

## Jurisdiction Survey on IRC Hallways

Conducted by Shaunna Mozingo, October 2023

**Question:** IRC Says that hallways must be 36" minimum width. What criteria do you use to determine if an area is a "hallway" since there is not a definition of hallway in the IRC?

### RESPONSES:

1. If it looks like a hallway, it's probably a hallway. If it's seven feet or more in width, then it might start to look like a habitable room. I think this is where the professional discretion of the local building authority needs to review each situation under the intent and purpose of the code. What is the hazard? What is the concern? What is the intended use? What is the probable use? Upon reviewing these questions, code requirements can be determined. I don't think one needs to worry about "what is a hallway" in general, but rather "what needs to be provided based on the intended and probable use of the space"
2. This means a minimum 36" width between two interior parallel walls.
3. A space or passageway providing access to or between two or more rooms is considered a hallway. If the hallway is greater than 6 feet in width then it becomes a foyer if at the primary egress door and a loft or other non-habitable room if located elsewhere in the dwelling. Rooms opening directly off of habitable rooms would not have a hallway associated with them.
4. Is the space in question part of the egress path for any portion of the dwelling?
5. The area that connects rooms, typically bedrooms. One time heard it cannot exceed 48", but have never had to utilize that.
6. Finished wall to finished wall irrespective of trim.
7. An area of a building onto which rooms open.
8. I'm not sure I use any criteria because I haven't had any issues with calling a hallway a hallway. Here's my attempt at a definition: A non-habitable space within a dwelling or that serves as a passageway or corridor to one or more rooms or to an egress door.
9. This is one like trying to define a "bedroom" Most folks would know a hallway if we saw one. Just like a bedroom a jurisdiction can create their own definition if there was a need.
10. An interior space created by interior walls providing access to an open interior floor space or access to the egress door.
11. I use my best judgement but not be so crazy that the applicant can do what they want without so much government interference.
12. It's more of a common sense interpretation. Wikipedia definition: A hallway, passage or corridor is an interior space in a building that is used to connect other rooms. Hallways are generally long and narrow. Hallways must be sufficiently wide to ensure buildings can be evacuated during a fire, and to allow people in wheelchairs to navigate them.
13. Routed path to adjoining rooms
14. Between Drywall. Casing and trim can encroach.
15. Good question! I try to use common sense and since the definition of a hallway in a general dictionary is "A passageway or room between the entrance to a space and the interior of a building or another space...", I use that to determine if a space is a hallway. Also, since there are other requirements in the code for doorway opening dimensions (in some cases), I am assuming that a doorway threshold/ door is not considered part of a hallway; because why would the code contradict itself if it was intended to include doorways/ door way thresholds/ openings as hallways. The code is certainly not black and white but you will need to use the intent of the code and common sense in determining how you/ your jurisdiction determine what a hallway is.