

Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living (DAIL)
Shared Living Program, Home Safety Inspection

**Smoke Detector and Carbon Monoxide Detector
Guidance**

December 2022

This guidance was created for the Department of Disability, Aging, and Independent Living (DAIL) Shared Living Program. It is not to be used for any other State program or agency requirements.

DAIL follows the “Residential Single Station Smoke Alarm (Detector) Installation Guidelines” on page 34 of the Vermont 2015 Fire and Building Safety Code. (National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA) Life Safety Code and the VT State Laws). Please note that DAIL can require additional standards above and beyond this guidance.

DAIL Home Safety Inspection

For smoke detectors to meet the DAIL Home Safety Inspection requirements, no matter what type or age of the dwelling, the smoke detectors **MUST** be:

- (1) Photoelectric, not a combination of ionization and photoelectric. (The photoelectric smoke detector can be in combination with a carbon monoxide detector.)
- (2) Placed in the appropriate common spaces and levels (see description below);
- (3) Hardwired if the building is built after 1994, OR a non-expired 10-year sealed lithium battery operated system if the home was built before 1994;
 - (a) Houses with hardwired smoke detectors can have additional non-expired 10-year sealed lithium battery smoke detector(s);
 - (b) Hardwired smoke detectors require a battery backup. This backup may be either a sealed lithium 10-year battery or a removable battery.

Non-photoelectric smoke detectors are sold online; however, they do not meet Vermont requirements. Photoelectric smoke detectors must have a “[P]” displayed on the unit to be compliant at the time of inspection. Smoke detectors with a battery are required to have a sealed, 10-year lithium battery.

All smoke detectors must have a current date displayed on the unit to be compliant at the time of the inspection. The expiration date of the detector is usually found on the bottom of the unit; therefore, the agency during the pre-inspection and the housing inspector during the inspection will typically need to physically remove the smoke detector from the wall or ceiling to ensure the date is valid. It is important to replace the unit after verifying the date.

The smoke alarms in Vermont cannot be a combination type with both ionization and photoelectric sensors in one unit. If a Shared Living Provider lives in a surrounding state (NH, MA, NY), they must follow the DAIL Housing Safety Standard to be a Vermont Shared Living Provider.

Placement of Smoke Detectors

For the DAIL Safety Housing inspection, there are specific requirements as to the placement of the smoke detectors.

- All bedrooms of the home;
- In common space(s) on each level of the unit; to include the basement;
- Near the heat source(s), such as a furnace, a boiler, or an in-wall propane or kerosene heater such as a Rinnai, Empire, Toyo, etc.;
- In a common space that has a wood burning or other heating source. This can double as the level and heating source requirement.

Where “common space” is a hallway, kitchen, living room or other room (den, game room, etc.) to which all members of the household have access.

Carbon Monoxide Detectors

A carbon monoxide detector must be on every floor, as well as near any heat source.

A photoelectric smoke detector can be a combination of photoelectric and carbon monoxide.

Compliance

The Smoke Detector and Carbon Monoxide Detectors in a Shared Living Home will be considered **Non-Compliant** on the Home Safety Inspection if they do not meet all requirements listed above; if the home is not in compliance, the home cannot be a Shared Living Home.