Bulletin 26-23-8
Receptacle requirements in kitchens of dwelling units
Rule 26-722 d)

Issued October 2026
Supersedes Bulletin 26-23-7

Scope

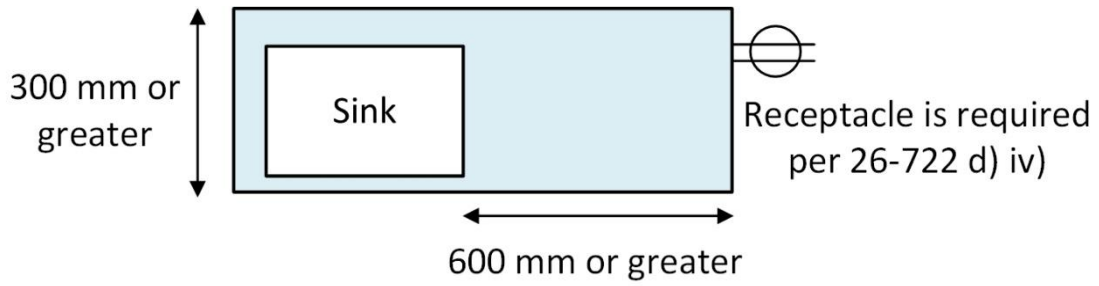
1) Peninsular/island counter space
    a) What is considered to be “a continuous counter space”?
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    d) Receptacle for peninsula and island - location
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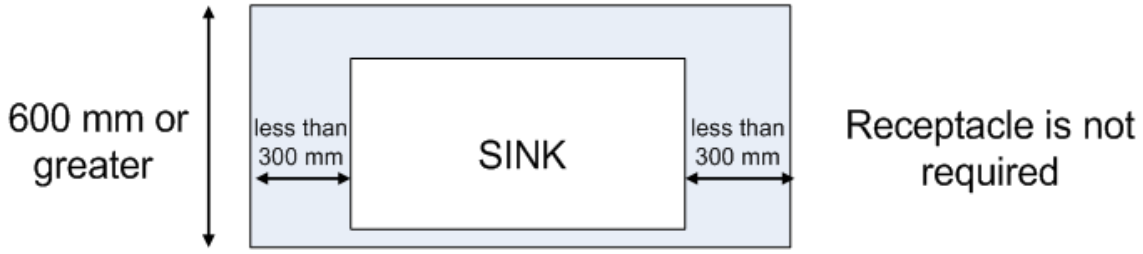
1) Peninsular/island counter space

a) What is considered to be “a continuous counter space”?

Rule 26-722 d) iv) and v) require at least one receptacle (5-15R split or 5-20R) to be installed at each peninsular or permanently fixed island counter space with a continuous long dimension of 600 mm or greater and a short dimension of 300 mm or greater. A continuous dimension, referenced in Rule 26-722 d) iv) and v), excludes a sink, counter stove top, or other built-in equipment, as per Diagram B1.The requirements for continuous counter space in Rule 26-722 d) iv) and v) is similar to Rule 26-722 d) iii) requirements, that the wall space behind a sink, counter stove top, other built-in equipment or isolated counter work sections less than 300 mm long, is not required to be provided with a receptacle outlet.

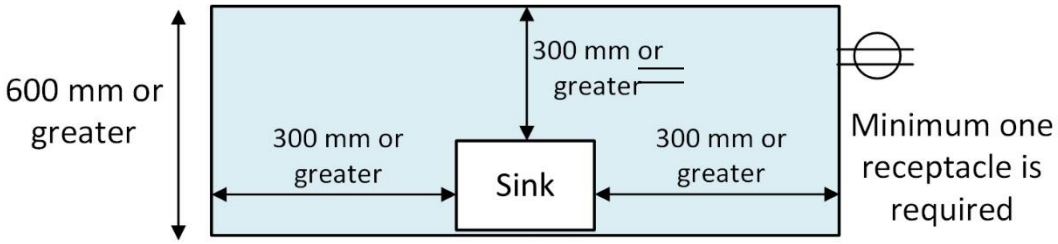
Diagram B1 – Continuous island counter space





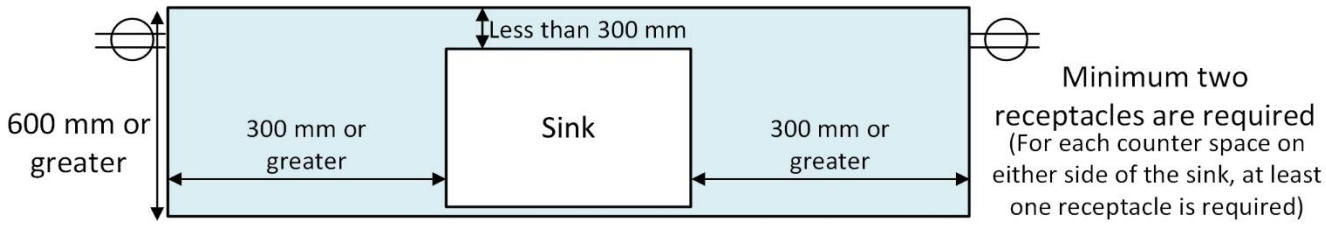
If the peninsular or island counter has two or more spaces, each satisfies the minimum dimensions of 600 mm by 300 mm, and those spaces are connected to form one continuous counter space, then a minimum of one receptacle is required. An example for that is shown below in Diagram B2. Where the depth of a peninsular or island counter space behind a sink, counter stove top, or other built-in equipment is 300 mm or greater, as per Diagram B2, the entire peninsula or island that meets the minimum dimension criteria in Rule 26-722 d) iv) and v) is considered as one continuous counter space and at least one receptacle is required.

Diagram B2 – Large counter space behind the sink, one large island counter space



However, if the peninsular or island counter has two or more spaces, each satisfies the minimum dimensions of 600 mm by 300 mm, and those spaces are separated, then a minimum of one receptacle is required for each individual space. An example of this is shown below, in Diagram B3. Where the depth of a peninsular or island counter space behind a sink, counter stove top, other built-in equipment is less than 300 mm, so that the peninsular or island countertop is separated into two spaces, and each space meets the minimum dimension criteria in Rule 26-722 d) iv) and v), as per Diagram B3, a minimum of two receptacles is required for the peninsular or island countertop space.

Diagram B3 – Island with separated continuous counter spaces that meets dimensions of Rule 26-722 d) iv)

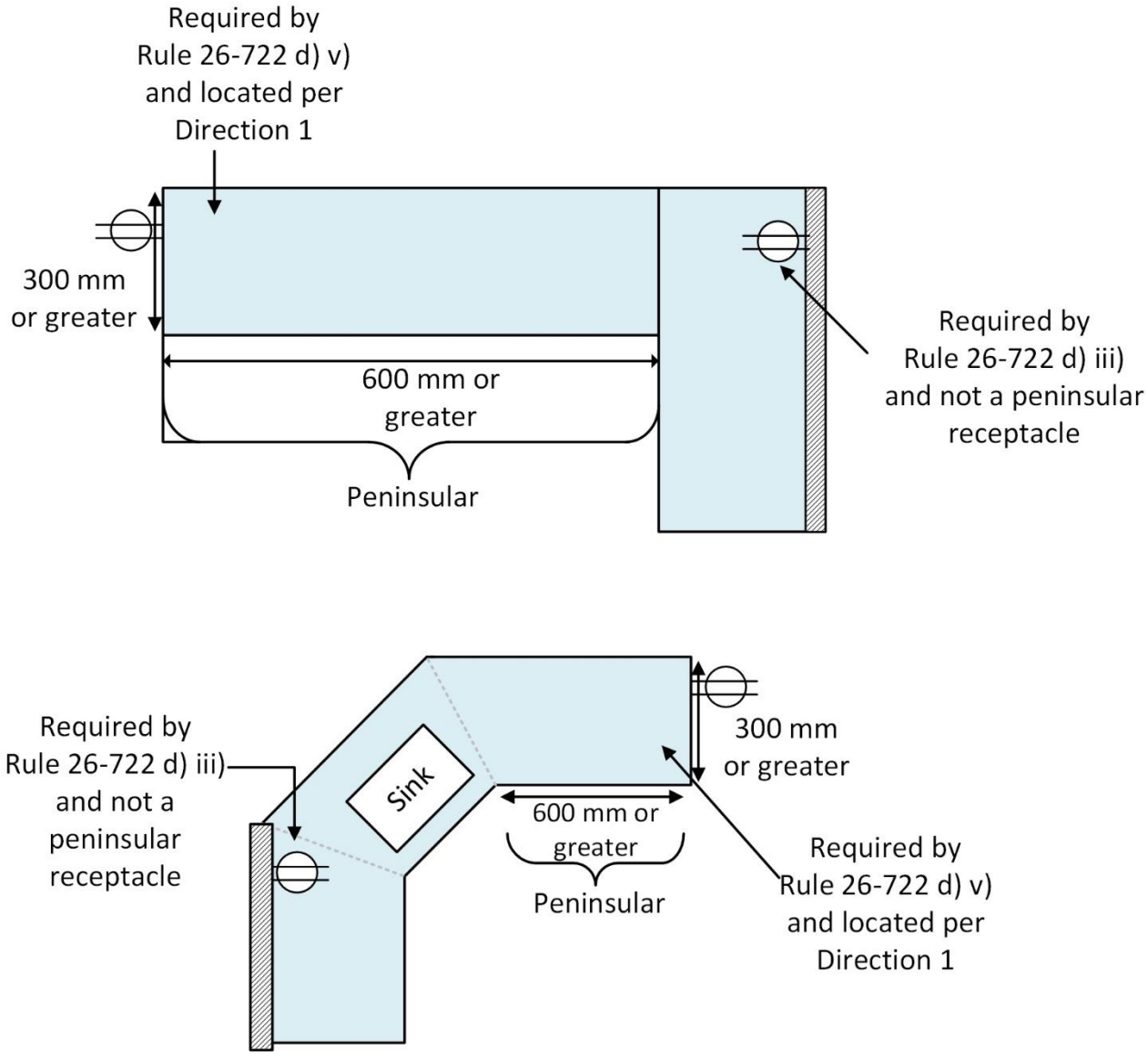


b) Receptacle installed at peninsula - clarification

Question 1
Does a receptacle mounted on the wall behind a counter work surface, adjacent to a kitchen peninsula, satisfy the requirement for the peninsula receptacle?

Answer 1
No, a receptacle mounted along the wall behind a counter work surface, as required by Rule 26-722 d) iii), does not satisfy the requirement of Rule 26-722 d) v) for the peninsula receptacle. Appendix B note to Rule 26-722 d) v) specifies that a peninsular countertop is measured from the connecting edge. An additional receptacle is required at the peninsular counter space, as per Diagram B4.

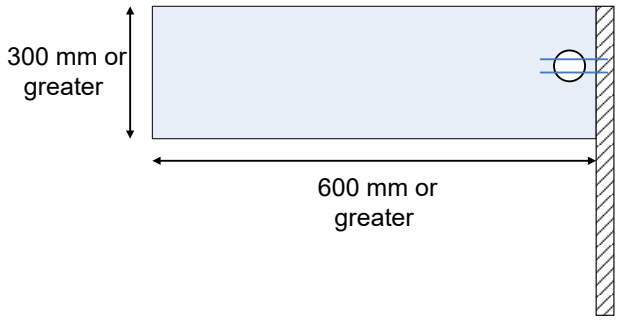
Diagram B4 – Receptacle requirements for a peninsula attached to a kitchen counter



Question 2
Does a receptacle mounted on the wall above a standalone kitchen counter peninsula, as shown in Diagram B5, satisfy the requirement for the peninsula receptacle?

Answer 2
Yes, a receptacle mounted on the wall above a standalone kitchen counter peninsula satisfies the requirement for the peninsula receptacle. Appendix B note to Rule 26-722 d) v) specifies that a peninsular countertop is measured from the connecting edge and as shown in Diagram B*5*, the connecting edge is the wall. Diagram B*5* is Code compliant.

Diagram B5 – Receptacle requirements for a standalone peninsula



c) Receptacle installed at island - clarification

Question 3
What is meant by “a permanently fixed island counter”?

Answer 3
A permanently fixed island counter is one that is permanently fastened to the floor and cannot be moved without removing the fastenings. If an island is not fastened to the floor and can be moved to different locations to suit the customer’s needs, then it is not a permanently fixed island counter.

Question 4
Does Rule 26-722 d) iv) require the installation of at least one receptacle at a moveable island counter space?

Answer 4
No, Rule 26-722 d) iv) only requires the installation of at least one receptacle at each permanently fixed island counter space. If the island counter space is not permanently fixed in position, then no receptacle is required.

Question 5
Does the Ontario Electrical Safety Code (OESC) require that a moveable island counter space be permanently fixed in position and at least one receptacle installed at the island?

Answer 5
No, there is no Rule in the OESC that requires an island counter space to be permanently fixed in place.

d) Receptacle for peninsula and island – location

Direction 1
Receptacles required by Rule 26-722 d) iv) and v) shall be permitted to be installed:

- behind the counter work surface, if the partial wall has sufficient depth and there is sufficient space in the wall cavity for the outlet box and cover, without altering the trim;
- in countertops, provided that receptacle outlet assemblies are certified for the application and are not mounted facing up, as specified by Rule 26-720; or
- as high as can be practicably mounted on the side or end of the island or peninsula. Example of “as high as practicable” location is where a receptacle is mounted not more than 300 mm below a counter work surface.

Note
Where islands or peninsulas have a cantilever extension (See Photo B1) no more than 150 mm in length, a receptacle shall be permitted on the underside within 300 mm of the top of the counter.

Photo B1 – Cantilever style counter top



Rationale for Direction 1
Rule 26-722 d) iv) and v) provides the requirements for receptacles in kitchen islands and peninsulas, however, it does not provide requirements for acceptable locations. The Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) has been asked by many contractors and kitchen cabinet manufacturers to clarify acceptable locations for the receptacles on peninsulas and islands.

If the peninsula or island has a raised backsplash or partial wall available above the counter, as per “Direction 1”, receptacles are permitted to be mounted on the wall above the counter (where the space exists).

If the countertop is flat across its entire work surface, Rule 26-720 c) prohibits the mounting of receptacles face up in a work surface, in kitchen or dining areas, which

therefore requires the use of a pedestal if mounted on top of the counter surface. Most portable kitchen appliances, certified to C22.2 No. 64 Household Cooking and Liquid-Heating Appliances, are equipped with a 900 mm cord. Locating a receptacle as high as practicable on the side or end of the island or peninsula ensures that they are within easy reach of appliances located on the counter top. The example for the receptacle location within 300 mm of the countertop (excluding the side with a breakfast bar that extends more than 150 mm) allows standard kitchen appliance cords to reach the receptacle.

Question 6
Does a receptacle installed in the kick plate below an island or peninsular cabinet, satisfy the requirements of Rules 26-722 d) iv) and 26-722 d) v)?

Answer 6
No, as per “Direction 1”.

2) Receptacles for kitchen counter space

Question 7
What is the minimum height of a wall extending above the counter work surface before receptacles, as per Rule 26-722 d) iii), are required?

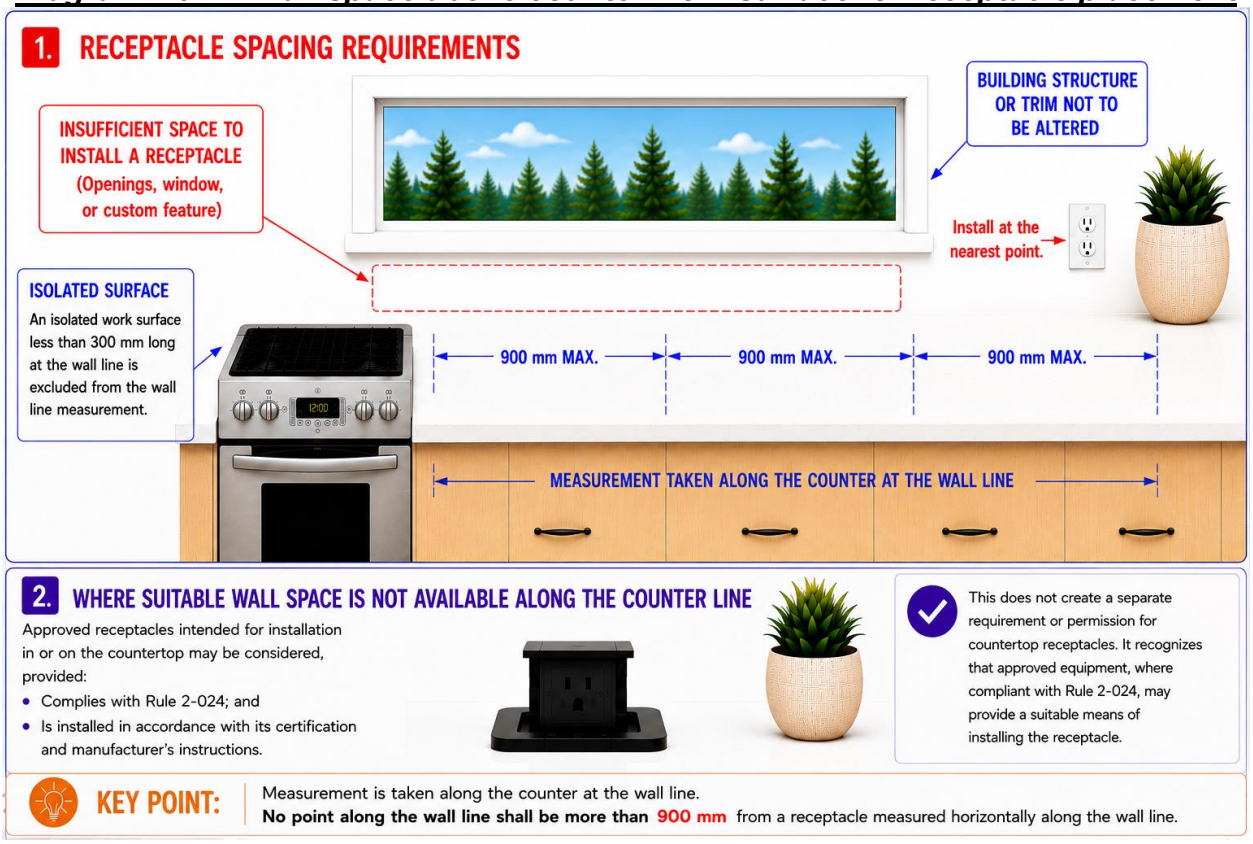
Answer 7
Where that wall space is sufficient to accommodate an outlet box and cover without altering the building structure and/or trim, receptacles shall be installed to comply with the maximum spacing outlined in the Rule. If that wall space is not sufficient to accommodate the box and cover without alterations, notwithstanding 26-722 d) iii), the receptacle shall be permitted to be installed at the nearest point along the counter that can accommodate the box and cover adequately. For the application of Rule 26-722 d) iii), the measurement is taken along the counter at the wall line. Therefore, any wall space above the countertop is to be included in that wall line measurement. (See Diagram B5A)

Note: Where suitable wall space is not available along the counter line, approved receptacles intended for installation in or on the countertop may be considered, provided the equipment complies with Rule 2-024 and is installed in accordance with its certification and manufacturer's instructions.

Rationale 7
This is to clarify that Rule 26-722 d) iii) is intended to be applied for measurement where a counter work surface is installed. Kitchen designs increasingly incorporate architectural features such as large windows, and custom openings, that may extend to or near the counter work surface. These designs can limit available wall space for the installation of receptacles and have resulted in questions regarding the application of Rule 26-722 d) iii), including whether a minimum wall height is required and how interrupted wall spaces are considered when determining receptacle spacing. Where conventional wall space is unavailable, this clarification does not create a separate requirement or permission for countertop receptacles; it recognizes that approved

equipment, where compliant with Rule 2-024, may provide a suitable means of installing the receptacle.

Diagram B5A – Wall space above counter work surface for receptacle placement



Background 8

With the new kitchens in high end homes, the architect and builder install mirror or stainless behind the counter which makes it difficult to install receptacles along the wall. If the receptacles are installed under the cabinets, above the counter, facing down and satisfy Rule 26-722, then the counters will still be able to be serviced with receptacles without having to cut into the backsplash.

Question 8

Is it acceptable to install receptacles facing down, under the cabinet, above the counter, instead of on the wall behind the counter?

Photo B2 – Receptacles installed facing down under kitchen cabinets



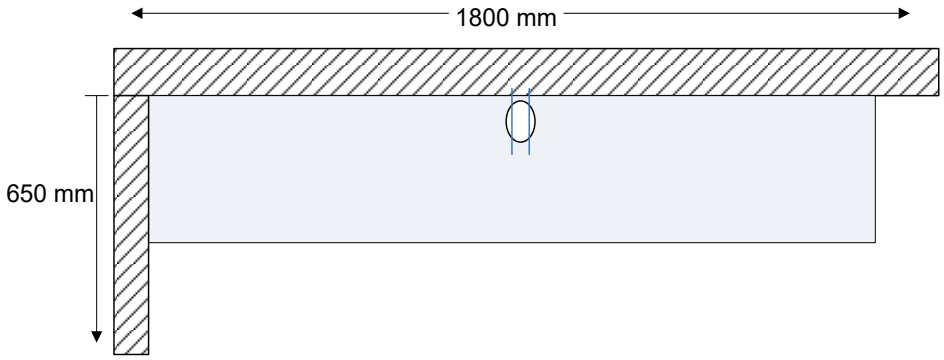
Answer 8
Yes, provided they are located as close as practicable to the counter wall

Rationale 8
Rule 26-722 d) iii) requires that there be sufficient receptacles installed so that no point is more than 900 mm from a receptacle. With the receptacles installed on the underside of the cabinet, in an approved manner, this requirement may still be met.

Background 9
Confusion as to how the wall line length is calculated when a counter ends adjacent to two walls is causing disputes as to how many receptacles are required.

Question 9
For the purpose of applying Rule 26-722 d) iii), what is the wall line length in Diagram B6?

Diagram B6 – What is the wall length?



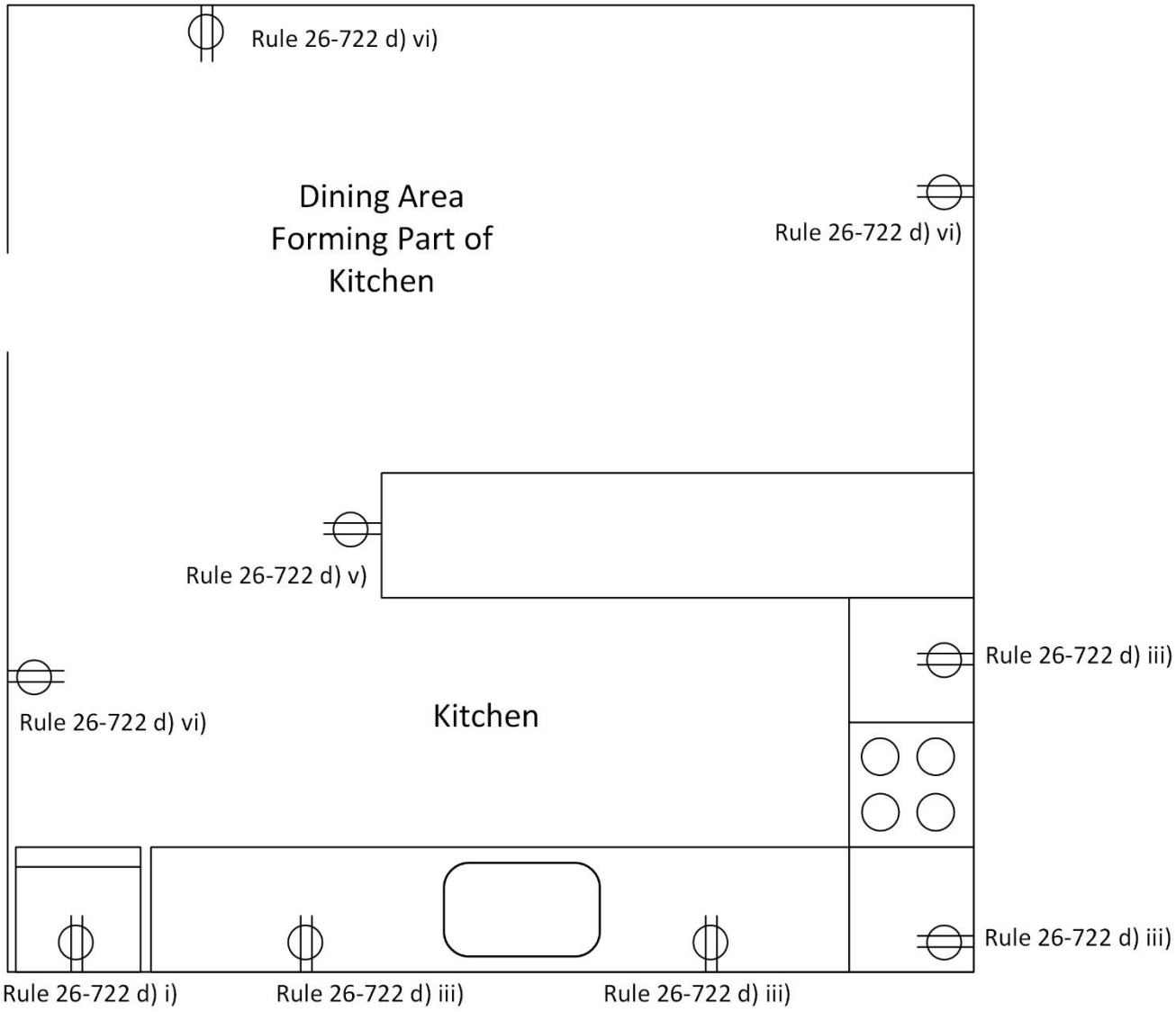
Answer 9
Notwithstanding Rule 26-722 d) iii), the length is considered to be 1800 mm and only one receptacle is required.

Rationale 9
Counter length is being measured along the back wall; the side wall does not change how equipment is utilized.

3) Requirements for receptacles in "open concept" kitchens

In today's more modern homes, the trend appears to be toward more "open concept" kitchen/dining areas. As we already have other rules that mandate outlets in the kitchen along the counter work surfaces, islands etc., finished walls of an "open concept" kitchen require a sufficient number of receptacles, similar to other areas of a dwelling, see Diagram B7. Rule 26-722 d) vi) requires a sufficient number of receptacles to be installed on the remaining finished usable space wall in accordance with Rule 26-722 a) and shall be arc-fault protected as per Rule 26-658.

Diagram B7 – Receptacle requirements for "open concept" kitchens



4) AFCI protection requirements

Based on Rule 26-658, arc-fault protection of branch circuits for dwelling units is required for each branch circuit supplying 125 V receptacles, rated 20 A or less. For more information about AFCI requirements see Bulletin 26-18-*.

Some specific branch circuits in kitchens are excluded from this requirement. These are branch circuits supplying receptacle(s) installed:

- at the kitchen counter, for use by persons with disabilities, required by Rule 26-720 d)
- for a refrigerator, required by Rule 26-722 d) i)
- at the kitchen counter, required by Rule 26-722 d) iii)
- at an island, required by Rule 26-722 d) iv); or
- at a peninsula, required by Rule 26-722 d) v)

All branch circuits supplying additional receptacles in kitchens are required to be protected in accordance with Rule 26-658 a) and b). Examples: receptacle for garburator; a dedicated receptacle for a microwave oven, wall cabinet, shelf or enclosure; receptacle for a gas range; general receptacles in “open concept” kitchens.

a) Refrigerators’ circuits in kitchens of dwelling units

Clarification has been requested for freezers and wine coolers with regards to which branch circuits they are permitted or required to be connected to.

Rule 26-654 only requires at least one branch circuit for receptacles installed for refrigerators in the kitchen of a dwelling unit as per Rule 26-722 d) i). These circuits are also exempted from the AFCI requirements of Rule 26-658.

Therefore, in a dwelling kitchen, notwithstanding Rule 26-654, receptacles intended to supply a mini-fridge, beverage cooler or a freezer are permitted to be fed from a “refrigerator branch circuit”. However if connected to a general-purpose circuit, AFCI protection is required as per Rule 26-658.

Question 10
Can a single duplex receptacle be installed to supply side-by-side refrigerators or freezers?

Answer 10
Yes, notwithstanding Rule 26-722 d) i), a single duplex receptacle shall be permitted.

b) Butler’s pantry receptacles

Clarification has been requested for requirements of butler’s pantry receptacles. A butler’s pantry is typically a small service and storage room between a kitchen and a dining room that may incorporate a counter as shown in Diagram B8.

Diagram B8: Location of a butler’s pantry



Question 11
Is a butler's pantry considered a kitchen?

Answer 11

No. Therefore, the kitchen counter receptacle requirements and AFCI exemptions do not apply.

Note

Receptacles may be required in useable wall space by Rule 26-722 a) and c) and arc fault protection is required.

Rationale 11

Rule 26-658 a) i) requires each branch circuit supplying 125 V receptacles rated 20 A or less to be provided with arc-fault protection by a combination-type arc-fault circuit interrupter, except for receptacles installed in accordance with the specific exceptions identified in Rules 26-720 f) and 26-722 d) i), iii), iv), and v). The exceptions in Rule 26-658 a) i) are specific to the receptacles and locations identified by those Rules and shall not be interpreted as a general exemption for receptacles installed in a butler's pantry simply because the pantry is associated with or located near a kitchen.