

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORRECTIONS

Public Safety Services




V. J. BELLA  
STATE FIRE MARSHAL



FOSTER, JR.  
GOVERNOR

MEMORANDUM

TO: Plan Review Staff

FROM: Henry C. Reed, Sr.   
Architect Supervisor

RE: Minimum Ramp Width

DATE: September 17, 1996

NFPA 101:5-5.4.1 Requires a minimum number of "accessible means of egress" and although ADAAG permits minimum 36" wide ramps, NFPA 101 is more stringent pursuant to NFPA 101:5-2.5.

According to the definition for "Means of Egress" in ADAAG, "...An accessible means of egress is one that complies with these guidelines and does not include stairs, steps, or escalators", therefore, new ramps used to satisfy the requirements of 101:5-5.4 are required to have a minimum clear width of 44" pursuant to 101:5-2.5.

Example: A trailer is being submitted for business occupancy. Its size is 12' x 60' and is permitted to have a single means of egress. The owner has provided steps having three 6" risers to a 5' x 5' landing which is level with the floor elevation of the trailer. The owner has also provided an 18' long ramp to provide handicap access to the building connected to the entrance door landing. The provision of the ramp is required pursuant to NFPA 101:5-5.4.1 since no area of refuge is provided, however, the ramp must be at least 44" in width in order to satisfy the requirements of NFPA 101:5-2.5.

A 36" wide ramp would be permitted only if it were not used as a component of the means of egress from a building. If another ramp was installed in the example above to provide access to the trailer, at another location, for instance, to a rear door, then a 36" wide ramp would be permitted. If a ramp was provided outside in the sidewalk (independent of the building) to provide access from the parking area, then a width of 36" would be permitted. Be aware, however, that if the ramp is in the means of egress (exit discharge included), then its minimum width must be 44".

HCR/FLF/smi

cc: Jerry W. Jones

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