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ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS CHAPTER 11B OF THE 2001 CALIFORNIA BUILDING CODE

This handout describes the minimum accessibility requirements for **public buildings, public accommodations, commercial buildings, and publicly funded housing.**

Newly Designed or Newly Constructed Buildings:

All areas of newly designed or newly constructed public buildings, public accommodations, commercial buildings, and publicly funded housing shall be accessible to persons with disabilities as required by Chapter 11B. Accessibility to buildings shall be provided for all occupancy classifications except as modified or enhanced by Chapter 11B, but never to the exclusion of them.

Existing Buildings:

All existing public buildings, public accommodations, commercial buildings, and publicly funded housing shall be accessible to persons with disabilities as required by Chapter 11B. These requirements shall apply only to the areas of specific alterations, structural repairs, or additions and shall include the following areas:

- Accessible entrance to the building
- Primary path of travel to the altered area
- Sanitary facilities serving the area
- Drinking fountains serving the area
- Telephones serving the area
- Signs serving the area
- Parking

When the total cost of the alterations required to make these features accessible creates an unreasonable hardship, access shall be provided to the extent that it can be without incurring a disproportionate cost. In choosing which accessible elements to provide, priority should be given to those elements that will provide the greatest access in the following order:

1. An accessible entrance
2. An accessible route to the altered area
3. At least one accessible restroom for each sex
4. Accessible drinking fountains
5. Accessible telephone
6. When possible, additional accessible elements such as parking, storage, and alarms

Unreasonable Hardship:

Unreasonable hardship exists where the cost of providing an accessible entrance, path of travel, sanitary facilities, drinking fountains, public phones, and accessible parking exceeds 20 percent of the cost of the project without these features and the cost of the project without these features does not exceed the "Engineering News Record US20 Cities" average construction cost index (\$104,270 as of January 2005). The cost of the project must include every item necessary to complete the desired alteration including electrical, plumbing, HVAC, carpeting, paint, ceiling tiles, door hardware, walls, partitions, etc.

A **Disabled Access Unreasonable Hardship Application** must be completed and submitted with all other construction documents at the time a project is being submitted for a Building permit.