



POLICY 4001:

It is Council policy that:

1. Group Home Role

The City of Richmond recognizes that group homes offer an important service, providing their residents with short and long-term living arrangements, affordable and safe housing, skills training, peer support, counselling, and other support. The homes make it possible for people in need to live independently, with support, in the community.

2. Location Criteria

- a) A dwelling unit used as a group home may be located no closer to another dwelling unit used as a group home than 200 m (656.17 ft.).
- b) A variance to the distance separation criteria of section 1(a) may be permitted, on a case to case basis, at the discretion of City Council.
- c) Group homes should be located close to transit routes, shopping, recreation and health facilities, schools or community services, depending on the nature of the clientele.
- d) Dwellings used for group homes should be compatible with the form and scale of the surrounding neighbourhood.

3. Group Home Size

Group homes in Richmond are permitted to accommodate a maximum of 10 residents.

4. Design Criteria

- a) Group homes should be sited on suitable sized lots to allow for adequate setbacks from property lines, and provision of outdoor open space.
- b) Provision should be made for at least two off-street parking spaces.
- c) The lot should be screened from adjacent properties, either with landscaping or fences.
- d) The internal design should be suitable to residents' needs and should conform to the applicable regulations of the Community Care and Assisted Living Act.

5. Zoning

Under Zoning Bylaw 8500, a group homes are classified as a "minor community care facility" and are a permitted use in all residential districts. The Zoning Bylaw contains the following definition:



“Community care facility, minor means the use of a principal dwelling for:

- a) residential care of up to 10 people on a temporary or permanent basis (not including employees or resident caregivers) who are not related by blood or marriage, in a facility which may or may not be licensed under the Community Care and Assisted Living Act, including supervision provided to minors through a prescribed residential program, or adults who are vulnerable because of family circumstances, age, disability, illness or frailty and are dependent on caregivers for continuing assistance or direction; or
- b) care under the Community Care and Assisted Living Act, for up to 10 children (not including employees or child caregivers) such as nursery school, emergency care, out of school care, family day care, special needs day care, group day care and occasional, casual or short term supervised care for children and which may include limited overnight accommodation for minors who are supervised under a prescribed program and is distinct from a child care program which is a home business.

6. "Good Neighbour" Policies

The City of Richmond encourages group homes to follow “good neighbour” guidelines whereby the operators:

- a) Ensure ongoing contact with the local neighbourhood (within a five-house radius of the group home) to address issues and concerns in a productive and problem-solving manner, and to provide contact to address potential problems or issues;
- b) Undertake maintenance and renovations of the facility according to neighbourhood standards and carried out in the least disruptive manner;
- c) Maintain ongoing staff contact with the neighbourhood to ensure any issues are immediately resolved; and
- d) Encourage group home residents to become part of the neighbourhood.

7. Group Home Planning Framework

- a) The City recognizes four categories of group homes:
 - i. Group homes licensed under the Community Care and Assisted Living Act for 1 – 6 residents
 - ii. Unlicensed group homes for 1 – 6 residents
 - iii. Group homes licensed under the Community Care and Assisted Living Act for 7 - 10 residents
 - iv. Unlicensed group homes for 7 - 10 residents.



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Larger facilities (i.e., those accommodating more than ten persons in care) fit within the Zoning Bylaw definition of Major Community Care Facility and are not considered to be group homes.

- b) All group homes are expected to meet the City's requirements with respect to building, fire, zoning and location criteria
- c) Commercial (for profit) group homes are required to obtain a Business License.
- d) The planning and approval process for the various categories of group homes is summarized in Table 1, attached.

(Community Social Development)



Table 1: City of Richmond Group Home Planning Framework

Group Homes	Fire & Building Safety	Zoning	Neighbourhood Notification/Information
Licensed Group Home: 3-6 (three to six residents)	Proposed building must meet City fire and building safety requirements for single family homes, and must also contain a sprinkler system, emergency lighting, and fire separation at the garage	Managed as a residence. Permitted in all districts zoned for residential use.	Not required.
Unlicensed Group Home: 1-6 (one to six residents)	As above	As above.	Not required.
Licensed Group Home: 7-10 (seven to ten residents)	As above.	Managed as a residence. Permitted in all districts zoned for residential use, provided building is a minimum of 200 metres from another licensed or unlicensed Group Home	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Upon notification by Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH)-Richmond that an application for a Licensed Group Home (7-10 residents) has been received, the City writes to neighbours within a five-house radius of the proposed home to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite them to an informal meeting, hosted by the City in conjunction with VCH-Richmond, to provide information and to solicit comments on the home; Provide them with contact information for designated member of group home operating team, a "fact sheet" about the home, and the "Group Homes in Richmond" publication. The City provides comments on the group home application to VCH-Richmond for information and consideration. VCH-Richmond, at its discretion, issues a Community Care Facility (CCF) License for facility. Nine months after issuance of the CCF License: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The City contacts neighbours within a five-house radius of the facility, in writing, to seek additional comments and feedback on the group home, hosting an additional information meeting for the neighbours, if required; The City conveys comments of VCH-Richmond for information and consideration
Unlicensed Group Home: 7-10 (seven to ten residents)	As above.	As above.	Upon the City receiving an application for an Unlicensed Group Home (7-10 residents) the City writes to neighbours within a five-house radius of the proposed home to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite them to an informal meeting to provide information and to solicit comments on the home; Provide them with contact information for designated member of facility operating team, a "fact sheet" about the home, and the "Group Homes in Richmond" publication.
Institutional Facility 10+ (more than ten persons in care) NOTE: These are not group homes.	Proposed building must meet Assembly Occupancy Standards of the National Building Code.	Managed as an institution. Rezoning likely required to accommodate institutional use.	Rezoning includes neighbourhood notification and public hearing process.