

Summary of Proposed Changes to the New Jersey Rehabilitation Subcode (N.J.A.C. 5:23-6)

The following table summarizes the proposed amendments to the New Jersey Rehabilitation Subcode based solely on [Proposal Number: PRN 2025-136](#) and [Proposal Number: PRN 2025-137](#) issued by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs. These proposed updates align the Rehabilitation Subcode with the 2024 model code cycle, clarify existing requirements, update section references, and ensure consistent application of standards for work performed in existing buildings throughout the state.

Proposed changes	What it means
New 2024 model codes adopted (IBC, IRC, IECC, IMC, etc.)	New Jersey is replacing older model codes with the 2024 code cycle, so the Rehabilitation Subcode must update its references, terminology, and section numbers. Most changes are updating cross-references, not changing actual requirements.
Rehabilitation Subcode updated throughout	The Rehabilitation Subcode (N.J.A.C. 5:23-6) is revised line-by-line to match the new 2024 section numbers in the model codes. This affects references to fire safety, energy, mechanical, plumbing, stairways, glazing, and structural items. The rules themselves mostly stay the same, and only the section numbers change.
IEBC references redirected to the Rehabilitation Subcode	Where the 2024 IRC normally references the International Existing Building Code, New Jersey instead directs users to the Rehabilitation Subcode. This consolidates all existing-building rules under the Rehabilitation Subcode.
Outdated definitions removed from the IRC	Definitions like “Substantial Damage” and “Substantial Improvement” are removed from the IRC because these concepts already exist and are controlled in the Rehabilitation Subcode’s flood provisions. This prevents conflicting definitions.
IRC section on existing-building stairways deleted	IRC Section R318.7.9 (Stairways in Existing Buildings) is deleted so that stairway modifications in existing homes rely fully on Rehabilitation Subcode requirements.
Renovation / alteration sections updated for plumbing fixture law	The Rehabilitation Subcode now explicitly references the New Jersey Appliance Standard Law for water-efficient fixtures. Any replacement toilets/faucets/etc. during renovations or alterations must meet NJ’s efficiency requirements.
Energy Code references updated	All energy-related references in Rehabilitation Subcode Sections 6.5, 6.6, 6.7, 6.8, and 6.9 are updated to the 2024 residential and commercial Energy Codes. This ensures insulation, ductwork, lighting, and mechanical efficiency work in existing buildings points to correct, current sections. For example:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newly created conditioned sunrooms or garages must meet R-value and U-factor requirements in updated sections R402.2.13 and R402.4.5 (replacing R402.2.12 and R402.3.5). Newly installed wood-burning fireplaces must now comply with R402.5.2 plus IRC R1006, or with commercial energy code Section 5.4.3.2 and IBC 2111.14, instead of older references. Newly installed pool heaters and pump motors must comply with R403.11 (residential) or commercial energy code Section 7.4.5 (renumbered from R403.10)
Clarified rules for work in flood zones	Flood-hazard references in the Rehabilitation Subcode are updated so they correctly point to the new 2024 IBC/IRC flood sections. No new flood rules. This is purely updating references to maintain compliance with the new code edition.
Reorganization of residential work categories (Group R)	Some work, such as creating new dwelling units or finishing previously unfinished space, is moved from Alteration to Reconstruction because it is a higher-impact project.
Energy storage system provisions added/updated	The Rehabilitation Subcode now includes explicit references for energy storage systems (ESS), aligning with the new IRC sections. This clarifies smoke/heat alarm requirements when adding ESS to existing homes.
Mechanical systems “outside the thermal envelope” clarified	The Rehabilitation Subcode clarifies how to apply energy code requirements to mechanical systems located outside the heated part of the building, aligning with new IECC language.
High-rise / occupiable roof clarification	The Rehabilitation Subcode is updated to ensure that existing buildings with occupiable roofs are not reclassified as “high-rise” just because the 2024 IBC changed the definition. This prevents existing buildings from triggering high-rise retrofits.
New special use or occupancy reference added	A new special use/occupancy category is added, so all applicable categories from the building subcode are represented in the Rehabilitation Subcode.
Clarified application of residential & commercial energy codes for additions	A new section (6.32(h)1) clarifies how the residential and commercial energy code applies for additions, such as requirements in section R408 would not be feasible to implement in additions and more than likely would not be required for addition projects.
Editorial clean-up for clarity & accuracy	Many edits simply clarify wording or remove changed text to the code, making it easier to follow. These do not change compliance requirements.