

CMS RELEASES WAIVER GUIDANCE FOR HEALTH FACILITIES USE OF 2012 LSC

As **expected earlier this month**, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) have just released guidance for health facilities wishing to utilize specific features now available in the 2012 Life Safety Code (LSC). As **previously discussed**, the updated LSC provides new ways for nursing facilities to adopt a more home-like setting.

The recent changes in the 2012 LSC allow fixed furniture and wheeled equipment to be placed in egress hallways; alternative kitchen arrangements that can be open to corridors; (possibly) direct vent gas fireplaces in resident rooms and solid fuel (i.e. wood-burning) fireplaces in other areas, and combustible decorations on walls, doors, and ceilings.

All changes in the new LSC were addressed in response to the desire for culture change in nursing facilities to adopt a more home-like setting, rather than an institutional setting.

Effective immediately, CMS will consider requests for waivers from the currently enforced 2000 LSC for these items without requiring the facility to demonstrate compliance with the 2000 edition would generate an "unreasonable hardship"; the customary requirement for the approval of a LSC waiver.

Each waiver request will be considered individually to ensure the facility has followed all LSC requirements and the equipment has been installed properly. All waiver requests will be processed in the regular fashion with input from the State Survey Agency and final approval by the CMS Regional Office.

Should you have any questions, please contact:

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