
FIRE PREVENTION AND BUILDING SAFETY COMMISSION
Department of Homeland Security

Written Interpretation of the State Building Commissioner

Interpretation #: CEB-2018-02-2014 IBC-1009.8

Building or Fire Safety Law Interpreted

675 IAC 13-2.6, the 2014 Indiana Building Code, Section 1009.8. Stairway landings. There shall be a floor or landing at the top and bottom of each stairway. . . Exception: Aisle stairs complying with Section 1028.

Interpretation of the State Building Commissioner

The exemption from Chapter 10 stair requirements granted to Chapter 28-compliant assembly aisle stairs is not intended for this application. The intent is to differentiate between standard stairs and assembly aisles, which in many instances must incorporate risers due to the sloping nature of the assembly space's floor.

In creating the assembly aisle stair exemptions, the rationale was that it was impractical to follow the stair rules in an assembly space aisle when that aisle might need to consist of risers. In such cases the standard stair requirements (width, landings, guard and hand rails, etc.) are often impractical to implement, and they can create impediments to sight lines and travel. In dividing, as part of this renovation, each of the existing outermost aisles into a sloping aisle surface and an adjacent ramp and stair, the stair is no longer an integral part of the aisle. The aisle in effect bypasses the stair; it remains in place as a continuous sloped surface. The stair is used only to access the exit and not to traverse the sloped auditorium floor. It is a standard stair, and subject to the requirements of Chapter 10.

Viewed differently, there is no practical difference between the stairs in their previous pre-renovation locations and the stairs in their new locations. Both old and new locations are within the auditorium space. Prior to the renovation, the stairs (presumably with compliant landings) were separated from these aisles by walls; now they are only separated by guards. Moving them from one side of the walls to the other does not alter their function, or their need for compliance with the requirements of Chapter 10.

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