



Town of Highland Beach

Building Department • 3616 South Ocean Blvd., Highland Beach, Florida 33487

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ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINE 2019-02-05

REDUCING MEANS OF EGRESS IN CONDO BUILDINGS (BLOCKING KITCHEN DOORS WITH CABINETS AND OTHER OBSTRUCTIONS, R-2 OCCUPANCIES, FIRE-SPRINKLERED BUILDINGS ONLY).

Whereas:

1. Pursuant to FS 553.775 (1) "It is the intent of the Legislature that the Florida Building Code (FBC)...be interpreted by building officials, local enforcement agencies, and the commission in a manner that protects the public safety, health, and welfare at the most reasonable cost to the consumer by ensuring uniform interpretations throughout the state..."
2. And, according to FBC 1001.2 where reducing a means of egress to less than required by the code is prohibited; and
3. FBC Existing 701.2 "An existing building or portion thereof shall not be altered such that the building becomes less safe or energy efficient than its existing condition; and
4. Section 1020 of the FBC requires minimum fire-separation requirements; and
5. Florida Fire Prevention Code, NFPA-1 states: Where a fire door or fire window opening no longer functions as an opening, or the door or window is removed and not replaced, the opening shall be filled to maintain the required rating of the wall assembly. [NFPA 80:5.1.6]

Therefore:

It is the policy of the Highland Beach Building Department as interpreted by the Building Official that:

1. In R-2 occupancy buildings throughout the Town provided with Automatic Sprinkler Systems installed according to FBC 903 with residential, quick response heads, a kitchen door may be eliminated as an egress doorway, so long as it can be demonstrated on plans or construction documents that:
 - a. The door being blocked is removed and replaced with material that meets the fire separation requirements as determined by the licensed Architect or Engineer of record (RDP) for the project; and
 - b. The RDP states on the submitted architectural drawings that the door being removed does not make the unit less safe.

This policy shall remain in effect indefinitely and shall be reviewed and updated with adoption of subsequent code cycles pursuant to FS 553.73 (code cycle adoption/changes by the Florida Building Commission), or abandoned if found to be prohibited or no longer in agreement with the Florida Building Code.

September 2, 2021

Jeff Remas, Building Official