

Hamilton Board of Health

FAQ: Can I Build an Addition on my House? Can I add a bedroom?

Multi-step process to answer these questions....

1) Determine if minimum setbacks are met.

	Septic Tank, Holding Tank, Pump Chamber, Treatment Unit, Grease Traps	Soil Absorption System
Cellar or Crawl Space Wall, foundation drain	10'	20'
Slab Foundation (slab at or above grade)	10'	10'

2) Adding rooms or just enlarging existing rooms?

- a) If just enlarging existing rooms, and if setbacks are met, contact a Licensed Title 5 Inspector to perform a Title 5 Inspection if septic system is over 20 years old unless a Title 5 inspection on file passed within last 5 years.*

If Title 5 inspection passes, and setbacks met, HBOH will allow addition, by signing-off on building permit application, showing required setbacks between septic and building are provided.

b) Adding a Room

- i) These aren't counted as rooms for septic system sizing. ("Non-Rooms")

Bathroom	Unfinished Basement
Unheated Attic	Mud Room
Laundry Room	Foyer
Pantry	WIC
Storage Room (No Windows)	

If adding one or more of these "non-rooms" (above) and if set backs are met, contact a Licensed Title5 Inspector to perform a Title 5 Inspection if septic system is over 20 years old unless a Title 5 inspection on file passed within last 5 years.*

If Title 5 inspection passes, and setbacks met, HBOH will allow addition, by signing-off on building permit application, showing required setbacks between septic and building are provided.

- ii) If room addition is one of the following, count all existing and proposed "Rooms", for example:

Living	Dining
Kitchen	Bedroom
Family Room	Office
Library	Sunroom
Etc.	

When counting rooms, an open LR, DR, and kitchen are counted as 2 rooms: DR/kitchen are one room/ function, and LR is another room/function, per long-standing HBOH written policy. (See attached Policy Concerning "Open" Floor Plans).

- iii) Determine if total number of rooms proposed will exceed septic "design flow", first by counting total rooms. (See rooms vs non-rooms, listed above.)
 - a. If total room count is 8 or less, count bedrooms. A room could be considered a bedroom if it is 70 sf or larger, has privacy, at least one "egress" window, and a closet. Multiply each bedroom by 110 gpd to find minimum design flow required.
 - b. If total room count is 9 or more, count rooms (see rooms vs non-rooms, listed above). Septic design flow is based on total room count, divided by 2, round down, multiply by 110 gpd.
- iv) Review Hamilton Board of Assessors "property card" for number of rooms and bedrooms existing.
- v) Determine the "design flow" of existing septic system.
 - Located on septic plan and permit.
 - Plan and Permit are available at HBOH office.
- vi) If septic plan and permit indicate sufficient size to add bedrooms (or rooms), then:
 - Submit a "Request for Confirmation" to HBOH
- vii) When Confirmation returned to you, contact a Licensed Title 5 Inspector to perform a Title 5 Inspection if septic system is over 20 years old unless a Title 5 inspection on file passed within last 5 years.*
- viii) If all setbacks are met, inspection passes, and septic system sized for added bedrooms or rooms, HBOH will allow added bedrooms, by signing-off on building permit application.

What if the "design flow" does not allow for added bedroom (or room)?

Consult with a septic system design engineer to determine whether there are options available to expand or replace the septic system in order to add bedrooms (or 9+ rooms) to this property.

* If septic system is less than 20 years old or a Title 5 inspection passed within 5 years, NO Title 5 inspection is required.

Request for Confirmation – Septic System Design Flow

To Hamilton Board of Health:

Please confirm the septic system at:

_____ Address

Is approved for _____ of bedrooms +/- or _____ gpd.
#

Submitted by: _____ Name

Please Circle: Owner / Realtor / Property Buyer / Other

Email: _____

Phone: _____ Date: _____

.....

Hamilton Board of Health File Review: _____

Confirmed _____ Date: _____

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POLICY CONCERNING "OPEN" FLOOR PLANS

Definition (s)

"Open Floor Plan": for the purposes of this policy, shall mean any combination of one or more **uses** for a room or series of rooms which are interconnected and share the same footprint without the benefit of partitions, barriers, or other structural elements which delineate separation.

"Majority Intent": for the purposes of this policy, shall mean the primary, exclusive use to which this room purports.

"Bedroom" See section 15:002 in 310 CMR 15:000 State Sanitary Code, Title 5. 1995 Ed. (next page)

For the purpose of this policy, and to expedite the review of new and proposed remodeling to existing houses the following is adopted. "Open" floor plans which, depict an attempt to combine multiple uses into one room shall not be counted as one room. The use(s) of the room must be consistent with the majority intent of the room, (kitchen with breakfast room, kitchen with dining room). Any combination of use or uses which deviate from the majority intent of the open floor plan, shall cause the room to be separated and counted as two or more separate rooms. Only two rooms which are consistent with the majority intended use may be combined for purposes of the room count.

Adopted: 4/3/2003

Title 5 Definition of Bedroom

310 CMR: DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

15.002

Bedroom – A room providing privacy, intended primarily for sleeping and consisting of all of the following:

- (a) floor space of no less than 70 square feet;
- (b) for new construction, a ceiling height of no less than 7'3";
- (c) for existing houses and for mobile homes, a ceiling height of no less than 7'0".
- (d) An electrical service and ventilation; and
- (e) At least one window.

Living rooms, dining rooms, kitchens, halls, bathrooms, unfinished cellars and unheated storage areas over garages are not considered bedrooms. Single family dwellings shall be presumed to have at least three bedrooms. Where the total number of rooms for single family dwellings exceeds eight, not including bathrooms, hallways, unfinished cellars and unheated storage areas, the number of bedrooms presumed shall be calculated by dividing the total number of rooms by two then rounding down to the next lowest whole number. The applicant may design a system using design flows for a smaller number of bedrooms than are presumed in this definition by granting to the Approving Authority a deed restriction limiting the number of bedrooms to the smaller number.