

Short Term Rental Accommodation and smoke alarms

Owners must install and maintain smoke alarms in dwellings that are used or made available for short-term rental accommodation (STRA).

Smoke alarm requirements

Owners must ensure smoke alarms:

- are installed in the dwelling in accordance with the Building Code of Australia (Building Code) applicable at the time of installation of the alarms;
- comply with Australian Standard AS 3786;
- are not more than 10 years old and have not passed their expiry date;
- are in working order; and
- are permanently connected to the mains power supply.

Installing smoke alarms

The Building Code requires smoke alarms to be installed on or near the ceiling as follows:

- a minimum of 300 mm away from the corner junction of the wall and ceiling; and
- between 500 mm and 1500 mm away from the high point and apexes of the ceiling if the room has a sloping ceiling.

This is to avoid the smoke alarm being positioned in a dead air space, where trapped hot air prevents smoke from reaching the alarm.

Where it is not possible to install the smoke alarm on the ceiling, it may be installed on the wall and located a minimum of 300 mm and a maximum of 500 mm off the ceiling at the junction with the wall.

Location of smoke alarms

The location of smoke alarms will depend on the dwelling's Building Code classification.

Class 1a building

A Class 1a building is a single dwelling. Examples of a Class 1a building include a detached house, row house, town house, terrace house or villa unit.

In a Class 1a building smoke alarms must be located in:

- any storey containing bedrooms, every corridor or hallway associated with a bedroom, or if there is no

corridor or hallway, in an area between the bedrooms and the remainder of the building; and

- each other storey not containing bedrooms (even if those storeys consist of only carparking, bathrooms, laundries and the like).

Diagram 1 – Class 1a: Smoke alarm location where bedrooms grouped.

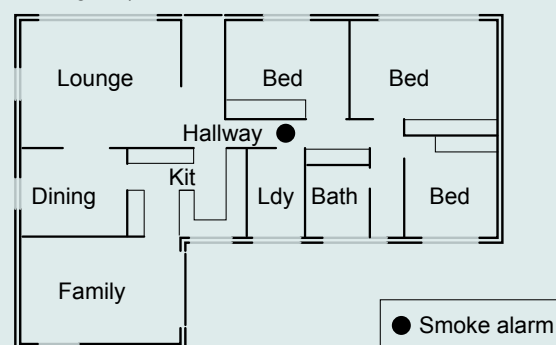
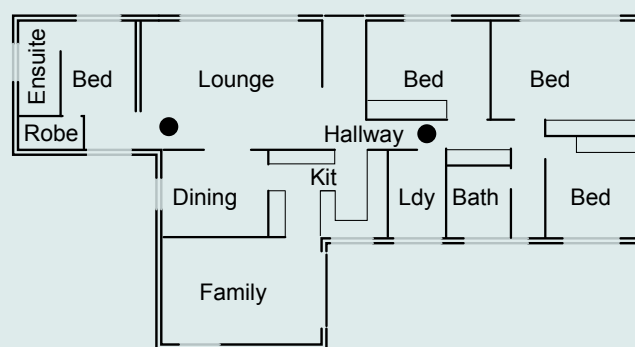


Diagram 2 – Class 1a: Smoke alarm location where bedrooms are separated.



Class 1b building

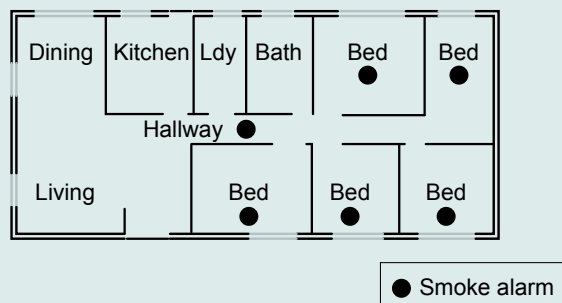
A Class 1b building includes:

- A small boarding house, guest house, hostel or the like, that ordinarily accommodates no more than twelve people.
- Four or more single dwellings located on one allotment and used for short-term holiday accommodation, such as cabins in caravan parks, farm stay, holiday resorts.

Smoke alarms in a Class 1b building must be located in:

- the same locations required for a Class 1a building; and
- in every bedroom.

Diagram 3 - Class 1b: Smoke alarm location.



Class 2 building

A Class 2 building is a building that contains two or more sole-occupancy units such as apartments.

In general, the location of smoke alarms inside the apartment or unit is similar to the requirements for a Class 1a building.

Class 4 building

A Class 4 building is a single dwelling in a non-residential building if it is the only dwelling in the building.

In general, the location of smoke alarms inside the dwelling is similar to the requirements for a Class 1a building.

Who can install smoke alarms?

A licensed electrician is required to connect or disconnect mains powered smoke alarms.

Are battery powered smoke alarms allowed?

A battery powered smoke alarm is only permitted where there is no hidden space in which to run the necessary electrical wiring for the required mains powered smoke alarm and there is no appropriate alternative location. For example, where the ceiling is concrete, or the dwelling has a flat roof with no ceiling space. Local government approval for a battery powered smoke alarm is not required in this circumstance.

Installation of a battery powered smoke alarm in other circumstances may require local government approval.

Requirement to maintain smoke alarms

STRA owners are responsible for maintenance of the smoke alarms so that each alarm is:

- in working order; and
- permanently connected to the mains power supply, or where the use of a battery powered smoke alarm is permitted, the alarm has a 10-year life battery that cannot be removed; and
- not more than 10 years old and has not passed its expiry date.

For detailed information about how to comply with the smoke alarm requirements of the Building Regulations 2012, please refer to the smoke alarm information on Building and Energy's [website](#)

Keeping smoke alarms in working order

It is recommended that owners refer to the smoke alarm manufacturer's instructions and the DFES tips for maintaining smoke alarms in working order.

- Test once a month by holding down the test button until you hear a loud alert tone, then release. Use a broom handle if you cannot reach but be careful you do not damage the smoke alarm.
- Vacuum around your smoke alarm vents with a soft brush attachment. This will remove a build-up of dust and cobwebs.
- Spray insect repellent on a cloth and wipe the ceiling around the smoke alarm. Do not spray directly on the alarm.
- Replace batteries annually if they are user-replaceable.
- Do not paint or place anything over them.

It is recommended the owners install interconnected smoke alarms in all sleeping areas, living spaces, paths of travel (hallways, stairways) and garages (if they are under the home's main roof).

For further information regarding maintenance of smoke alarms please visit the DFES [website](#)

Disclaimer – The information contained in this fact sheet is provided as general information and a guide only. It should not be relied upon as legal advice or as an accurate statement of the relevant legislation provisions. If you are uncertain as to your legal obligations, you should obtain independent legal advice.

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