens, both exterior and interior.*

The size requirements are confusing. Can you break it down?

Along with the other WAC and International Residential Code requirements, there are three requirements for window size:

- (1) Opening must be at least 5.7 square feet (5.0 SF if at grade [ground] level).
- (2) Opening height at least 24 inches.
- (3) Opening width at least 20 inches.

Windows can be nearly any shape or size, as long as they meet the minimums for height, width, and square footage for the part of the window that opens. ** This means windows can be long and narrow, short and wide or square. They can be larger than required, but cannot be smaller, even if they meet the height and width minimums.*

My window opening is 6 square feet in size. Will it pass inspection?

While the total size may meet the requirements, the window must also meet the minimum height and width requirements. So, ensure the height and width of the opening are at least 24 inches and 20 inches.

How do I measure my window to determine the square footage?

Measure the height in inches and the width in inches and multiply the two. Then divide the result by 144 to convert inches to square feet.

Example: 26 inches H X 30 inches W = 780 Inches. 780 inches ÷ 144 = 5.42 square feet

You may also measure the window dimensions in feet, then no division is needed.

Example: 3 feet X 2 feet = 6 square feet

What is the purpose of the minimum measurements?

The minimums for height, width and square footage are the minimum amount of space needed for exit or rescue through the window. The window opening must be able to accommodate emergency rescue equipment and persons entering or exiting. Having a 6 square foot window with an opening 18 inches wide does not allow for a person to exit or an emergency responder to enter. Having a window with an opening of 8 square feet where the opening height of 20 inches is not tall enough to allow for exit or rescue.

Can you provide some examples?

See examples below.

Measurement reference key

Inches: “

Square Foot: SF

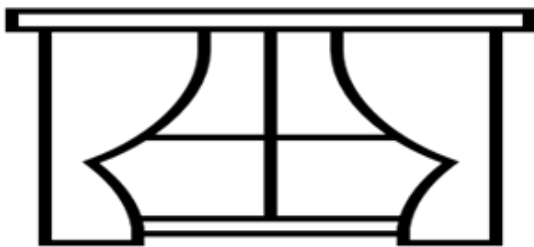


Figure 1 (opening is 28” tall, 48” wide, 9.3 SF)

This window meets minimum requirements.

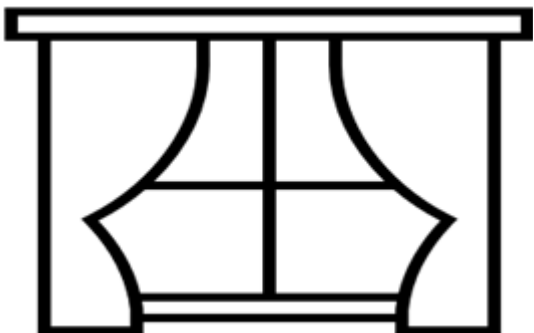


Figure 3 (opening is 48” tall, 48” wide, 16 SF)

This window meets minimum requirements.

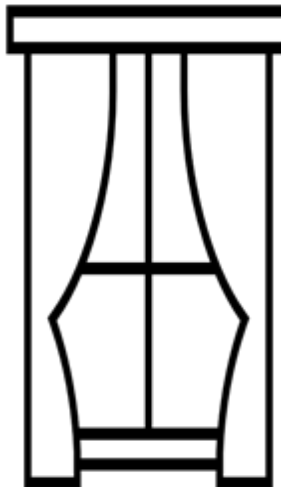


Figure 2 (opening is 64” tall, 30” wide, 13 SF)

This window meets minimum requirements.



Figure 4 (opening is 24” tall, 24” wide, 4 SF)

This window does not meet minimum requirements.

(February 2026)