

BBRS Official Interpretation No. 2013_04

Date: May 14, 2013

Subject: 8th Edition 780 CMR 51 Residential Volume: Section R310 Emergency Escape and Rescue Openings

Background/Discussion:

An *emergency escape and rescue opening*^a (EERO) has been required in *basements* since the 7th edition of 780 CMR. An EERO is required in *basements* with no *habitable space*, and a single *stairway* leading from the *living space* to the *basement* does not in and of itself meet the EERO requirement. An additional bulkhead, door, or window with certain configurations does satisfy the EERO requirement per Sections 310.

The code is explicit on bulkheads, doors, and windows but it is not with respect to other configurations that may meet the intent of the general requirement for any EERO; it “shall open directly into a *public way*, or to a *yard* or *court* that opens to a *public way*.”

BBRS Staff has received numerous inquiries on whether or not a second *stairway* leading from the *basement* meets the requirements of Section 310. This official interpretation is provided to clarify information from the International Code Council and others on the requirements for *emergency escape and rescue openings*.

QUESTION 1: A *basement* has a *stairway* that serves the *living space* and a second *stairway* that leads directly to a garage which has an exterior door that opens to a *yard*. Does this meet the requirements of R310?

ANSWER 1: Yes.

QUESTION 2: A *basement* has a *stairway* that serves the *living space* and a second *stairway* that leads directly to a mudroom which is separated from the main *living space* by a door. This mudroom also has an exterior door or a means of egress door which opens to a *yard*. Does this meet the requirements of R310?

ANSWER 2: Yes.

QUESTION 3: A *basement* has a *stairway* that serves the *living space* and a second *stairway* that leads directly to a hallway which is separated from the main *living space* by a door. This hallway also has an exterior door or a means of egress door which opens to a *yard*. Does this meet the requirements of R310?

ANSWER 3: Yes.

QUESTION 3: A *basement* has a *stairway* that serves the *living space* and a second egress path that does not lead through the *living space*. This second egress path leads to an exterior door which opens to a *yard*. Does this meet the requirements of R310?

ANSWER 3: Yes.

a. Text in italic indicate words that are defined in Chapter 2 of the *International Residential Code 2009*