

BASEMENT BEDROOMS

Bedrooms in basements of residential dwellings are **not** permitted unless all of the following criteria can be met. Changes to an existing egress window opening or adding a new egress window will require a building permit.

The City of Janesville Housing Code Section 18-55 adopts by reference the Building and Heating, Ventilating and Air Conditioning Code of the Wisconsin Administrative Code, and is made a part of this Chapter, which states:

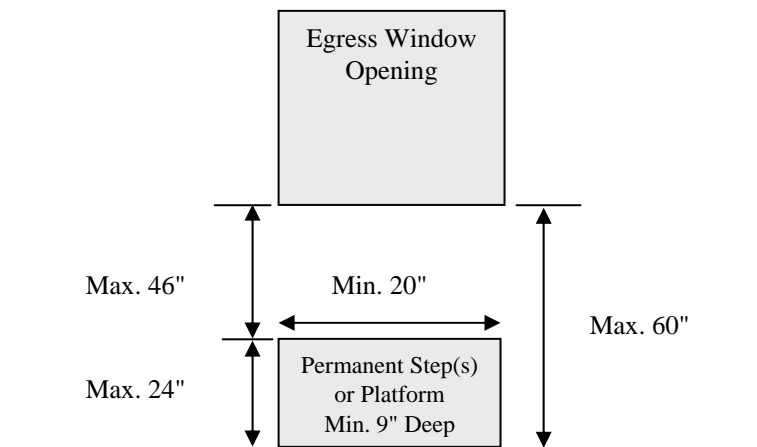
Wisconsin Administrative Code Chapter SPS 321.03 (5)(b):

Basements, which include spaces used for sleeping, shall be provided with at least two exits. The two exits shall not be accessed by the same stairway or ramp and shall be located as far apart as practical. One exit shall be a stairway or ramp, which leads to grade, or a door located at the basement level, which leads to grade via an exterior stairs. The second exit may be via a stairway or ramp, which leads to the floor level above the basement or an egress window located in each bedroom.

Sub. (6m) states that windows used for exiting purposes must be operable without the use of tools, and the net clear opening shall be at least 20" x 24", and a sill height of not more than 46 inches above the floor.

Effective April 1, 2001: 321.03(6)(d)

If an egress window is more than 46" above the floor, it shall be provided with a minimum 9" x 20" permanent step(s) or platform located such that it is no more than 46" directly below the window or 24" above the floor. The windowsill can be no more than 60" above the floor. Multiple steps are not required. See diagram.



If a window is provided as an exit located below grade, then an areaway shall be provided. The width of the areaway shall be at least equal to the width of the exit window, the bottom of the areaway shall not be more than 46" below grade, shall be a minimum of three feet measured perpendicular from the wall, and shall be constructed to prevent rainfall flowing into the areaway from entering the dwelling.

Effective April 1, 2001: 321.03(6)(e) If an areaway (window well) serving an egress window is more than 46" below grade, it shall be provided with a ladder or intermediate step. This ladder or step may infringe up to 6" on the required areaway length (3' perpendicularly from the wall) or width (equal to the window width). This ladder or step is exempt from s. 321.04, Stairs.

When a basement egress window is installed below a deck, there shall be a minimum travel path from the window of 36" wide by 36" high for a distance no greater than 15 feet.

Natural Light & Ventilation requirements: 8% of the net floor area shall be provided with natural light by means of glazed openings. Natural ventilation shall be provided by means of operable windows; the net area of the windows shall be at least 3.5% of the net floor area.

Ceiling height shall be at least 7 ft. in 50% of the room. Beams and other projections shall not project more than 8 inches below the required ceiling height.