



What are the requirements for exits?

- *Exits* must be separated from the workplace by fire resistant materials—that is, one-hour fire-resistance rating if the exit connects three or fewer stories, and two-hour fire-resistance rating if the exit connects more than three floors.
- *Exits* can have only those openings necessary to allow access to the *exit* from occupied areas of the workplace or to the *exit discharge*. Openings must be protected by a self-closing, approved *fire door* that remains closed or automatically closes in an emergency.
- Keep the line-of-sight to *exit signs* clearly visible always.
- Install “EXIT” signs in plainly legible letters.

Safety Features for Exit Routes

- Keep *exit routes* free of explosive or highly flammable furnishings and other decorations.
- Arrange *exit routes* so employees will not have to travel toward a high-hazard area unless the path of travel is effectively shielded from the high-hazard area.
- Ensure that *exit routes* are free and unobstructed such as by materials, equipment, locked doors, or dead-end corridors.
- Provide lighting for *exit routes* adequate for employees with normal vision.
- Keep *exit route* doors free of decorations or signs that obscure the visibility of *exit route doors*.
- Post signs along the *exit access* indicating the direction of travel to the nearest *exit* and *exit discharge* if that direction is not immediately apparent.
- Mark doors or passages along an *exit access* that could be mistaken for an *exit* “Not an Exit” or with a sign identifying its use (such as “Closet”).
- Renew fire-retardant paints or solutions when needed.
- Maintain *exit routes* during construction, repairs, or alterations.

Emergency Exit Routes

What Everyone Should Know

How would you escape from your workplace in an emergency? Do you know where all the exits are in case your first choice is too crowded? Are you sure the doors will be unlocked and that the exit access behind them will not be blocked during a fire, explosion, or other crisis. Knowing the answers to these questions could keep you safe during an emergency.

How many exit routes must a workplace have?

Usually, a workplace must have at least two exit routes for prompt evacuation. But more than two exits are required if the number of employees, size of the building, or arrangement of the workplace will not allow a safe evacuation. Exit routes must be located as far away as practical from each other in case one is blocked by fire or smoke.

Design and Construction Requirements

- *Exit routes* must be permanent parts of the workplace.
- *Exit discharges* must lead directly outside or to a street, walkway, refuge area, public way, or open space with access to the outside.
- *Exit discharge* areas must be large enough to accommodate people likely to use the *exit route*.
- *Exit route* doors must be unlocked from the inside. They must be free of devices or alarms that could restrict use of the *exit route* if the device or alarm fails.
- *Exit routes* can be connected to rooms only by side-hinged doors, which must swing out in the direction of travel if the room may be occupied by more than 50 people.
- *Exit routes* must support the maximum permitted occupant load for each floor served, and the capacity of an *exit route* may not decrease in the direction of *exit route* travel to the *exit discharge*.
- *Exit routes* must have ceilings at least 7 ft., 6 in. high.
- An *exit access* must be at least 28 inches wide at all points. Objects that project into the exit must not reduce its width.