COMMERCIAL STAIRS, RAILINGS, AND GUARDS

These are general guidelines. There may be additional requirements depending on the specific project. Please ask if you have any questions.

WIDTH OF STAIRS
- The width of stairways shall be determined by the occupant load
- Stairways serving an occupant load of less than 50 shall have a width of not less than 36”.
- Stairways serving an occupant load of 50 or more shall not be less than 44” in width and may require a wider width due to an increased occupant load.

HEADROOM
- Stairways shall have a minimum headroom clearance of 80” measured vertically from a line connecting the edge of the nosings.
STAIR TREADS AND RISERS

- Tread depths shall be 11” minimum.
- Stair riser heights shall be 7” maximum and 4” minimum.
- The tolerance between the largest and smallest tread depth or largest and smallest riser height shall not exceed 3/8”.

![Diagram of stair treads and risers]

STAIRWAY LANDINGS

- There shall be a floor or landing at the top and bottom of each stairway.
- The length and width of the landing shall not be less than the width of the stairways they serve.
- Where the stairway has a straight run the length need not exceed 48”.

*Need not exceed 48 in. if landing occurs in a straight run of stairs.
**HANDRAILS**

- Stairways shall have handrails on both sides.
- Handrail height, measured above stair nosings shall be uniform, not less than 34” and not more than 38”.
- All handrails shall be graspable.
- Handrail gripping surfaces shall be continuous, without interruption by newel posts or other obstructions.
- Handrails shall return to a wall, guard or the walking surface or shall be continuous to the handrail of an adjacent stair flight.
- Where handrails are not continuous between flights, the handrails shall extend horizontally at least 12” beyond the top riser and continue to slope for the depth of one tread beyond the bottom riser.
- Circular handrails shall have an outside diameter of at least 1 1/4” and not greater than 2”. Other shapes may be acceptable if they provide equivalent graspability.
Handrail with circular 1 1/4 in. min/2 in. max diameter or provide equivalent graspability.

Handrail that is not circular; perimeter of at least 4 in. but not greater than 6 1/4 in.

2 3/4 in. maximum
1 1/4 in. minimum

Begin recess
Begin finger recess
Tallest portion of profile

Min. 5/16 in. depth this area

Widest portion of profile

Handrail perimeter > 6 1/4 in.

7/8 in. maximum to 5/16 in. depth of finger recess

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GUARDS

- Guards shall be located along open-sided walking surfaces that are located more than 30” above the floor or grade below.
- Guards shall not be less than 42” in height.
- Guards shall not have openings which allow passage of a sphere 4” in diameter.