

**DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES
SOUTHBURY TRAINING SCHOOL DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND EMS**

**EVACUATION SCORE DETERMINATION
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

1. Who has to have an Evacuation Score?

All facilities that are designated “Board and Care Occupancies” in accordance with the CT Fire Safety Code, (which is a building or part thereof, that is used for lodging and boarding of four or more residents, not related by blood or marriage to the owners or operators, for the purpose of providing personal care services) are required to have an Evacuation Score. This includes Community Living Arrangements or “Group Homes” that have four or more residents. This also includes multi-family homes whose total occupancy in all parts of the building is four or more residents (even in separately licensed arrangements), *unless* the individual living units are adequately separated by fire resistance construction and there is no internal communication between units. (The Authority Having Jurisdiction would determine this). Homes with 3 or less residents are NOT required to have Evacuation Scores.

2. What is an Evacuation Score?

An Evacuation Score (aka: “E-Score”) is the designation of the facility’s “Evacuation Capability”. The Evacuation Capability is the ability of the occupants, residents and staff, as a group, to either evacuate a building or relocate from the point of occupancy to a point of safety. The Evacuation Capability must be determined by a procedure acceptable to the “Authority Having Jurisdiction” (see # 3).

3. Why do we need an Evacuation Score?

The “*Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ)*” (Which in State owned and/or and staffed facilities is the Office of the State Fire Marshal, and in Private Agency operated homes (when privately owned) is the local Fire Marshal) are required to conduct a fire inspection to assure the facility complies with the Connecticut Fire Safety Code. In addition, other licensing / certifying agencies (i.e.: DDS Licensing, CT Department of Public Health ICF/MR, etc.) also conduct inspections that require this information. What the Evacuation Capability Rating is, determines the exact requirements that building fire protection features must conform to. (i.e.: fire doors, sprinkler systems, etc.)

4. What are the Levels of Evacuation Scores and what do they mean?

There are three “levels” of Evacuation Capability. (a) Prompt – the ability of a group to move reliably to a point of safety in a timely manner that is equivalent to the capacity of a household in the general population; (b) Slow – the ability of a group that can move reliably to a point of safety in a timely manner, but not as rapidly as can members of a household in the general population; (c) Impractical – The inability of a group to reliably move to a point of safety in a timely manner.

5. Are there evacuation time limits tied to the scores?

Yes. Translation of drill times to evacuation capability may be determined as (1) 3 min or less, prompt; (2) over 3 min, but not in excess of 13 min, slow; and (3) more than 13 min, impractical.

6. What are the various roles of the many agencies that deal with Evacuation Scores?

- CT State Fire Marshal’s Office – Is the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) in all State owned and operated facilities and enforces the CT Fire Safety Code in those facilities. Uses E-Scores to determine code compliance.
- Local Fire Marshal’s Office - Is the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) in all privately owned and operated facilities and enforces the CT Fire Safety Code in those facilities. Uses E-Scores to determine code compliance.
- Department of Public Health/ ICF/MR – Conduct inspections to assure compliance with federal regulations (including fire codes) for facilities that participate in the ICF/ MR program. Updates all annual E-Scores for such facilities.
- DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES – Licenses all private providers and provides inspection and review to assure compliance with DDS licensing requirements (including fire safety requirements). Provides oversight to state providers.
- Southbury Training School Fire Department – As an agent for DDS, provides E-Scores for all new homes, annual E-Score evaluations for all non- ICF/MR facilities and provides updates for all scores as needed between annual updates.

7. Who promulgates the required annual Evacuation Score?

Annual Evacuations Scores for ICF/MR funded facilities: ICF Inspectors promulgate the annual E-Score when they inspect the facility.

Annual Evacuation Scores for all Non-ICF facilities: The Southbury Training School Fire Department (STS FD), working as an agent of the DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES, promulgates annual E-Scores in these facilities.

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E-Score Updates due to changes in occupancy or resident's capabilities: The Southbury Training School Fire Department, working as an agent of the DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES promulgates these E-Scores for both ICF/MR and non-ICF/MR facilities.

8. What is the process for a NEW home to receive an Evacuation Score?

ICF/MR Homes: The Department of Public Health ICF/MR Inspectors will establish the home's E-Score upon their initial inspection.

Non-ICF/MR Homes: Upon initial DDS Licensing, the STS FD will be notified of the new license. Within 6 months, the STS FD will contact the facility and conduct a site visit to complete the E-Score calculation at that time.

9. What are the mechanisms to determine Evacuation Scores?

ICF/MR homes: During the annual Dept. of Public Health ICF/MR facility inspection, Inspectors with the Department of Public Health meet with facility staff and utilize a series of worksheets to evaluate the various aspects of an E-Score including building features, staffing levels and resident ratings. Evacuation Drill Reports are evaluated and Inspectors make observations at the time of the inspection, relative to the information. Based on this information, the E-Score is determined.

Non-ICF/MR Homes: Approximately 2 months before an E-Score is due, agency directors are sent a "survey form" for facility staff to complete. Once this survey instrument is completed (that includes information on the building, staffing and resident ratings), along with the 12 most recent fire evacuation reports are sent to the STS FD. An STS FD Officer conducts a desk review of the information, comparing the drill reports, information provided and past scores. If needed, contact is made and/or site visits are conducted to assure accurate scores. In addition, beginning in the spring of 2003, STS FD officers will conduct unannounced site visits to both public and private facilities to review the E-Score information, conduct evacuation drills and assure scores are accurate.

10. What procedure is used to determine Evacuation Scores?

There are two methods detailed in the CT Fire Safety Code that determine Evacuation Scores. They are the mathematical method described in NFPA 101A (see below) or a series of timed drills. Both ICF/MR Inspectors and the STS FD utilize a mathematical method and timed drill review that includes the following:

- (a) Determining the evacuation assistance scores for the individual residents (Score of 1 – 40pts based on information given regarding resident's ability to evacuate, response to alarm, etc.)
- (b) Computing the relative level of evacuation difficulty faced by the resident of a specific facility based on the response capabilities of the staff (Staff Score based on number of staff present 3rd shift, and if they are awake or not – Score based on 20 pts for each awake staff and 16 pts for each asleep staff, but ready to respond staff)
- (c) Adjusting for vertical egress travel (0.8, 1.0 or 1.2 based on level of bedrooms vs. level of exit discharge, and
- (d) Mathematically calculating an evacuation capability score based on a, b and c above.
$$\{(Total Resident Score) \times (Vertical Egress Score) / (Total Staff Score)\} = Evacuation Score$$

Evacuation Scores : $\leq 1.5 \Rightarrow$ Prompt; $> 1.5 \leq 5.0 \Rightarrow$ Slow; $> 5.0 \Rightarrow$ Impractical
- (e) Comparing the mathematical calculation to the series of last 12 timed drills to assure times (see # 19 FAQ) are compatible.

Note: If scores are not furnished to the AHJ (SEE # 3), the evacuation capability will be classified as impractical. Unless *the AHJ* determines that all residents are able to travel to a centralized dining facility without continuous staff assistance and there is continuous staffing whenever there are residents in the facility, then the facility shall be classified as slow.

11. When does an Evacuation Score have to be updated?

Evacuation Scores will be updated annually as detailed above. E-Scores should also be updated if there are any changes in client response capability, staffing levels or building features. Individuals should be re-evaluated after each accident or illness that requires hospitalization. It is the facility's administration's responsibility to notify the STS FD to implement these changes within a reasonable time frame. Generally within 6 months of the change, or the next scheduled annual evaluation – whichever comes first, is acceptable.

12. What is the process to get an Evacuation Score Updated?

Contact the STS FD and a new evaluation package will be sent to you, to complete and return.

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13. Why is my “due date” different from year to year?

For non-ICF/MR facilities, each time the score is updated, (i.e.: due to a change in residents), the annual “clock” gets restarted and the next due date is one year from the update.

14. I have a new resident, when do I update my home’s Evacuation Score?

In order to assure staff can accurately answer the survey questions regarding the new individual’s evacuations capability, the score should be updated after six evacuation drills are completed, within six months, or the next annual re-evaluation; whichever comes first. At that time contact the STS FD and a new evaluation package will be faxed to you.

15. A resident has left the home, when do I update my home’s Evacuation Score?

Within six months of the resident leaving the home.

16. How are Evacuation Scores determined for homes with respite beds?

For homes with designated respite beds: To account for the worst case scenario for these changing situations when the bed is filled on a transient basis, the score will be figured out using 40 points (maximum) score for the designated respite bed - no matter what the capability of the resident that is residing there at any given time is. However, any occupant whether deemed “respite” or not, that is in the facility for 6 months, *for E-Score Calculation purposes*, should be considered a full resident of the facility and a new E-Score should be done at that time. *(Please note: all residents should be sleeping in designated bedrooms – not in living rooms, or activity rooms with no bedroom doors.)*

17. What happens if a Non-ICF/MR home does not submit the required survey and drill reports to the STS FD, when requested, to update their annual evacuations scores?

Survey Packages are sent out 2 months before a re-evaluation is due. A second notice is sent one month before the evaluation is due. If at the time the evaluation is due the required survey and drill reports have not been forwarded to the STS FD for review, the facility will be designated as “Impractical to evacuate”. This designation could mandate that the facility meet the construction requirements of the new classification based on inspection and review of the Authority Having Jurisdiction (see # 3 re: Local or State Fire Marshal).

18. Why wouldn’t we be issued an evacuation score, even though I have submitted all the required paperwork in a timely manner?

There are 5 basic requirements relative to staff response and training that MUST be met, in order for an Evacuation Score to be determined. If any of these issues are “NO”, no score can be issued:

- Must have a protection plan (evacuation plan) and staff trained in it’s implementation
- The total available staff at any given time is able to handle the individual evacuation needs of each resident who is in the facility (except as specifically permitted).
- Every staff member considered in the rating can meaningfully participate in the evacuation of every resident.
- All staff members considered in this rating are required to be in the facility when on duty (except as specifically permitted).
- At least 12 drills were conducted during the previous year (unless in operation for less than 1 year).

* Exceptions must be reviewed and / or approved by the AHJ (see #6) >

19. Can a Group Home utilize a “Defend in Place” Evacuation plan where the plan is to utilize an interior point of safety during a real fire emergency?

As a general rule, homes should have an evacuation plan that requires a total evacuation to the exterior. However, a group home can have an evacuation plan that utilizes an interior point of safety ONLY if the Authority Having Jurisdiction (see # 6) has approved that point of safety and the evacuation plan. Documentation of that approval shall be maintained as part of the plan. “Defend in Place” is an evacuation philosophy that is generally reserved for “Health Care” Occupancies that offer a greater form of protection from fire due to more stringent building construction and compartmentalization requirements.

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20. What is a point of safety ?

- (a) It is exterior to, and away from the building, or
- (b) It is an acceptable interior point of safety, determined by the AHJ, and documentation as to it's acceptability is on file in the facility.

21. What happens if my Evacuation Score Changes?

A change in E-Score MAY mandate that the facility meet the construction requirements of the new classification based on inspection and review of the Authority Having Jurisdiction (see # 3 re: local or state fire marshal). This would mean that if an "existing" "prompt" facility changes to a "slow" evacuation capability rating, the facility should meet the same requirements for a newly constructed "slow" facility.

22. When timing a drill, when does it start and when does it end?

Drill timing should begin when the alarm is sounded, the drill timing should end when all occupants are accounted for at a point of safety (document total evacuation time in minutes and seconds)

23. Do all the residents in my home have to actively participate in the fire drills?

YES. All Residents must actively participate in fire drills. It is a basic assumption in board and care homes (group homes) that residents can actively participate (the CT Fire Safety Code requires residents to be trained to the best of their ability). The *only* exception to this, is if the home is designated as "Impractical to Evacuate" and the facility meets the additional requirements set out in the CT Fire Safety Code (which is the Operating features required of Health Care Facilities/Chapter 13). In this case, those residents who cannot meaningfully assist in their own evacuation, or have special health problems, shall not be required to actively participate in the drill. Written Fire Marshall's approval is not required; however, it is encouraged that the local AHJ be consulted in this arrangement, and DDS inspectors may require documentation from the physician substantiating the resident's special health problems. If residents *refuse* to participate, that individual's Evacuation Score should reflect that behavior and that behavior should be noted in the facility's site-specific fire safety plan.

24. What are my options if my home does not qualify for the exception in # 20 above, because my home is NOT designated "Impractical to Evacuate", yet I feel it is unsafe to have all the residents participate in the fire evacuation drills?

- 1. First you should contact this office and a re-evaluation of your evacuation capability will be determined to see if "Impractical to evacuate" is a more appropriate designation.
- 2. If it is still determined that the home is NOT appropriately designated "Impractical to evacuate", your local Authority Having Jurisdiction (see # 6) should be contacted to review and approve any residents not participating. This approval would be expected to be in writing, allowing this situation.

25. What is the STS Fire Department's Evacuation Score Quality Assurance Program?

Beginning in April 2003 the STS FD will be conducting unannounced site visits to facilities where E-Scores have been issued. The visit will include a Fire Evacuation Drill (which the Fire Officer will observe and critique), a question and answer opportunity for facility staff, and a fire safety inspection of the facility.

26. What is the new "State Fire Marshal's Office Board and Care Facility Outreach Program"?

Beginning in the fall of 2002, the STS FD has been contacting Local Fire Marshals when any site visits of homes are conducted or random QA Visits are conducted. If the Local Fire Marshal desires to, they will accompany the STS FD, as well as possibly, a representative from the State Fire Marshal's Field Services Division to review and inspect the facility.

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27. What are the interactions between the STS FD, the facility's Authority Having Jurisdiction (Local or State Fire Marshal), and DDS Licensing?

E-Scores are forwarded to the facility's AHJ, along with a special "red flag" note if the score has changed each time a score is updated. In addition, Local Fire Marshals are notified of, and invited to participate in all initial site visits and "un-announced" site visits by the STS FD. All deficiencies found, and a copy of the E-Score is always forwarded to the AHJ and DDS Licensing Division.

REFERENCES: CT LIFE SAFETY CODE (NFPA 101 2003 EDITION AND CT AMENDMENTS), NFPA 101A , CT DDS LICENSING REGULATION (3/95)

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