



# HOUSE BILL 25-1030

## ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS IN BUILDING CODES

SPONSORS: REP. JOSEPH, REP. STEWART, SEN. CUTTER, SEN. WINTER



### BACKGROUND

Today, both commercial and residential buildings remain vastly inaccessible to people with disabilities. Even though the ADA has been law for well over 30 years, even buildings that are being built to this day do not meet minimum accessibility requirements. Accessibility includes everything from ramps and doorways to emergency alarms and grab bars.

Especially as Colorado undergoes transformative change through high density housing growth, it is more important than ever to ensure that this growth is built accessible, to ensure access for all people and to save significant renovation and litigation costs.

### GAPS IN CURRENT LAW

While Title 9 does cover some of the minimum residential requirements, it does not cover commercial premises and also does not have the scope necessary to be effective in all residential settings.

Additionally, there are gaps in enforcement and review for accessibility requirements in multi-family residential buildings because the law is a patchwork between the ADA, Section 504 Colorado State Law. Without clear requirements, there are gaps especially in accessibility features beyond the unit based requirements.

## WHAT THE BILL DOES

HB25-1030 requires the following:

- Requires local governments with building codes to adopt codes that meet or exceed the standards set by the most recent international building codes as it relates to both commercial AND residential accessibility.
- Require the Department of Public Safety to adopt building codes that meet or exceed the standards set by the most recent international building codes as it relates to public schools and health facilities.
- Require the Department of Local Affairs to adopt codes that meet or exceed the standards set by the most recent international building codes as it relates to manufactured homes, factory-built buildings, site-built hotels, motels, and multifamily buildings in jurisdictions with no codes.

# SUPPORT ACCESSIBLE HOUSING FOR ALL

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What is the IBC?

The International Building Codes (IBC) are a set of minimum safety and health standards for construction, covering aspects like structural integrity, fire safety, and accessibility, designed to ensure buildings are safe for occupants and promote consistent construction practices across different regions. They are known among governments across Colorado as the standard codes, and make up a vast majority of the building codes that have been adopted in Colorado.

### What does the IBC Cover?

The IBC covers most buildings and structures. IBC Chapter 11, which covers accessibility, details which accessibility functions are required in each building type. Notably, it does not cover single family homes, duplexes, or townhomes that are less than three stories. Those structures are covered in the International Residential Code, which this bill does not impact.

### Does my district use the IBC?

Most likely, yes! Most jurisdictions across Colorado, including the state codes, utilize one of the two most recent versions of the IBC. This is because IBC is seen by many as the pre-packaged gold standard, and it is easiest for builders and inspectors to have a more uniform and familiar system to work in. If you have questions about a specific city in your district, please reach out to Disability Law Colorado and we would be happy to find your local code and compare it to IBC standards.

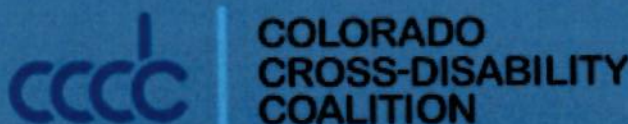
### When does this bill apply?

The language of the bill specifies that the requirement to update accessible building codes only applies when a governing body is making a substantial update to their existing codes. Most of the time, a substantial update only occurs when the code goes through modernization (for example when a local government moves from the 2018 version of their code to the 2021 version). If a government does not update their code, then there is no requirement to adopt accessible building codes.

### Will this make it more expensive to build?

NO! There is no evidence that this bill will increase costs to build, and may in fact decrease overall costs by protecting against liability. Because most governments follow IBC, and the ADA still requires accessible buildings, this should not change things from the perspective of a builder. However, with a more uniform system of accessible codes, it is easier to do code review and inspection work to help remediate accessibility violations prior to having an ADA lawsuit, saving builders and businesses money.

## Groups who Support HB25-1030



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Feedback or Inquiries: [jjohnson@disabilitylawco.org](mailto:jjohnson@disabilitylawco.org)



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Feedback: [junie.joseph.house@coleg.gov](mailto:junie.joseph.house@coleg.gov)



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