Luminaires (Light Fixtures) Installed in Clothes Closets

The NEC (National Electrical Code) does not specifically require that a lighting fixture be installed in a clothes closet. If a lighting fixture is installed, however, installation requirements covered under 2014 NEC article 410.2 and article 410.16 must be applied.

Closet Storage Space is defined as, “a volume bounded by the sides and back closet walls and planes extending from the closet floor vertically to a height of 6 feet or the highest clothes-hanging rod and parallel to the walls at a horizontal distance of 24 inches from the sides and back of the closet walls respectively, and continuing vertically to the closet ceiling parallel to the walls at a horizontal distance of 12 inches or the width of the shelf, whichever is greater.”

A fixture that is installed in a clothes closet must be a surface-mounted or recessed incandescent or LED type with all lamp(s) completely enclosed; or a surface-mounted or recessed fluorescent fixture. These fixtures shall not project into the defined storage spaces as indicated by the dimensions in the diagram below.

Surface-mounted fluorescent or LED fixtures shall be permitted to be installed within the Closet Storage Space where identified for this use.

**NEC articles 410.2 & 410.16 Luminaries in clothes closets**
Note: Minimum dimensions from fixtures are from fixture bulb cover to the nearest part of the Closet Storage Space.