



FIRE PREVENTION GUIDELINE

Title: Maintenance of the Means of Egress		
Number: FPG-21	Effective Date: 01/01/2023	Revised Date: 03/01/2023
Code References: California Fire Code (CFC), California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 19, Merced Municipal Code (MMC)		
Note: <i>This guideline is a summary of Fire Department clarifications and interpretations of City and State Codes and nationally recognized standards in accordance with the currently adopted edition of the Fire Code. Information contained herein applies to typical circumstances and may not address all situations.</i>		

SCOPE

This Guideline has been developed to ensure the public can exit from a building during a fire, panic situation or other emergency. The guideline provides the public and business community direction regarding the maintenance of the means of egress.

CODES AND GUIDELINES

This guideline shall apply to all buildings or temporary structures in accordance with the California Fire Code, California Code of Regulations, Title 19 and the Merced Municipal Code.

PERMITS REQUIRED

An operational permit is not required.

DEFINITION

Means of Egress: A continuous and unobstructed path of vertical and horizontal egress travel from any occupied portion of a building or structure to a public way. A means of egress consists of three separate and distinct parts: the exit access, the exit and the exit discharge.

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

RELIABILITY

1. Exit accesses, exits or exit discharges shall be continuously maintained free from obstructions or impediments to full instant use in the case of fire or other emergency
2. Security devices that affect the means of egress are subject to the approval of the Fire Marshal.



3. Any security device or system that emits any medium that could obscure a means of egress in any building, structure or premise shall be prohibited.

OBSTRUCTIONS

A means of egress shall be free from obstructions that would prevent its use.

1. Furnishings, decorations or other objects shall not be placed so as to obstruct exits, access thereto, egress there from, or visibility thereof.
2. Hangings and draperies shall not be placed over exit doors or otherwise be located to conceal or obstruct an exit.
3. Means of egress doors shall be readily distinguishable from the adjacent construction and finishes so that such doors are easily recognizable as doors. Mirrors shall not be placed on exit doors or placed in or adjacent to any exit in such a manner as to confuse the direction of exit.

DELAYED EGRESS DEVICES

The use of delayed egress devices is prohibited unless approved by the Fire Code Official. The building detection and suppression systems, occupancy type and other features must be in compliance with all code requirements. A plan submittal to Inspection Services may be required.

EXIT SIGNS

1. Exit signs shall be installed and maintained
2. Decorations, furnishings, equipment or other signage shall not impair the visibility of exit signs.

DOORS

Chains, bars, sliding bolts or other devices that would prevent access to a building or escape from the interior building during an emergency is prohibited.

1. Exception: In Occupancy Groups B (business), F (factory), M (mercantile) and S (special) horizontal sliding or vertical security grilles are permitted at the main exit and shall be openable from the inside without the use of a key or special knowledge or effort during periods that the space is occupied. The grills shall remain locked in the full-open position during the period of occupancy by the general public. Where two or more means of egress are required, not more than one-half of the exits or exit



access doorways shall be equipped with horizontal sliding or vertical security grilles. Keys for unlocking security grilles must be located in an approved key box.

2. The use of bars, grates, bolts or similar devices on the interior of the building is prohibited at all times.
3. Security bars or grilles are not allowed for use in A (assembly), E (educational), I (institutional), H (hazardous) or other occupancies not noted in section (1 above).

APPROVED DOOR HARDWARE

Self-Releasing Door Hardware

The lever is locked and unlocked by a key from the exterior. The inside lever is always unlocked and provides single action exiting when the interior lever is turned.



Self-Releasing Door Hardware with Code Entry

Door is locked from the exterior side at all times (code is required for access). The inside lever is always unlocked and provides single action exiting when the interior lever is turned.





Self-Releasing Door Hardware with Interconnected Single Locking Hardware

Single deadbolt protection with single action exiting when the interior lever is turned. Deadbolt retracts when the interior lever is turned.



Self-Releasing Door Hardware with Interconnected Multi-Point Locking Hardware

Multi-point deadbolt protection with single action exiting when panic bar is depressed. Multi-point locking hardware is also available with lever type handle.





DOUBLE KEYED CYLINDER DEADBOLT

A double keyed cylinder deadbolt requiring a key to unlock the door from the outside and inside. This type of deadbolt is approved on the **MAIN** entrance door in occupancy Group A having an occupant load of **300 or less**, and in Groups B, F, M and S as long as a readily visible durable sign is posted on the inside on or adjacent to the door stating: **“THIS DOOR TO REMAIN UNLOCKED DURING BUSINESS HOURS”** or **“THIS DOOR TO REMAIN UNLOCKED WHEN BUILDING IS OCCUPIED”**.

PERMITTED



SINGLE KEYED CYLINDER DEADBOLT (THUMB-TURN DEADBOLT)

The most common deadbolt in use is the single keyed deadbolt where a key is required to unlock the door from the outside but a simple thumb-turn is used to unlock the door from the inside. This installation is **NOT** allowed on any door unless it is a component of interconnected single action hardware.

NOT PERMITTED
Unless it is a component of interconnected single action hardware

