



Thomas Dolan Architecture : Building Issues

Minimum Residential Facilities

By definition, a live/work unit accommodates residents in addition to work activities. As a minimum, a live/work unit will need to provide residential facilities equivalent to those provided in what is variously described as an efficiency unit or a studio apartment. Those would include:

A separate bathroom, with a toilet and a tub or shower with hot and cold water.

Cooking facilities including a sink, some countertop, a range, and sufficient electrical outlets for a refrigerator and other countertop appliances.

Heat sufficient to keep the unit tolerably warm in the winter (insulation helps, too).

A designated sleeping area.

Some live/work buildings have been organized with certain shared or communal facilities. In such cases, common (probably accessible) bathrooms could suffice, and even common kitchen facilities. In such a case, the only residential facilities in other units would be an area reserved for sleeping with sufficient light, ventilation, and a complying emergency escape and rescue opening.

Numerous cities have set the minimum size for an efficiency unit at 270 to 285 square feet. In Oakland, the minimum size unit is 660 square feet, and since under their zoning regulations the residential portion cannot exceed 1/3 of the area, 220 square feet becomes the default minimum to accommodate two people.

<http://www.live-work.com/revised/lwi/codes/minimum.shtml>