

SAFETY COMPENDIUM – EGRESS



Egress: A synonym for Exit.

Exit means that portion of an exit route that is generally separated from other areas to provide a protected way of travel to the exit discharge.

1. In every building or structure exits shall be so arranged and maintained as to provide free and unobstructed egress from all parts of the building or structure at all times when it is occupied.
2. No lock or fastening to prevent free escape from the inside of any building shall be installed. Locks, latches, and other devices must not impede free and unobstructed egress. Make sure all exit doors can be opened by performing only one function and that special knowledge of keys or lock combinations is not required.
3. No less than two means of egress shall be provided from the Workroom. (A single exit route is permitted where the number of employees, the size of the building, its occupancy, or the arrangement of the workplace is such that all employees would be able to evacuate safely during an emergency.)
4. Means of egress shall be continually maintained free of all obstructions or impediments to full instant use in the case of fire or other emergency.
5. A sufficient number of exits must be provided to allow prompt escape. Make sure a door from a room to an exit or to an area that gives access to an exit is of the side-hinged, swinging type. If the room can be occupied by 50 or more people, the door must swing out for travel to the exit.
6. All doors that do not have identification signs (such as the boiler room, restroom, custodial closet, or other room that may be confused with an exit) must be marked with a sign stating: "Not an exit."
7. Facility mailing and carrier vestibule doors are for transporting mail to and from the loading docks. These vestibule doors are not an approved means of egress and must be designated and/or identified with a 'NOT AN EMERGENCY EXIT' sign.

Exit access means that portion of an exit route that leads to an exit.

1. Make certain that exit access is arranged so it is not necessary to travel toward any area of high hazard. All exits must discharge directly to the street or to a yard, court, or other open space that gives safe access to a public way. All egress routes shall lead to exits that discharge to open space that allows for safe access to a public way.
2. In no case is access to an exit to be made through a restroom or other room subject to locking, unless the exit serves only the room subject to locking.
3. Access to exits and doors leading to exits are designated and arranged so that they are clearly recognizable. Exits shall be marked by a readily visible sign.
4. Access to exits shall be marked by readily visible signs in all cases where the exit or way to reach it is not immediately visible to the occupants.
5. Never block aisles and emergency exits with equipment; keep them open for emergencies and egress. Always use designated traffic aisles when traveling within a facility. Never take shortcuts through work areas.
6. An exit access must be at least 28 inches (71.1 cm) wide at all points. Where there is only one exit access leading to an exit or exit discharge, the width of the exit and exit discharge must be at least equal to the width of the exit access. The width of an exit route must be sufficient to accommodate the maximum permitted occupant load of each floor served by the exit route.

Exit route means a continuous and unobstructed path of exit travel from any point within a workplace to a place of safety (including refuge areas). An exit route consists of three parts: The exit access; the exit; and, the exit discharge. (An exit route includes all vertical and horizontal areas along the route.)

1. Each exit route must be adequately lighted so that an employee with normal vision can see along the exit route.
2. Each exit must be clearly visible and marked by a sign reading "Exit."
3. Each exit route door must be free of decorations or signs that obscure the visibility of the exit route door.
4. Each exit sign must have the word "Exit" in plainly legible letters not less than six inches (15.2 cm) high, with the principal strokes of the letters in the word "Exit" not less than three-fourths of an inch (1.9 cm) wide.
5. Directional arrows are required if the direction of travel to reach the nearest exit is not immediately apparent. Provide emergency exit signs with directional arrows to points of egress. Signs shall be mounted at a height that will prevent damage from rolling equipment.
6. If the direction of travel to the exit or exit discharge is not immediately apparent, signs must be posted along the exit access indicating the direction of travel to the nearest exit and exit discharge. Additionally, the line-of-sight to an exit sign must clearly be visible at all times.
7. Each doorway or passage along an exit access that could be mistaken for an exit must be marked "Not an Exit" or similar designation, or be identified by a sign indicating its actual use (**e.g.**, closet).
8. Each exit sign must be illuminated to a surface value of at least five foot-candles by a reliable light source and be distinctive in color.