New Public Swimming Pool Enclosure Allowances

The Department of Public Health (DPH) has revised its allowances for public swimming pool enclosures and for the provision of amenities within the enclosure of a public swimming pool. The intention of the pool enclosure is to prevent drownings of children by ensuring that the swimming pool is inaccessible to children not accompanied by an adult.

The California Building Code requires at least four (4) feet of unobstructed deck space be available around a public swimming pool to provide a clear area to provide access for rescuers and to provide an area to perform CPR to any drowning victim.

Based on these requirements, DPH will consider approval of the following during the plan review process:

1. The area around the pool enclosure must be a public walkway or area open to the public and may not have planters or other structures that can be climbed within 5 feet of the fence. See Figure 1.

![Figure 1](image1)

2. Windows may be installed within a building wall that serves as the swimming pool enclosure provided that the windows are located in a public area under the control of the pool owner and are permanently prevented from opening wide enough to allow the passage of a four (4) inch sphere. See Figure 2.

![Figure 2](image2)
3. The wall of a building on the same property separating a private area from the pool may have an unopenable window serve as part of the enclosure of the pool. There may be no direct access route from the private space to the pool enclosure. See Figure 3A.

Any balconies along pool enclosure walls must be located over ten (10) feet above the pool deck and shall be designed to deter jumping or diving into the pool or spa. See Figure 3B.

4. The pool deck of a rooftop pool must be located over ten (10) feet above any patios or balconies. A rooftop pool must have a barrier at least 42” high separating the pool deck from the building edge to prevent pool users from falling off the deck. See Figures 4A & 4B. Note: Any changes to a private balcony/patio or public area adjacent to the building edge that reduces the distance to less than ten feet separation or introduces a climbable structure will require a 5’ tall pool enclosure to be installed.
5. Indoor pool lounges with a view of the pool may be provided for pool users when similar amenities are offered outside of the pool enclosure for non-pool users.

Indoor pool lounges must remain accessible to all pool users whenever the pool is open (i.e., no locked doors between the pool and the lounge).

Restrooms, showers, and dressing rooms for pool users located in the pool lounge are not required to have a view of the pool.

Pool enclosure entry/exits within the pool lounge area must open to a public area and have code compliant doors. See Figure 5.

6. A hotel may provide food and drink to pool users via an approved satellite food service facility located within the pool enclosure. See Figure 6

The satellite food facility must be operated by the permitted restaurant located on the same property under the same ownership. Refer to the California Retail Food Code for more information on satellite food service facilities.
7. Barbeques and fire pits may be allowed within the pool enclosure when: similar amenities are offered outside of the pool enclosure for non-pool users; they are located so they do not obstruct required clear deck space; and they are located to provide a clear view of the pool. See Figure 7.