



LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY & CORRECTIONS
PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES

OFFICE OF STATE FIRE MARSHAL



H. "BUTCH" BROWNING, JR.
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

INTERPRETIVE MEMORANDUM 2018 – 01

To: OSFM Industry Partners
OSFM Staff

From: Joe Delaune, Chief Architect/Plan Review, OSFM

Approved by: Chief Butch Browning, State Fire Marshal *JB*

Date: February 5, 2018

**RE: Sliding Door Installation(s) in Health Care
Occupancy Corridor Walls**

Health care occupancies require exit access corridors to be protected as prescribed by NFPA 101. Corridor doors are required to be self-latching with positive latching hardware. The intent of this requirement is to provide for one-step simple and rapid door closure during times of emergency.

Sliding package door systems that have breakaway swinging features compromise this requirement. Once activated in the swinging/partial sliding position, the required self-latching features are not operational without additional manipulation of the door. Additional time and steps are needed to secure the door back into the latched position.

It is critical that health care corridor doors operate properly during times of emergency. This office understands the clinical need at times for a width greater than the average 42" door for patient transfer. Therefore sliding package door installations with breakaway swinging features shall be permitted in health care occupancy corridor walls without a formal appeal/equivalency proposal provided that all of the following conditions are satisfied:

1. The door installations shall comply with all other applicable corridor door requirements of the NFPA 101 Life Safety Code and the IBC.
2. The OWNER of the building shall provide a written statement on letterhead of the facility to this office, prior to installation, acknowledging responsibility for maintaining the following conditions:

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- a. The subject doors shall be normally kept in the appropriate sliding configuration.
- b. The break-away swinging door feature shall be used only occasionally for the short periods of time necessary for patient transfer, and then immediately returned to the normal sliding configuration.
- c. The subject doors shall not be left in a simultaneous swinging/sliding configuration, except for very short durations.
- d. Responsible nursing staff shall be trained to quickly secure doors from the swinging/ sliding position back into the closed position.