



THE MILROSE GUIDE TO THE 2022 NYC CONSTRUCTION CODE CHANGES:

Residential Amenity Spaces

The new 2022 NYC Construction Code includes over 600 major changes and it will go into effect on November 7, 2022. To help you prepare, Milrose's Code & Zoning Analysts are publishing an 8-part series where they break down the significant changes you need to be aware of for your upcoming projects.

In [Part 1: Commercial Interiors](#), we covered the forthcoming code changes to elevators, occupied terraces, and live load calculations that will impact commercial buildings. Next up, we are breaking down the big code changes on the way for residential amenity spaces. Read on for an overview of the new occupant load calculations, exit door requirements and special fire protection requirements for Group R-2 Amenity Spaces.

The new code will usher in major changes to the rules for residential amenity spaces.

GROUP R-2: RESIDENTIAL AMENITY SPACES

Since New York City updated to the 2014 Construction Code eight years ago, there has been an [increasing trend](#) in new residential construction to provide amenity spaces for tenants, such as lounges, gymnasiums, swimming pools, roof terraces, and dining spaces. The 2022 NYC Building Code will clarify and bring changes to code requirements for amenity spaces in residential apartment buildings (Group R-2 occupancies).

Chapter 10 of the 2022 NYC Building Code will be revised to provide new means of egress requirements for "accessory to Group R-2":

» **NEW OCCUPANT LOAD CALCULATIONS FOR GROUP R-2 AMENITY SPACES:**

The NYC Building Code uses a floor area per occupant calculation (density) to determine how design occupant loads are determined for a space, in order to determine the means of egress capacity. Previously, the 2014 Code only provided a calculation of 200 gross square feet per occupant for all residential spaces. The 2022 NYC Building Code will introduce new occupant load calculations for residential amenity spaces that more closely align with those of assembly spaces.

"Concentrated" indoor residential amenity spaces (such as lounges, dining spaces, etc.) must be calculated at **15 net square feet per person**, whereas **"unconcentrated"** indoor residential amenity spaces shall be calculated at **50 net square feet per person**. Accessory roof terraces for residents can continue to be calculated at 200 gross square feet per person.



» **REQUIRED NUMBER OF EXIT DOORS FROM GROUP R-2 AMENITY SPACES:**

NYC Building Code calls for two means of egress pathways (two exit access doors) from larger rooms and spaces, based on the occupant load of the room. The 2014 Code requires two means of egress doors from any residential space with more than 20 occupants. This requirement was intended for large apartments (4,000 square feet or more). However, it technically also applies to residential amenity spaces, which meant that small residential amenity spaces with as few as 21 persons are currently required to have access to two means of egress (for comparison, nonresidential spaces, such as office amenity spaces, may have up to 74 occupants with one means of egress door).



The new 2022 code will allow residential amenity spaces to have up to 49 occupants with one exit access door.

» **MAXIMUM OCCUPANT LOAD OF GROUP R-2 OCCUPANCIES**

Group R-2 amenity spaces will be limited to an occupant load of 74 persons. Otherwise, the spaces will need to be classified as [Place of Assembly](#) (Group A) occupancies.

Amenity spaces with multiple rooms must count the total occupant load of each room, unless they are separated from each other by 1 hour fire-resistance-rated walls. Such amenity spaces will NOT be permitted to be connected by large openings—openings will be limited to fire doors that are 156 square feet in area or less, and the total width of openings will be limited to 25 percent of the length of the wall.

» **SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR LARGE GROUP R-2 AMENITY SPACES**

Large residential amenity spaces that are the “primary function” on a story—those that are

greater than 50 percent of the building area of the story and have more than 150 persons—will have to comply with special egress and fire protection requirements. **Corridors within the amenity spaces will have to be fire-resistance-rated fire barriers, with no direct openings from mechanical, electrical, or storage rooms permitted.** The corridors would have to be at least 5 feet wide, and have an area to accommodate the total occupant load on the basis of 3 square feet per person.

Additionally, the corridors will need to be served by either smokeproof stairway enclosures (e.g. pressurized stairways), pressurized corridors, occupant self-evacuation elevators, or an additional (third) exit stairway. If any of these conditions cannot be met, the space will need to be classified as a Place of Assembly (Group A) occupancy.

Questions or concerns about the new code changes? Milrose is here to help. **[Get in touch.](#)**

Stay tuned for our next guide which will cover the code changes impacting healthcare facilities. **[Subscribe here.](#)**

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