



REENA HOUSING STANDARDS 2024



Reena is a non-profit organization that promotes dignity, individuality, independence, personal growth and community inclusion for people with diverse abilities within a framework of Jewish culture and values.

This document summarizes housing standards established for Reena to provide consistent experiences for all persons living in Reena-owned residences.

Based on our value of accessibility, Reena is committed to maintaining a safe and supportive environment where people with diverse abilities can live and participate in their community in line with the biblical direction of removing the stumbling blocks (Leviticus 19:14).

Reena will strive for excellence in meeting the standards we have adopted when planning for new locations and will continue to work on making improvements to all our existing locations.

Reena Housing Standards

Standards for encouraging belonging

- Access to amenities offered by Reena and community partners
- Access to religious and cultural facilities
- Proximity to public transit within 1 km, access to staff to drive Reena vans or access to Secure Medical Transport
- Proximity to a grocery store within 1 km or grocery delivery service or staff support for shopping
- Proximity to a park, easy walking trails or green spaces within 1 km
- Proximity to a community centre and public library within 1.5 kms or access to indoor recreational areas that are kept clean and safe
- Proximity to a pharmacy within 1 km or access to pharmacy delivery service
- Proximity to health care services, hospital or emergency health care services within 3 kms
- Proximity to area with job or volunteer opportunities within 10 kms
- Proximity to retail, personal care services, dining and cafes within 2 kms
- Access to reliable wi-fi

Standards for strengthening relationship to space

- Opportunity for residents to provide input on décor, furniture placement and paint colour for common areas
- Opportunity for residents to provide input on housemate if sharing living spaces
- Resident is provided with choice of décor, furniture, bedding and paint colour in bedroom
- Beds of appropriate size and mattress that is suitable for the resident
- Appropriate furnishing, clothing storage and bedding that is appropriate to the weather
- Sufficient space accessible for the resident to keep personal possessions and privacy
- Exterior window, screen and window covering in bedroom to ensure natural light and source of ventilation
- Specialty furniture

Standards for safety

- Mixing valve installed on each location's hot water heater to prevent scalding (to ensure that water from the faucet is not hotter than 49°C); dishwashers and washing machines to be fed directly from hot water tank for sanitation purposes
- Secured storage space in each location to store flammable liquids, paint supplies, poisonous and hazardous substances, and hazardous household products
- Clearly marked exits that are kept free of obstruction throughout the location
- Written fire safety/fire evacuation procedures posted in a conspicuous place at each location
- Integrated smoke alarm, CO2 detector and sprinkler system in each room interior and stairway for each storey
- First aid kit and manual accessible to staff at each location/apartment unit
- Temperature maintained at a minimum of 20°C throughout the building from October 1 to May 31 for all locations
- Air conditioning or cooling room readily available for extreme heat days
- Appliances and furnishings that are easy to use, maintain and clean
- Defibrillator for *intentional community apartment buildings
- Communication system throughout residence/building (i.e., CCTV in common areas, intercom) for intentional community apartment/designed homes
- Air exchange system, air cleaning/ventilation throughout residence/building
- Home/building is separated with barriers from railway lines, high traffic and surrounding environmental concerns
- Backup generator for safety, independence, and health security
- Access to back-up cooking appliances or meals in the event of broken appliance
- Fire extinguishers in kitchen

* An **intentional community** is a housing model where a group of individuals live together based on shared values and goals, often integrating housing with supportive services tailored to specific needs.

These communities focus on collaboration, mutual support, and creating an environment that facilitates independent living while providing necessary care and resources.

For homes serving children

- Fire-resistant partition separates any fuel-fired central heating appliance from the remainder of the building on floors where there is a bedroom and a central heating fuel-fired appliance
- Kitchen fire extinguisher rated 2A 10B C
- Floor space is at least 7 sq m = 7,532 ft² - children over 16 years of age
- Designated outdoor recreational space to allow for 9 sq m of play space per child

For new construction of intentional community apartment building (standards have been adopted from the rick hansen accessibility certification)

Vehicular and bike access

- Adequate number of accessible parking spaces
- Location of designated accessible space is located in close proximity to the main entrance, on level ground and sheltered
- Well-illuminated throughout parking lot
- Designated passenger drop-off and pick-up zones
- Outdoor bike parking rack and sheltered storage for bikes and scooters

Exterior approach and entrance

- Surface is firm, stable and slip resistant (no pavers)
- Leveled path or low-gradient slope
- Drainage 2% slope
- Seating along path to entrance
- Shelter at primary entrance
- Accessible entrance that is power-operated and easy-to-open
- Emergency power or fail-safe systems for power-operated doors
- Seating at indoor entrances

Interior circulation

- Levelled threshold below 13mm
- U or L-shaped lever style door handles
- Colour contrasted doors
- Colour contrasted strips or marking on glazed doors
- Kick plate on doors
- No busy patterns on flooring, carpets or staircase
- Wide hallways
- Handrails on both sides installed for long hallways
- Seating for long hallways
- Well-illuminated hallways
- Ramps are less than 8% slope

- Unit doors viewing wheelchair height and standing height
- Doors enabled for power operators
- Wheelchair accessible height switches and controls
- Unit access to backup power generator

Lobby and reception

- Desk and counters at accessible heights and clearly visible from entrance with direct route
- Seating is matte, non-slip without bold pattern and contrasts with environment
- Large elevators with audio floor announcement

Washrooms

- **Entry door:** Power-operated door or screen wall entry or minimum force required to open entry door, accessible hardware (U or L-shaped levers), colour- contrasted, clear opening beyond 900 mm in width or barn door or blind entrance doors
- **Toilet stall:** door is accessible (D-handles), colour- contrasted, clear opening beyond 900 mm in width
- **Toilet:** grab bars at appropriate height (750 mm for side bars, 860 mm for rear bars), appropriate seat height (430 mm), back supports (tank), toilet flushing mechanism is within reach
- **Urinal:** Accessible with clear space (430 mm lower rim height with 920 mm clear width of stall), colour- contrasted with adjacent surfaces
- **Toilet paper dispensers:** commercial grade at appropriate height and locations (600 mm height, 300 mm forward reach), open roll type, full blocking during construction to enable potential use as grab bar
- **Emergency call button** (universal washroom): within reach of toilet
- **Sink and counter:** accessible heights (840 mm counter surface height, 685 mm knee clearance height and depth ranging from 200-300 mm), washroom accessories at accessible heights (below 1200 mm)
- Automated or easy to operate plumbing fixtures and accessories
- **Shower:** roll in, grab bars, accessible water faucet and shower wand, recessed soap holders or shelves within easy reach, colour-contrasted, floor drain gently sloped, affixed permanent shower rod
- Provision for ceiling tracks
- Mirrors angled down
- Visibility to bathroom (direct line of sight reduces falls)

Fire alarm systems and equipment

- Design to B3 fire standards
- Evacuation chair for mid and high-rise buildings alternating floors
- Audible and visible fire alarms
- Fire alarm pulls at accessible height and location (1200 mm height)
- **Evacuation instructions:** non-reflective surface, in large print and high contrast, floor plan diagram and alternate formats, at accessible height and location

Laundry room

- Front loading machines
- Accessible heights for counters and sinks with knee clearance below
- Seating available

Kitchens

- Clear space for maneuvering/sufficient space for turning radius
- Accessible heights for sinks and counters, knee clearance under sink
- Sink faucet is easy to use or automatic (single lever/easily operated with a single finger or closed fist)
- **Quartz Counters and cabinetry:** rounded, electrical outlets with accessible reach, accessible hardware
- Microwave height is accessible
- Refrigerator that is side by side (not stacked)
- Cooktop or range (dials in the front and not in the back)
- Dishwasher at raised height
- Automatic shut off on stove or temperature control on stove element (special induction ovens)

Office / administrative areas

- Adjustable chairs
- Desks/counters at accessible height or variety of heights
- Desks/counters are colour-contrasted with surrounding
- Workstation outlets and switches are at accessible heights



For new construction of homes for individuals with behavioural challenges (standards have been adopted from the successful housing elements & developmental disabilities shedd tool)

Entrances and circulation

- Locking mechanisms (keys, code, magnetic locks) to appropriately meet resident and program needs
- Single key or a single code for locking mechanisms
- Doors: opens/swings the correct way
- Staff areas close to/at entrances or areas requiring supervision
- Wide corridors and entrances to allow accessible, easy passage
- Anti-slip/textured stair tread
- Install doorbells/alarms that ring upon entry and exit of a room
- Large lockable closets as storage

Fixtures and finishes

- High Impact or 5/8" Drywall walls to resist damage
- Padded or carpeted walls to reduce impact self- injury
- Durable Commercial grade vinyl flooring with covered baseboards
- Minimized seams in wall and flooring material to address the impulse to pick at or pull apart building materials
- Blinds installed behind a plexiglass cover or blinds between panes of glass
- Frosted glass to bring diffuse, natural light into private areas

Building Systems

- Heat recovery unit to help with building/energy efficiency
- Heating and cooling units organized to service zones of the house to provides variety to meet a range of needs and as backup in event of failure
- Recessed, covered or relocated necessary sprinklers, fire alarm pulls, and exit signs
- Ventilation high up on walls or ceilings out of reach

- Seamless vent covers
- Use of solar and passive systems

Outdoor areas

- Fences to secure areas/supported individuals or divide outdoor areas
- Larger communal outdoor areas and quieter individual outdoor areas combination

Living areas

- Space for staff to meet, perform administrative tasks and store equipment
- Surveillance considering resident independence and staff/resident safety
- Water, tear resistant fabrics on upholstery or cover absorbent materials with liquid protection layer
- Built in furniture securely fastened to the wall for larger cabinets / storage units
- Heavy or weighted sofas, armchairs and tables made of solid material to withstand wear and reduce the possibility of flipping, picking up or moving
- Enclosed televisions and speakers behind plexiglass cover
- Room/closet with a closing door to store computer

Kitchens

- Kitchen door that locks
- Locking kitchen cabinets for sharp or dangerous implements
- Large, durable appliances to serve larger groups
- Adequate preparation space for larger meals, consider the maximum amount of people in the house for a meal (extra support staff, family, administrative staff, therapeutic staff, etc.)

Bedrooms

- Durable plastic wrapped mattresses with minimal seams
- Durable beds built from solid material, with a box structure rather than legs
- Picture frames screwed down or no picture frames
- Artwork painted directly on the wall as a mural, in place of typical hung pictures
- Visibility to bathroom (direct line of sight reduces falls)

Bathrooms

- Extra drainage to avoid flooding
- Barrier free shower
- Hidden plumbing elements and toilet cisterns, with inspection chambers in case of unblocking (zip-tie cistern, wooden cistern cover, hidden cistern, steel toilet)
- Water shut-off/controls accessible from outside the bathroom
- Mirrors

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For new construction of homes for individuals with complex medical needs

- Wide driveways
- Accessible entrance that is power-operated
- Emergency power or fail-safe systems for power-operated doors
- Onsite accessible vans
- Adequate number of laundry machines
- Adequate number of electrical outlets
- Adequate space for residents and staff
- Elevator
- Well-illuminated hallways
- Ramps are less than 8% slope
- Roll in shower, grab bars, accessible water faucet and shower wand, recessed soap holders or shelves within easy reach, colour-contrasted, floor drain gently sloped

For new construction of homes for individuals with dementia

(Standards have been adopted from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) Housing Options for People Living with Dementia)

Lighting

- Good lighting in areas where residents spend a lot of time (i.e. reading, cooking, eating) to minimize shadows and misperceptions
- For new construction, orient building to maximize natural light
- Transitional spaces for areas where lighting goes from bright to dim or dim to bright
- Avoid lace curtains which causes shadows
- Average horizontal illuminance: living rooms 300, recreation room 300 + 300 of daylight, kitchens 600, bathrooms 300, bedrooms 200, hallways 100-150, stairs 150 (from Dementia Design Series: Improving the Design of Housing to Assist People with Dementia)

Doors

- Immediately visible doors that are easy to identify
- Avoid sliding doors
- Contrast door with adjacent walls for doors residents can access
- Same tone for doors where visual redirection is needed (i.e. restricted areas)
- Provide seating just inside building entrances to allow vision time to adjust

Signs

- Fire exit instructions at eye level
- Consistent in style
- Mounted no higher than 1.2 metres from the floor
- Contrasted with the door or wall

Noise and room acoustics

- Bedrooms located away from unwanted noise
- Acoustical ceiling and wall products, low pile carpeting and heavy curtains to absorb noise

Floors

- Low pile carpeting, shock absorbing materials in case of falls, avoid shiny floors
- Consistent tone that is the same between rooms (avoid change in tone or stripes as it could be misinterpreted as steps)
- Avoid patterns and speckles
- Same tone door mats
- Avoid contrast changes where different flooring surfaces meet

Stairs

- Solid, reinforced handrails installed on both sides of the stairs
- Edges of steps outlined with bright coloured paint or tape
- Rubber treads or non-skid adhesive strip on uncarpeted stairs
- Avoid different tone flooring at the top or bottom of the stairs



Handrails

- Graspable handrails (diameter of 1.5 inches) and secured firmly to the wall (rounded handrails are easier to grip)
- Contrast with wall
- Include feature such as knob or rail turning in to indicate where it ends

Kitchens

- Reachable cupboards (may need glass doors or no doors)
- Stove and countertops at the same height
- Maximize lighting using both strip lighting above kitchen surfaces and spotlights for task lighting
- Avoid speckled floors

Bathroom

- Contrast toilet seat with both floor and bowl
- Grab rails contrast with wall and floor
- At least 2 overhead lights positioned in locations that will minimize shadows - none should be directly above the bath where they can shine in the person's eyes
- Handheld shower head is preferable to showers with overhead waterspouts
- Entry to shower should be barrier-free
- Free-standing shower seat with arm rest contrasted with surrounding
- Visibility to bathroom (direct line of sight reduces)

Bedrooms

- Lots of lighting
- Furniture that allows the resident to see what is inside is helpful
- Movement-operated lighting

Dining room

- Furniture that contrasts with walls and floor
- Contrast table mats, plates, bowls, glassware and cutlery with table

Living room

- Furniture contrasts with floor
- TV screen covered or hidden when not in use
- Natural light, large window, ensure curtains and trees are not blocking natural light

Outdoor spaces

- Sensor or night lights
- Levelled walking path with points of interest along the way, no dead ends
- Secured fencing and gates
- Lobbies, conservatories and porches for outdoor experience
- Non-slip, consistent tone and level
- Handrails on slopes and steps
- Raised planting beds and other garden items
- Protection from wind, rain or sun
- Robust and comfortable seating

To decrease wandering behaviours

- Dimmed lighting to remind the person to stay in bed
- Comfortable bedroom temperature and bedding
- Large clock to orient time
- Locks on windows and sliding locks at the top of doors
- High vertical railings on verandahs and balconies to prevent falling
- Remove barriers and loose mats or rugs that may cause falls
- Stickers on doors and glass doors to distract
- Bell chimes, electric alarms on exit doors
- Electronic tracking devices

Fire alarm systems and equipment

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Sources

- Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS)- Quality Assurance Measures
- Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS)-Children's Residential Licensing
- Successful Housing Elements & Developmental Disabilities (SHEDD)- The SHEDD Tool
- Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Standards
- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) "Housing Options for People Living with Dementia"