



**Informal Interpretation Report
Number 5252**



Date July 19, 2007

Edition 2004

Section 1009.11

Question:

Is it the intent of Exception 3 under 1009.11 to suggest that single risers in a walkway or patio that are spaced 48 inches or more apart, can create a succession of level changes, each being exempt from handrails? To ask another way, how far apart would one need to space single riser level changes in a walkway for them to be considered as individual single level changes exempt from handrail requirements (48 inches as suggested by 1009.4?).

Answer:

No. Section 1009.11 exception 3 exempts decks, patios and walkways that have a SINGLE change in elevation and a landing on each side of the elvation change from the handrail requirements. A succession of elevation changes would require a handrail.

On 07/19/2007 at 11:57 AM

Commentary:

The Exception is not intended to allow a long stairway with 48" treads without hand rails. The described condition meets the definition of a stair and, where more than one change in elevation occurs, the definition of a stairway (FBCB s.1002.1). However, no mention is made whether or not the changes in elevation (or stairway) are part of a means of egress. Please note, Section 1001.1 states: " ... the provisions in the chapter control the

design construction, and arrangement of means of egress components required to provide an approved means of egress from structures and portions thereof." (FBCB s.1001.1) If the walkways and patios are not comprising part of the means of egress, the Section may not apply. Keep in mind, the exception is not intended as a way to circumvent the code by creating a long stairway with 48" treads.

Notice:

The Building Officials Association of Florida, in cooperation with the Florida Building Commission, the Florida Department of Business & Professional Regulation, ICC, and industry and professional experts offer this interpretation of the Florida Building Code in the interest of consistency in their application statewide. This interpretation is informal, non-binding and subject to acceptance and approval by the local building official.