



**Informal Interpretation Report
Number 7441**



Date April 28, 2015

Edition 2010

Section 311.7.7.2

Question:

Is it the intent of 311.7.7.2 Exception 2 to allow the handrail, attached above a newel mounted on the first ascending tread (lowest), to continue past the newel at the same angle and slope and extend past and over hanging the face of the newel by a varying distance, without changing slope or returning?

Answer

No, exception 2 allows the starting newel to be over the lowest tread. Does not say anything about allowing the handrail to extend over the newel.

Commentary:

The wording in 311.7.7.2 states: "Handrail ends shall be returned or shall terminate in newel post for safety terminals." This indicates you can extend the handrail past the newel as long as you turn it down and back to the newel. A "D" shape return.

An easing is a piece typically used to transition a direction. Below is an industry definition of easing.

All literature reviewed shows the easing starting on the stair side of the bottom newel post.

Definition - "EASING The curved junctions placed in a handrail to bring the parts at different levels into one flowing curve. A fitting that curves in a vertical plane, used to change the angle of the handrail."

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.