

CHAPTER 11

ACCESSIBILITY

User note:

About this chapter: Chapter 11 contains provisions that set forth requirements for accessibility of buildings and their associated sites and facilities for people with physical disabilities. The fundamental philosophy of the code on the subject of accessibility is that everything is required to be accessible. This is reflected in the basic applicability requirement (see Section 1103.1). The code's scoping requirements then address the conditions under which accessibility is not required in terms of exceptions to this general mandate. While the IBC contains scoping provisions for accessibility (for example, what, where and how many), ICC A117.1, *Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities*, is the referenced standard for the technical provisions (in other words, how). Accessibility criteria for existing buildings are addressed in the International Existing Building Code®. The International Residential Code® references Chapter 11 for accessibility provisions; therefore, this chapter may be applicable to housing covered under the International Residential Code. The provisions in the I-Codes are intended to meet or exceed the requirements in the federal accessibility requirement found in the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Fair Housing Act.

There are many accessibility issues that not only benefit people with disabilities, but also provide a tangible benefit to people without disabilities. This type of requirement can be set forth in the code as generally applicable without necessarily identifying it specifically as an accessibility-related issue. Such a requirement would then be considered as having been "mainstreamed." For example, visible alarms are located in Chapter 9 and accessible means of egress and ramp requirements are addressed in Chapter 10.

SECTION 1101 GENERAL

1101.1 Scope. The provisions of this chapter shall control the design and construction of facilities for accessibility for individuals with disabilities.

SECTION 1102 COMPLIANCE

1102.1 Design. Buildings and facilities shall be designed and constructed to be *accessible* in accordance with this code and ICC A117.1.

SECTION 1103 SCOPING REQUIREMENTS

1103.1 Where required. *Sites*, buildings, *structures*, *facilities*, elements and spaces, temporary or permanent, shall be *accessible* to individuals with disabilities.

1103.2 General exceptions. *Sites*, buildings, *structures*, *facilities*, elements and spaces shall be exempt from this chapter to the extent specified in this section.

1103.2.1 Specific requirements. *Accessibility* is not required in buildings and *facilities*, or portions thereof, to the extent permitted by Sections 1104 through 1111.

1103.2.2 Employee work areas. Spaces and elements within *employee work areas* shall only be required to comply with Sections 907.5.2.3.1, 1009 and 1104.3.1 and shall be designed and constructed so that individuals with disabilities can approach, enter and exit the work area. Work areas, or portions of work areas, other than raised courtroom stations in accordance with Section 1108.4.1.4, that are less than 300 square feet (30 m²) in area and located 7 inches (178 mm) or more above or below the ground or finished floor where the change in elevation is essential to

the function of the space shall be exempt from all requirements.

1103.2.3 Detached dwellings. Detached one- and two-family *dwellings*, their accessory structures and their associated *sites* and *facilities* are not required to comply with this chapter.

1103.2.4 Utility buildings. Group U occupancies are not required to comply with this chapter other than the following:

1. In agricultural buildings, access is required to paved work areas and areas open to the general public.
2. Private garages or carports that contain required *accessible* parking.

1103.2.5 Construction sites. Structures, *sites* and equipment directly associated with the actual processes of construction including, but not limited to, scaffolding, bridging, materials hoists, materials storage or construction trailers are not required to comply with this chapter.

1103.2.6 Raised areas. Raised areas used primarily for purposes of security, life safety or fire safety including, but not limited to, observation galleries, prison guard towers, fire towers or lifeguard stands are not required to comply with this chapter.

1103.2.7 Limited access spaces. Spaces accessed only by ladders, catwalks, crawl spaces, freight elevators or very narrow passageways are not required to comply with this chapter.

1103.2.8 Areas in places of religious worship. Raised or lowered areas, or portions of areas, in *places of religious worship* that are less than 300 square feet (30 m²) in area and located 7 inches (178 mm) or more above or below the finished floor and used primarily for the performance of religious ceremonies are not required to comply with this chapter.