

481—301.19(103A,104A) Making apartments accessible and functional for persons with disabilities.

301.19(1) Multiple dwelling unit buildings. This rule applies to all multiple dwelling unit buildings that consist of four or more dwelling units if such buildings have one or more elevators. In such buildings without an elevator, all ground floor units must be accessible. The requirements of this rule apply to the individual dwelling units and the common use spaces that are accessible to persons with disabilities in multiple dwelling unit buildings.

EXCEPTION 1: A multiple dwelling unit building is deemed to be in compliance with this rule if it is located in a local jurisdiction that has enacted accessibility rules that have been recognized by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development as providing a safe harbor for compliance with the accessibility requirements established in the federal Fair Housing Act and if the building has been found to be in compliance with those requirements unless the building is required to comply with the requirements of the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards or other applicable standards that may be more restrictive than the provisions of this rule.

EXCEPTION 2: Certain multiple dwelling unit buildings are required to comply with the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards, published by the U.S. Access Board, 1988. Compliance with the provisions of this rule does not substitute for compliance with any applicable provision of the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards or any other applicable standards that may be more restrictive than the provisions of this rule.

NOTE: Compliance with the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards is generally necessary for buildings and facilities constructed with federal financial assistance.

“Dwelling unit” means a single unit of residence for a household of one or more persons. Examples of a dwelling unit covered by these rules include a condominium, an apartment unit within an apartment building, and another type of dwelling in which sleeping accommodations are provided but toilet or cooking facilities are shared by occupants of more than one room or portion of the dwelling. Examples of the latter include dormitory rooms and sleeping accommodations in shelters intended for occupancy as a residence for homeless persons.

“Ground floor” means a floor of a building with a building entrance on an accessible route. A building may have one or more ground floors.

a. The individual dwelling units shall contain an accessible route into and through the unit, as well as meet the following:

(1) All doors intended for use as passage through the dwelling unit have a clear opening of at least 32" nominal width with the door open 90 degrees, measured between the face of the door and the stop. Openings more than 24" in depth are not considered doorways.

NOTE: A 34" door, hung in the standard manner, provides an acceptable 32" opening.

(2) Except at doorways, the minimum clear width of the accessible route is at least 36" wide.

(3) In single-story units, special features such as lofts or sunken or raised areas may be on an accessible route provided the areas do not interrupt the accessible route through the remainder of the dwelling unit.

(4) In multistory dwelling units in buildings with elevators, the story of the unit that is served by the building elevator is the primary entry to the unit and such entry/accessible floor complies with the requirements of subparagraphs (1), (2) and (3) above. The entry/accessible floor contains a bathroom or powder room that complies with paragraph "c" below.

(5) Exterior deck, patio, or balcony surfaces are no more than ½" below the floor level of the interior of the dwelling unit unless they are constructed of impervious material such as concrete, brick or flagstone. In such case, the surface is no more than 4" below the floor level of the interior or lower if required by local building code.

(6) Thresholds at exterior doors, including sliding tracks, are no higher than ¾". Thresholds and changes in elevations as in subparagraph (5) above are beveled with a slope no greater than 1:2.

b. Kitchens shall meet or be adaptable to meet the following:

(1) A clear floor space at least 30" × 48" that allows a parallel approach by a person in a wheelchair is provided at the range or cooktop and the sink. Either a parallel or forward approach is provided at the oven, dishwasher, refrigerator/freezer or trash compactor.

(2) Clearance between counters and all opposing base cabinets, countertops, appliances or walls are at least 40". In U-shaped kitchens with a sink or cooktop at the base of the "U," the base cabinets are removable at that location or a 60" turning radius is provided.

c. All bathrooms of covered multifamily dwelling units shall comply with provisions of subparagraph (1) of this paragraph or at least one bathroom in the dwelling unit shall comply with provisions of subparagraph (2) of this paragraph and all other bathrooms and powder rooms within the dwelling unit must be on an accessible route with usable entry doors in accordance with paragraph "a" above. "Powder room" means a room with a toilet and sink.

In multistory dwelling units, only those bathrooms on the accessible level are subject to these requirements. Where the powder room is the only facility provided on the accessible level of a multistory dwelling unit, the powder room must comply with the provisions of subparagraph (1) or (2) of this paragraph.

(1) Sufficient maneuvering space is provided within the bathroom for a person using a wheelchair or other mobility aid to enter and close the door, use the fixtures, reopen the door and exit. Doors may swing into the clear floor space provided at any fixture if the maneuvering space is provided. Maneuvering space may include any knee space or toe space available below the bathroom fixtures.

Clear floor space at fixtures may overlap.

If the shower stall is the only bathing facility provided in the covered dwelling unit, the shower stall measures at least 36" × 36".

NOTE: Cabinets under lavatories are acceptable provided the bathroom has space to allow a parallel approach by a person in a wheelchair; if parallel approach is not possible within the space, any cabinets provided would have to be removable to afford the necessary knee clearance for forward approach.

(2) Where the door swings into the bathroom, there is a clear space (2'6" × 4'0") within the room to position a wheelchair or other mobility aid clear of the path of the door as it is closed and to permit the use of the fixtures. This clear space can include any knee space and toe space available below the bathroom fixtures.

Where the door swings out, a clear space is provided within the bathroom for a person using a wheelchair or other mobility aid to position the wheelchair such that the person is allowed use of the fixtures. There is a clear space to allow persons using wheelchairs to reopen the door to exit.

When both tub and shower fixtures are provided in the bathroom, at least one fixture is made accessible. When two or more lavatories are provided in a bathroom, at least one is made accessible.

Toilets are located within bathrooms in a manner that permits a grab bar to be installed on one side of the fixture. In locations where toilets are adjacent to walls or bathtubs, the centerline of the fixture is a minimum of 1'6" from the obstacle. The nongrab bar side of the toilet fixture is a minimum of 1'3" from the finished surface of the adjoining walls, vanities, or the edge of a lavatory.

Vanities and lavatories are installed with the center line of the fixture a minimum of 1'3" horizontally from an adjoining wall or fixture. The top of the fixture rim is a maximum height of 2'10" above the finished floor. If knee space is provided below the vanity, the bottom of the apron is at least 2'3" above the floor. If provided, full knee space (for front approach) is at least 1'5" deep.

Bathtubs and tub/showers located in the bathroom provide a clear access aisle adjacent to the lavatory that is at least 2'6" wide and extends for a length of 4'0" measured from the head of the bathtub.

Stall showers in the bathroom may be of any size or configuration. A minimum clear floor space 2'6" wide × 4'0" deep should be available outside the stall. If the shower stall is the only bathing facility provided in the covered dwelling unit, or on the accessible level of a covered multistory unit, and measures a nominal 36" × 36", the shower stall has reinforcing to allow for installation of an optional wall-hung bench seat.

d. Walls in bathrooms that are to be adaptable will be reinforced to allow later installation of grab bars around toilet, tub, shower stall and shower seat where provided.

Where the toilet is not placed adjacent to a side wall, provision shall be made for floor-mounted foldaway or similar alternative grab bars. Where the powder room is the only toilet facility located on an accessible level of a multistory dwelling unit, it must comply with this requirement for reinforced walls for grab bars.

NOTE: A tub may have shelves or benches at either end, or a tub may be installed without surrounding walls, if there is provision for alternative mounting of grab bars. For example, a sunken tub placed away from walls could have reinforced areas for installation of floor-mounted grab bars. The same principle applies to shower stalls, e.g., glass-walled stalls could be planned to allow floor-mounted grab bars to be installed later.

Reinforcement for grab bars may be provided in a variety of ways (for example, by plywood or wood blocking) so long as the necessary reinforcement is placed so as to permit later installation of appropriate grab bars.

e. Public and common use areas shall be readily accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities.

f. Light switches, electrical outlets, thermostats and other environmental controls shall be located no higher than 48", and no lower than 15", above the floor. If the reach is over an obstruction between 20" and 25" in depth, the maximum height is reduced to 44" for forward approach; or 46" for side approach, provided the obstruction is no more than 24" in depth. Obstructions should not extend more than 25" from the wall beneath a control. (See ADAAG Figure 5.)

NOTE: Controls or outlets that do not satisfy these specifications are acceptable provided that comparable controls or outlets (i.e., that perform the same functions) are provided within the same area and are accessible.

301.19(2) Elevators. An elevator meeting the requirements established for accessible elevators in Section 4.10 of the ADAAG is required in any apartment building of four or more stories.

NOTE: Elevators are not necessary in apartment buildings of three or fewer stories; however, the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards, or any other applicable standard, may require the installation of an elevator. If an elevator is not required to be installed by this rule, then the elevator is not subject to the requirements of Section 4.10 of the ADAAG.

301.19(3) Any covered units within a multiple unit dwelling which comply with a code or standard which has been certified as a safe harbor for compliance with the accessibility requirements of the federal Fair Housing Act by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development are in compliance with these rules unless the covered units are required to comply with the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards or any other applicable requirements which may be more restrictive than the provisions of this rule.

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