

Municipal Affairs Ministerial Order - Homes of Adults with Developmental Disabilities

Q & A for Persons with Developmental Disabilities Service Providers, Self-Advocates and Families/Guardians

What was announced?

- The final report from the Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) consultation team recommended that residences of adult individuals with developmental disabilities should be treated no different than any other home when interpreting and applying safety codes.
- A Ministerial Order (MO), effective December 30, 2016, will ensure that a residential standard is applied to the homes of adults with developmental disabilities.
- This means that safety codes inspections will not occur unless there is a request, an incident or complaint, as with any other home.
- The August 2015 technical interpretation (known as “STANDATA”) that supported the now repealed PDD Safety Standards Regulation administered by Human Services, will be withdrawn at the same time the amended exemption order is issued.

What other measures support safety in residences of adults with developmental disabilities?

- The MO continues to support safety in the homes of individuals receiving PDD services.
 - Residential building and fire code safety requirements such as smoke alarms are required as with any other home in Alberta.
 - The order does not apply to homes where the person is detained as part of a service plan for their own protection or public safety. In these cases, the risk to life safety is unacceptable, and the building and fire codes apply in full, including sprinklers.
- PDD service providers under Human Services will continue to assess and identify detention situations to the municipality or authority responsible to enforce the *Safety Codes Act*.
 - Where home living situations warrant modifications, Human Services will work with service providers, municipalities and other stakeholders on solutions - acknowledging this will take time to implement.

Has anything changed in situations where four or more individuals are residing in the same house?

- No. When there are four or more people living in the same residence, the *Supportive Living Accommodation Licensing Act* (SLALA) still applies and related inspections will continue for these specific residences. SLALA has its own set of standards that apply regardless of how the services/supports are being funded, meaning it is not specific to PDD.

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What difference is this going to make for Albertans with developmental disabilities served by PDD?

- The exemption order will ensure that the interpretation and application of safety codes to residential standards is applied consistently in homes occupied by people with developmental disabilities. This means their homes will only require those building or fire code safety measures that are required as with any other home in Alberta.
- The recognition that residences of adults with developmental disabilities are like any other home supports the inclusion of individuals with developmental disabilities in the community, and respects their rights to live with dignity.

When does the regulatory change take effect?

- The MO takes effect December 30, 2016.

What are the next steps?

- Municipal Affairs, in partnership with Human Services, is informing municipalities, safety services stakeholders and the PDD community and its stakeholders about the MO.
- PDD service providers funded by Human Services will continue to assess and identify detention situations to the municipality or authority responsible to enforce the *Safety Codes Act*.

Where can Albertans get more information?

- For more questions about the MO, please call Municipal Affairs' Safety Services, toll-free at 1-866-421-6929.
- For questions about the PDD program, please call 780-427-1177, Ext #3 (toll-free by first dialing 310-0000).