



Design and Construction Requirements of the Fair Housing Act

Applies to: All newly constructed, multi-family housing of four or more units ready for first occupancy on or after March 13th, 1991.

Exceptions:

- If last building permit issued prior to January 13th, 1990
- Impracticality

All ground floor units and units on floors served by elevators must have the following:

- At least one building entrance on an accessible route;
- All public and common use areas accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities;
- All doors providing passage into and within all premises sufficiently wide for use by persons with wheelchairs;
- An accessible route into and through the dwelling;
- Accessible light switches, electrical outlets, thermostats, and other environmental controls;
- Reinforcements in bathroom walls to allow installation of grab bars around toilet, tub, and shower when needed;
- Kitchens and bathrooms configured so that a person using a wheelchair can maneuver about the space.

Who Can Be Charged?

- Architects
- Builders
- Building Owners
- Agents of Building Owner

What Are The Penalties?

- Compensatory damages/lawyer's fees
- Retrofitting or setting up fund
- Civil Penalties
- Punitive Damages/ federal court

Advantages of Accessible Buildings:

- The number of potential renters is expanded.
- There is more comfort for everyone.
- Housing is safer in numerous ways.