

## Primary Care Clinic Classifications: Physical Plant Standards

**Purpose:** Title 10 of the Official Compilation of Codes, Rules and Regulations of the State of New York (NYCRR) Parts 711, 712, 713, 715 and 716 set forth the architectural, engineering, equipment and construction and other physical environment standards for all health facilities subject to Department of Health oversight pursuant to Public Health Law (PHL) Article 28. Licensed primary care clinics, particularly those in underserved communities, that seek to provide primary care services or other services in the same facility, such as behavioral health, and/or dental services, often are challenged to meet the physical environment standards. The following guidelines establish different classification categories that are designed to provide direction, allowed within our regulations, related to minimum physical environment standards for specific classifications of Article 28 primary care clinic operators (Level 1 and 2) because of their limited size and scope. The purpose of these guidelines is to promote access to primary care services.

### Definitions:

Primary Care Clinic	For purposes of this guidance, primary care clinic services licensed under Article 28 and services provided by a physician, nurse practitioner, or midwife acting within his or her lawful scope of practice under Title VIII of the Education Law and who is practicing in a primary care specialty.
Room	A space enclosed by hard walls and having a door. Where the word "room" or "office" is used in the Guidelines, it means the enclosed space in intended to be used for the named function. Otherwise, the described area may be a specific space in another room or common area.
Service Areas	Designated spaces that house auxiliary functions that do not routinely involve contact with patients, clients, or the public (e.g., supply, processing, storage, and maintenance services such as pharmacy, dietary, bulk sterile processing, laundry processing and storage, housekeeping, engineering operations, and waste storage/holding facilities).

### Classifications of Primary Care Clinics:

General Diagnostic and Treatment Center (D&TC) (Level 3)	Diagnostic and treatment centers are a medical facility as defined in 10 NYCRR section 751.1 or an extension clinic as defined in 10 NYCRR 401.1(g).
Limited Care Clinics (Level 2)	Limited Care Clinics provide physical health services and may be in combination with behavioral health and/or dental services. Maximum of 6 rooms in total, and the combination of room types cannot exceed 3 physical examination rooms, 3 dental examination rooms, and/or 3 consultation rooms.
Accessory Care Clinic (Level 1)	Accessory Care Clinics are meant to supplement an existing behavioral health clinic (Article 31), substance abuse clinic (Article 32), or otherwise be incidental to the main occupancy use of the facility. Accessory Care Clinics are limited to a maximum of 3 rooms in total, and total rooms may be in any combination of physical examination rooms and/or dental examination rooms.

### Patient Room Types:

Physical Examination Room	A room with a bed, stretcher, or examination table and capability for periodic monitoring (e.g., measurement of blood pressure or pulse oximetry) in which procedures that do not require a specialized suite can be performed.
Dental Examination Room	Dental examination room includes any room used to conduct dental examination and dental treatment and includes dental hygiene space. Note: Any equipment emitting ionizing radiation must have a physicist's certification.
Consultation Room	Used to provide limited physical health services (i.e. vitals, vaccinations, etc.) and, more typically, behavioral health services. A consultation room cannot be used to provide services that require a physical examination room.

### Service Areas Types:

Support areas (nursing units, diagnostic and treatment areas, etc.)	Designated spaces or areas in which staff members perform auxiliary functions that support the main purpose of the unit or other location.
Support areas (patient, families, and/or visitors)	Designated spaces for the use of patients, clients, registrants, or visitors (e.g., changing areas, dining rooms, toilet rooms, lounges) or families and visitors (e.g., waiting areas and lounges, children's play areas, toilet rooms).
Support areas (staff)	Designated spaces for the personal use of staff (e.g., changing areas, toilet rooms, showers, lounges, dining areas).

Standard and or Title	D&TC (Category Level 3)	Limited Care Clinic (Category Level 2)	Accessory Care Clinic (Category Level 1)
<b>Compliance with NFPA 101 Life Safety Code 2012 Edition</b>	•	•	•
<b>Compliance with FGI 2014 or 2018 Edition</b>	•	•	•
<b>Compliance with New York State Building Code and or Local Codes</b>			
DOH recognizes that the local authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) requirements for accessibility could conflict with NYSDOH determinations. In cases where NYSDOH determination conflicts with AHJ requirements, the most stringent determination governs, per NYSDOH regulations (10 NYCRR Section 711).	•	•	•
<b>Compliance with ADA 2010 Requirements</b>			
Requirements that all facilities must have reasonable accommodations for the general public and staff must be met. Requirements regarding access into the building and throughout the building will be required.			
If applicable, allowances will be considered on a case by case basis for structural impartibility. Structural impartibility means that application of the code would result in unreasonable hardship to the applicant, any required structural changes are not feasible, and/or waiver of the provision will not impact patient health and safety, per 2010 ADA standards.	•	•	•
All new construction is required to meet ADA standards and NYSDOH will not consider exceptions and or waivers to ADA standards. Proposed new spaces within existing facilities should make every effort to meet ADA standards or demonstrate in their healthcare provider application why they cannot.			
<b>Number of Exam Rooms Permissible Without Dental Services</b>			
No set requirements for number of rooms.	•		
Maximum of three (3) physical examination rooms and a maximum of three (3) consultation rooms. Clinic cannot exceed six (6) rooms in total.		•	
Maximum of three (3) physical examination rooms. Clinic cannot exceed three (3) rooms in total.			•
<b>Number of Exam Rooms Permissible with Dental Services</b>			
No set requirements for number of rooms.	•		
Maximum of three (3) dental examination rooms, maximum of three (3) physical examination rooms, and maximum of three (3) consult rooms. Clinic cannot exceed six (6) rooms in total.		•	
Maximum of three (3) rooms in total, and total rooms may be in any combination of physical examination rooms and/or dental examination rooms.			•
<b>Health Services Allowed</b>			
Services provided can include dialysis, cancer treatment, or other services as approved by the Department of Health.	•		
Services provided can include health promotion, disease prevention, health maintenance, counseling, patient education, diagnosis and treatment of acute and chronic illnesses and the utilization of consultation/referral as appropriate:	•	•	•
Vaccinations	•	•	•
Screenings	•	•	•
Diabetes outpatient self-management training (DSMT) services	•	•	•
Medical nutrition therapy (MNT) services	•	•	•
Diagnostic testing limited to blood draws, urinalysis, and labs limitations on types of procedures based upon risk	•	•	•

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<b>Health Services Allowed (continued)</b>			
Sedation: only local anesthesia may be provided subject to patient selection criteria	•	•	•
Chronic disease management (through remote monitoring or otherwise)	•	•	•
Buprenorphine Induction	•	•	•
<b>Room Types (Typical)</b>			
Physical Examination Rooms	•	•	•
Dental Examination Rooms	•	•	•
Consultation Rooms	•	•	
Special Purpose Examination Rooms	•		
Special Patient Care Rooms /Airborne Infection Isolation Room (Optional unless required by a specific chapter.)	•		
Nurse Stations	•	•	
Medication Safety Zones	•		
Nourishment Area or Room (Optional unless required by a specific chapter.)	•		
Imaging Facilities (Optional)	•		
Laboratory (Optional)	•	•	
Reception	•	•	•
Waiting Area	•	•	•
Administrative Areas	•	•	•
Multipurpose Room	•	•	
Medical Records (secure storage for paper or electronic records)	•	•	•
Staff Storage	•	•	•
Clean Supply Storage	•	•	•
Wheelchair storage and parking space	•	•	•
Emergency equipment storage	•		
<b>Ceiling Height Requirements</b>			
7'-10" Required as a minimum in all other spaces	•	•	•
7'-6" Required as a minimum in Corridors	•	•	•
<b>Exam Room Requirements: Physical and Dental Examination Rooms</b>			
Area: 80 square feet minimum	•		
Area: A minimum of 72 sq. ft. will be considered for existing construction if the applicant can demonstrate handicap accessibility.		•	•
Clearance: 2'-8" (General Purpose Exam Rooms)	(2) two sides of table; side and head or foot area, exam table can be against the wall	•	•
Clearance: 2'-8" (Dental Rooms)	(All sides, including the head, of each chair)	•	•
<b>Handwashing Sink</b> that is permanent, plumbed to water supply and sanitary sewer. (Located within Physical Exam Rooms & Dental Exam Rooms)	•	•	•

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<b>HVAC Requirements</b>			
Current NYS mechanical code (Business Occupancy Standard)	•	•	•
ASHRAE Table 170	•	•	•
<b>Patient Toilet</b>			
Patients, staff and public may not use the same toilet.	•		
In clinics with six (6) or fewer rooms, patients, staff and public may use the same toilet.		•	
In clinics with three (3) or fewer rooms, patients, staff and public may use the same toilet. Toilet does not need to be located in the clinic.			•
Must be ADA complaint	•	•	•
<b>Public Toilet</b>			
Patients, staff and public may not use the same toilet.	•		
In clinics with six (6) or fewer rooms, patients, staff and public may use the same toilet.		•	
In clinics with three (3) or fewer rooms, patients, staff and public may use the same toilet. Toilet does not need to be located in the clinic.			•
Must be ADA complaint	•	•	•
<b>Staff Toilet</b>			
Patients, staff and public may not use the same toilet.	•		
In clinics with six (6) or fewer rooms, patients, staff and public may use the same toilet.		•	
In clinics with three (3) or fewer rooms, patients, staff and public may use the same toilet. Toilet does not need to be located in the clinic.			•
Must be ADA complaint	•	•	•
<b>Staff Lounge</b>			
Staff lounge is required.	•		
In clinics with six (6) or fewer rooms, a lounge is not required but provisions for personal storage for staff is required.		•	
In clinics with three (3) or fewer rooms, a lounge is not required but provisions for personal storage for staff is required. Lounge does not need to be located in the clinic.			•
<b>Clean Storage</b>			
A clean storage room for supplies and equipment is required and it shall be dedicated to this purpose, separate from the soiled storage room, and include a counter, hand-washing station and supply storage.	•		
In Limited Care or Accessory Care Clinics, a clean handling area for supplies and equipment is required. If the clean handling area is <b>outside physical or dental exam rooms</b> , it may include a closet, locker, or alcove with a covered bin. Locked storage shall be provided for items such as syringes or medications. The clean handling area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shall not be in the same general area used to store soiled supplies/equipment</li> <li>• Shall not be accessible to a passerby</li> <li>• Shall not compromise clearance in hallways</li> <li>• Shall not compromise clearances in exit ways</li> </ul>		•	•

Standard and or Title	D&TC (Category Level 3)	Limited Care Clinic (Category Level 2)	Accessory Care Clinic (Category Level 1)
<p>In Limited Care or Accessory Care Clinics, a clean handling area for supplies and equipment is required. If the clean handling area is <b>inside physical or dental exam rooms</b>, it may include a cabinet or storage container. The clean handling area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shall be locked</li> <li>• Shall not reduce the size of the physical exam room or dental exam room to less than 72 square feet</li> <li>• Shall not compromise the specified clearances around the exam table</li> <li>• Shall not compromise clearances in exit ways</li> </ul> <p>If exceptions to the standards are made, residents must be screened and determined that no invasive procedures are indicated, such as extensive dressings or other procedures that would result in generation of large amounts of regulated medical waste in the room, to prevent contamination of clean supplies/equipment.</p>		•	•
<b>Soiled Storage</b>			
<p>A soiled storage room for the collection, storage, and disposal of soiled materials is required and it shall be dedicated to this purpose, separate from the clean storage room.</p>	•		
<p>In Limited Care or Accessory Care Clinics, a soiled storage area is required. Soiled supplies and equipment must be kept in a locked room or container. The soiled storage area may include a closet, locker, or alcove with a covered bin under the direct supervision of staff. The soiled storage area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shall not be stored or kept in patient rooms</li> <li>• Shall not be in the same general area used to store clean patient supplies/equipment</li> <li>• Shall not be accessible to a passerby</li> <li>• Shall not compromise clearance in hallways</li> <li>• Shall not compromise clearances in exit ways</li> <li>• If utilizing a covered bin for soiled linens or trash, it shall not exceed 32 gallons in capacity</li> </ul> <p>Normal trash, such as paper linens and exam room table paper and paper towels, shall be placed in waste containers and shall be emptied on a regular basis into a larger central container.</p>		•	•
<b>Environmental Services Rooms</b>			
<p>Environmental Services Rooms are required to have a service or floor mounted sink, hand-washing station or hand sanitation dispenser, and storage for supplies and housekeeping equipment</p>	•	•	•
<p>Environmental services room may be shared with other tenants that are business occupants only (this would exclude ambulatory health care settings, hospitals, and nursing homes) on the same floor. Only cleaning supplies may be stored in this room/area.</p>		•	•