



INFORMATION SHEET

NO. IE-02

DATE : July 5, 2023

CATEGORY : Interior Environment

TITLE : **Sizing of Yards and Courts That Provide Required Natural Light and Ventilation**

PURPOSE : The purpose of this information sheet is to clarify the minimum size of yards and courts required to provide natural light and ventilation and to address exceptions for horizontal air intake requirements.

REFERENCES : California Building Code, current edition
California Building Code, Section 1205 Yards or Courts

DISCUSSION : CBC Section 1205 specifies the minimum requirements for courts and yards, including area width, accessibility for cleaning and the location of air intakes.

To provide adequate natural light and ventilation, each yard or court must have a minimum width of three feet. In addition, courts with required windows on opposite sides shall have a minimum width of six feet. The length of the court shall be a minimum of 10 feet, unless one end opens to the public way or a yard.

For buildings more than two stories above grade plane, the minimum width of the yard shall be increased at the rate of one foot for each additional story. For buildings exceeding 14 stories above grade plane, the required width of the yard shall be computed on the basis of 14 stories above grade plane.

For buildings with courts more than two stories in height, the court shall be increased one foot in width and two feet in length for each additional court story. For buildings with courts exceeding 14 stories, the required dimensions shall be computed on the basis of 14 stories. The number of stories, for purposes of determining the court dimensions, per CBC Section 1205, shall be based upon the number of stories of the court. The minimum court dimensions thus determined shall be maintained, from the lowest story of the court to the uppermost story of the court.

Where courts are not used for natural ventilation requirements and openings are fixed, the horizontal air intake requirement for courts more than two stories in height per CBC Section 1205.3.2 does not apply. In addition, the court shall not be used for outside air intake and exhaust termination.



Patrick O'Riordan, C.B.O.

Date

Director

Department of Building Inspection

This Information Sheet is subject to modification at any time. For the most current version, visit our website at <http://www.sf.gov/dbi>