



Long-Term Care Regulatory Technical Memorandum

Number: TM 19-01 (ALF)
Title: Resident Bedroom Dimensions and Size
Provider Types: Assisted Living Facility (ALF)
TAC Reference: 26 TAC §553.62(m)(1)
Date Issued: June 3, 2019

1.0 Subject and Purpose

This technical memorandum (TM) provides guidance on the interpretation of, and compliance with, minimum dimensions and square footage requirements for a resident bedroom established in Texas Administrative Code, Title 26 (26 TAC) Chapter 553, Licensing Standards for Assisted Living Facilities,¹ in §553.62(m)(1).

The guidance provided in this TM cannot address every unique condition or configuration. Compliance can only be evaluated based upon the particulars and on-site conditions in each situation. This TM applies only to the provisions of 26 TAC §553.62(m)(1) that it addresses, and does not constitute a substantive change to any provision of §553.62. It does not address or modify any other rule in Chapter 553, nor any other legal requirement to which an assisted living facility is subject, including requirements for approval by a local authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) for enforcement of its own standards.

Graphics included in this TM are for visual illustration only. They are not intended to show an “approved” or “recommended” condition.

2.0 Policy Details & Provider Responsibilities

An ALF must meet the minimum requirements for a resident bedroom related to size, dimension and, for a person with a physical disability or mobility impairment, clear width for an access aisle around each bed. This

TM provides guidance on how to measure the dimensions and how to calculate the square footage for a resident bedroom.²

2.1 Resident Bedroom in a Type A ALF

A Type A ALF, regardless of the size of the facility, must provide at least 80 square feet of floor space in a bedroom for a single person and at least 60 square feet of floor space per person in a bedroom for two or more people.

A bedroom must be no less than 8 feet in the smallest dimension, unless specifically approved by HHSC. Therefore, an ALF may not include an area of the bedroom that is less than 8 feet in the smallest dimension in its calculation of square footage.

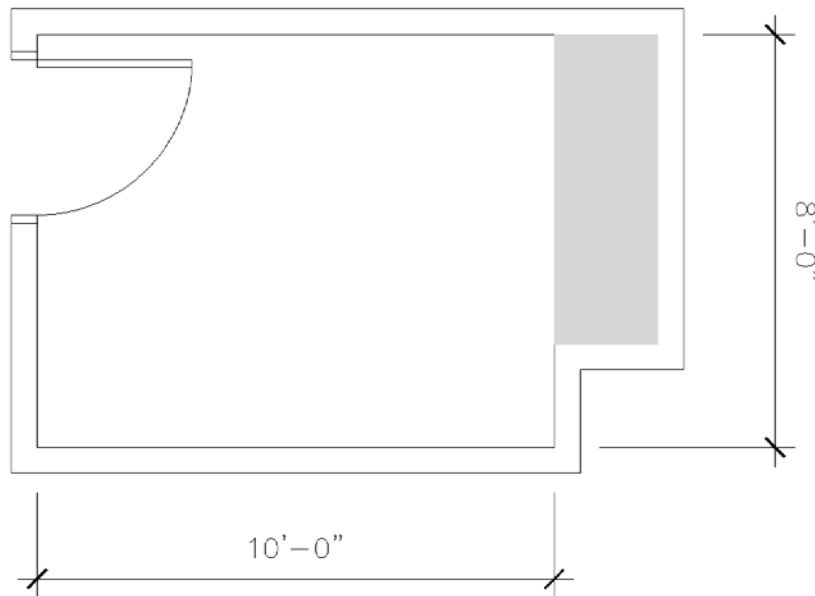


Figure 1 – Example of a resident bedroom in a Type A ALF that meets the minimum requirements for dimensions and square footage. Shaded areas show portions of the room that do not meet minimum dimension requirements and therefore must be excluded from the square footage calculation.

2.2 Resident Bedroom in a Type B ALF

A Type B ALF, regardless of the size of the facility, must provide at least 100 square feet of floor space in a bedroom for a single person

and at least 80 square feet of floor space per person in a bedroom for two or more people.

A bedroom must be no less than 10 feet in the smallest dimension, unless specifically approved by HHSC. Therefore, an ALF may not include an area of the bedroom that is less than 10 feet in the smallest dimension in its calculation of square footage.

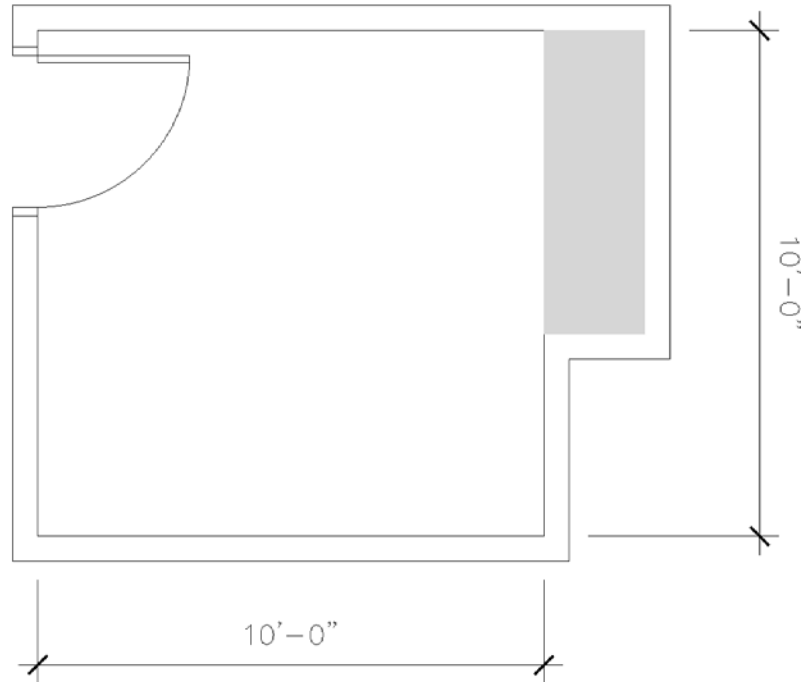


Figure 2 – Example of a resident bedroom in a Type B ALF that meets the minimum requirements for dimensions and square footage. Shaded areas show portions of the room that do not meet minimum dimension requirements and therefore must be excluded from the square footage calculation.

2.3 Living Unit Consisting of Separate Living or Dining Space and a Bedroom

In an ALF that provides a resident living unit with one or more bedrooms and living or dining space for the exclusive use of the resident residing in the bedroom, a portion of the living or dining space may be used to calculate up to 10 percent of the required bedroom square footage.

An ALF is eligible to apply a portion of the living or dining space to account for up to 10 percent of the minimum bedroom square footage requirement only if the bedroom meets the minimum dimension requirements or HHSC specifically approves a smaller dimension. This most commonly occurs and is permitted in a living unit sized for two or more residents.

2.4 Unusual Bedroom Configurations

A bedroom's shape might not be square or rectangular. This can cause confusion about how to measure a room or calculate square footage. The following diagrams show examples of bedrooms with odd angles, unusual configurations or built-in features that reduce the bedroom dimensions to less than the minimum required dimension. Section [2.5](#) of this document provides additional guidance for when a resident bedroom has a built-in packaged terminal air conditioner (PTAC).

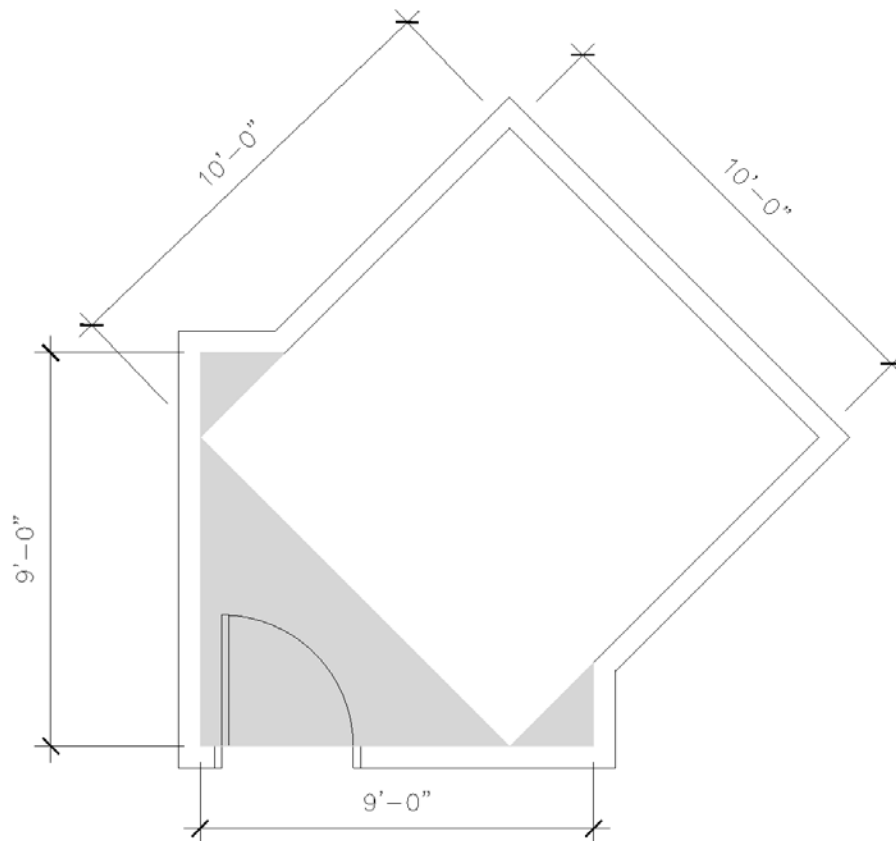


Figure 3 – Example of a resident bedroom with an unusual configuration, using a Type B ALF example. Shaded areas show portions of the room that do not meet minimum dimension

requirements and therefore must be excluded from the square footage calculation.

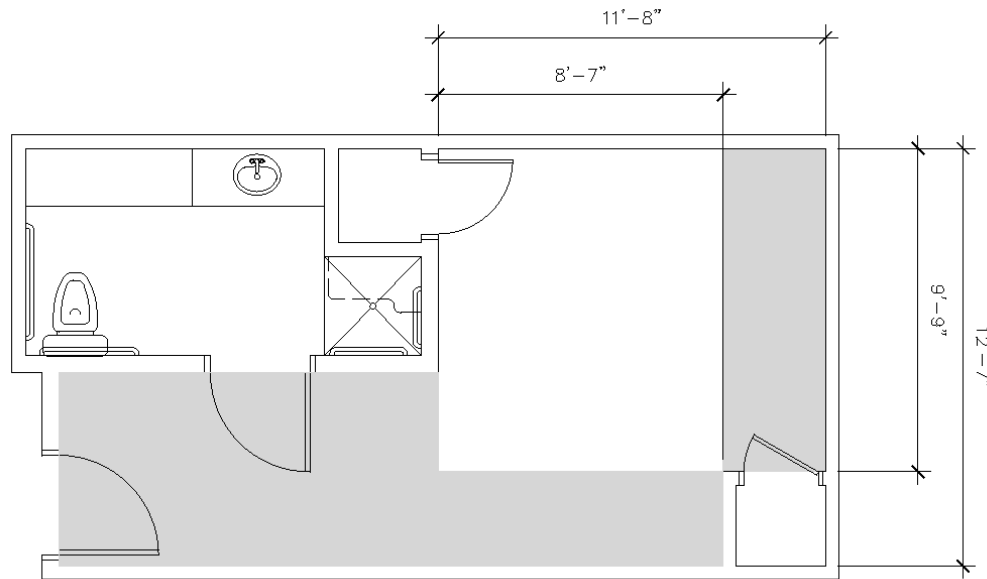


Figure 4 – Example of a resident bedroom with a built-in feature³ that reduces the dimension to less than the required minimum dimension. Shaded areas show portions of the room that do not meet minimum dimension requirements and therefore must be excluded from the square footage calculation.

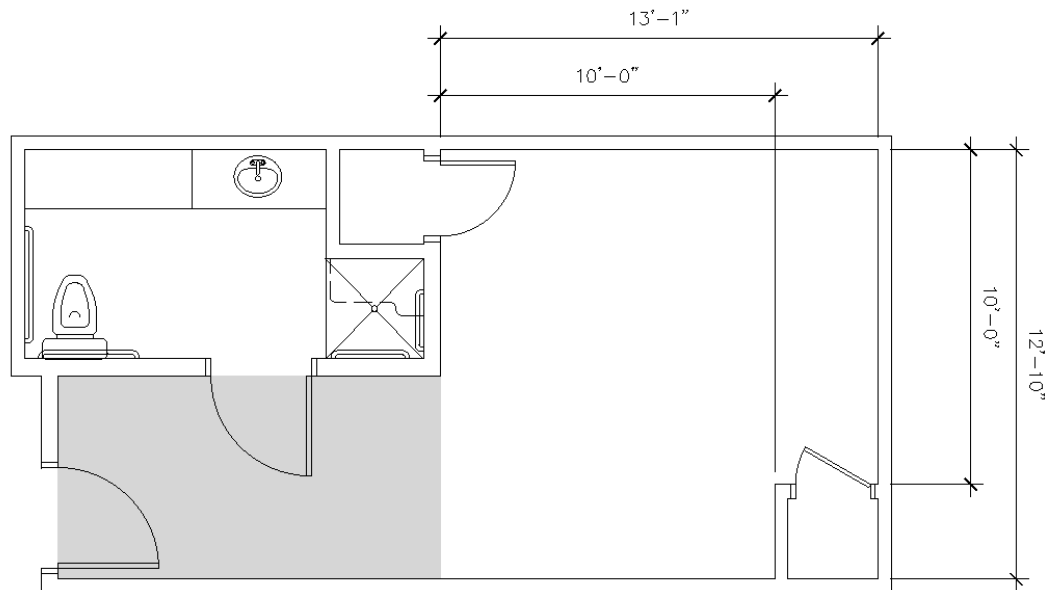


Figure 5 – Example of a resident bedroom with a built-in feature that reduces the dimension to less than the required minimum dimension. Shaded areas show portions of the room that do not meet minimum dimension requirements and therefore must be excluded from the square footage calculation.

2.5 Packaged Terminal Air Conditioner (PTAC)

A PTAC is a type of self-contained heating and air conditioning system. It is commonly seen in hotels and is usually installed underneath or above a window.

HHSC **does not** consider a PTAC an obstruction for the calculation of the resident bedroom's square footage if the PTAC, or its decorative cover, **does not extend all the way to the floor**.

HHSC **does** consider a PTAC an obstruction for the calculation of the resident bedroom's square footage if the PTAC, or its decorative cover, **extends to the floor**.



Figure 6 – A PTAC that does not extend all the way to the floor.

An ALF is not required to make changes to an existing resident bedroom with a PTAC solely because of the guidance provided in this document. HHSC permits an existing resident bedroom with a PTAC,

that is already approved, to remain in use. A new resident bedroom with a PTAC must follow the guidance in this document.

Section [2.6](#) of this document provides additional information on how to measure a resident bedroom with a PTAC. Sections [2.7](#) and [2.8](#) of this document provide additional information on determining if a resident bedroom is existing or new.

2.6 How to Measure a Room

Measure the room from the finished surface of one wall to the finished surface of the opposite wall. Do not measure from the surface of the trim (e.g., baseboard or molding). Measure at the floor height and keep the tape measure straight and level. Multiply the length by the width to calculate the area. Do not include an area where the dimension is less than the minimum required dimension.

If a resident bedroom has a PTAC, with or without a decorative cover, that **does not extend all the way to the floor**, measure the room from the finished surface of the wall, and not from the surface of the PTAC or its cover.

If a resident bedroom has a PTAC, with or without a decorative cover, that **extends all the way to the floor**, measure the room from the from the surface of the PTAC or its cover.

An HHSC life safety code (LSC) inspector will verify that a bedroom meets the minimum area and dimensional requirements during an on-site inspection.

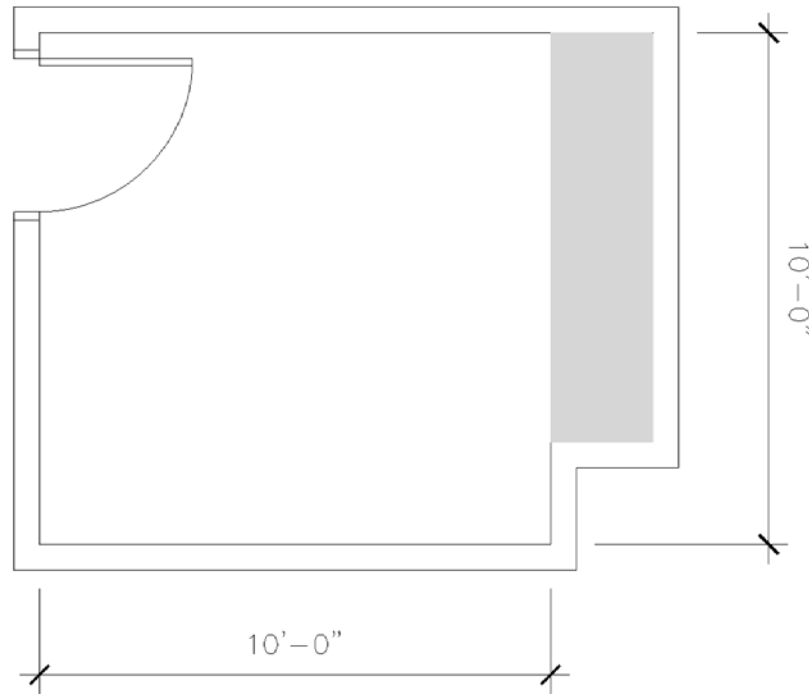


Figure 7 – Example of how to measure a resident bedroom using a Type B ALF example. Shaded areas show portions of the room that do not meet minimum dimension requirements and must be excluded from the calculation of the square footage.

2.7 Existing Bedrooms that Do Not Meet Dimension Requirements

For purposes of this TM, an existing bedroom is one approved for use in an ALF that was licensed, or approved for licensure, before the date of this TM. HHSC previously approved certain dimensions for some bedrooms that do not meet the minimum dimension requirements under 26 TAC §553.2(m)(1)(A) or (B), as applicable. The specific approval remains valid if the facility remains a licensed ALF without a break in licensure and the facility does not alter the approved dimensions.

If the provider makes modifications to the bedroom, it may affect the specific approval given, and the facility may be required to meet minimum dimensions. To maintain HHSC’s specific approval of a smaller dimension, the provider must not further reduce any approved dimensions of the bedroom.

The HHSC LSC inspector documents any specific approval of a dimension smaller than a minimum dimension required that has been previously granted to an existing ALF on HHSC Form 3724, Statement of Licensing Violations and Plan of Correction, in the P-000, initial comments section in conjunction with each LSC licensure inspection of the same facility. A facility must make available to any HHSC staff upon request, documentation of HHSC approval of any bedroom dimension smaller than a minimum dimension otherwise required by rule.

2.8 New Bedrooms that Do Not Meet Dimension Requirements

For purposes of this TM, a new bedroom is one approved for use in an ALF that is licensed or approved for licensure on or after the date of this TM. HHSC has the authority to specifically approve a resident bedroom that does not meet the minimum requirement for dimension, as permitted by 26 TAC §553.62(m)(1)(A) or (B).

HHSC expects a purpose-built building to meet the applicable bedroom dimension and size requirements. A purpose-built building is one that was specifically built to be an ALF, regardless of the size of the facility.

HHSC does not approve a new bedroom that does not meet the minimum square footage requirement in a purpose-built building.

HHSC may consider permitting a resident bedroom that does not meet the minimum dimension requirements in a new ALF converted from a residential home.

An ALF may verbally request that HHSC permits a resident bedroom that does not meet the minimum dimension requirements during the LSC licensure inspection. HHSC documents the specific approval or denial of any dimension smaller than the applicable minimum dimension as detailed in section [2.9](#) of this document.

2.9 HHSC Documentation of Approval or Denial of a Dimension Smaller than Required by Rule

The HHSC LSC inspector documents the specific approval or denial of any dimension smaller than the applicable minimum dimension on HHSC Form 3724, Statement of Licensing Violations and Plan of

Correction, in the P-000, initial comments section, in conjunction with the initial LSC or capacity increase inspection and each subsequent LSC licensure inspection.

As an example, when an HHSC LSC inspector **approves** a dimension smaller than the minimum dimension otherwise required by rule, the P-000 comments might state:

“Bedroom 101 measured 10 feet, 6 inches by 9 feet, 11 inches from the finished surface of one wall to the finished surface of the opposite wall. One dimension of this bedroom did not meet the requirement of no less than 10 feet in the smallest dimension. The bedroom measured 104 square feet in size. Bedroom 101 was approved for single occupancy with the 9 foot, 11 inch dimension that is smaller by 1 inch than the minimum 10 foot dimension required, and with the second dimension of 10 feet, 6 inches.”

As an example, when an HHSC LSC inspector **does not approve** a dimension smaller than the minimum dimension otherwise required by rule, the P-000 comments might state:

“Room 202, which the facility proposed to use as a bedroom for a single occupant, measured 10 feet, 0 inches by 9 feet, 6 inches. One dimension of this bedroom did not meet the requirement of no less than 10 feet in the smallest dimension. The bedroom measured 95 square feet in size, which is less than the required 100 square feet. The facility requested approval for use of this room as a bedroom. Since the bedroom did not meet the minimum square footage and dimension requirements, Room 202 was not approved for use as a bedroom.”

3.0 Background/History

Health and Safety Code §247.0263 requires HHSC to provide “guidance on the interpretation of minimum life safety code standards” prescribed under Health and Safety Code, Chapter 247, Assisted Living Facilities, and ALF rules, in 26 TAC Chapter 553. The statute requires a TM to be published at least twice a year.

4.0 Resources

None

5.0 Contact Information

If you have any questions about this letter, please contact the Policy, Rules and Training Section by email at PolicyRulesTraining@hsc.state.tx.us or call (512) 438-3161.

Endnote References

¹ 26 TAC Chapter 553, Licensing Standards for Assisted Living Facilities, is available in its entirety on the website of the [Texas Secretary of State](#).

² This TM does not address clear width for an access aisle around each bed in a bedroom for a person with a physical disability or mobility impairment. The location of the access aisle depends wholly on the type, size and location of the bed.

³ A built-in feature includes items like columns, mechanical shafts, vertical terminal air conditioner (VTAC)