



HUMAN RESOURCES TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

1201 S. Figueroa St., Los Angeles CA 90015 • (213) 765-4458

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Source: OSHA

Topic: Emergency Exit Routes

How would you escape from your workplace in an emergency? Do you know where all the exits are in case your first choice is too crowded or become unavailable? Are you sure the doors will be unlocked and that the exit access, such as a hallway, will not be blocked during a fire, explosion, or other crisis? Knowing the answers to these questions could keep you safe during an emergency.



WHAT IS AN EXIT ROUTE?

An exit route is a continuous and unobstructed path of exit travel from any point within a workplace to a place of safety. An exit route consists of three parts:

- **Exit Access** – portion of an exit route that leads to an exit.
- **Exit** – portion of an exit route that is generally separated from other areas to provide a protected way of travel to the exit discharge.
- **Exit Discharge** – part of the exit route that leads directly outside or to a street, walkway, refuge area, public way, or open space with access to the outside.

HOW MANY EXIT ROUTES MUST A WORKPLACE HAVE?

Normally, a workplace must have at least two exit routes to permit prompt evacuation of employees and other building occupants during an emergency. More than two exits are required, however, if the number of employees, size of the building, or arrangement of the workplace will not allow employees to evacuate safely. Exit routes must be located as far away as practical from each other in case one is blocked by fire or smoke.



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"Stay Alert, Don't Get Hurt!"

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WHAT ARE SOME OTHER DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS FOR EXIT ROUTES?

Exit routes must be permanent parts of the workplace.

- ★ Exit discharges must lead directly outside or to a street, walkway, refuge area, public way, or open space with access to the outside. These exit discharge areas must be large enough to accommodate the building occupants likely to use the exit route.
- ★ Exit route doors must be unlocked from the inside. They must be free of devices or alarms that could restrict use of the exit route if the device or alarm fails.
- ★ These doors must swing out in the direction of exit travel if the room is to be occupied by more than 50 people or if the room is a high-hazard area.
- ★ Ceilings of exit routes must be at least 7 feet, 6 inches high.
- ★ An exit access must be at least 28 inches wide at all points. Objects that project into the exit must not reduce its width.

WHAT ARE THE MAINTENANCE, SAFEGUARDING, AND OPERATIONAL FEATURES FOR EXIT ROUTES?

OSHA standards require employers to do the following:

- ★ Keep exit routes free of explosive or highly flammable furnishings and other decorations.
- ★ Arrange exit routes so employees will not have to travel toward a high-hazard area unless the path of travel is effectively shielded from the high-hazard area.
- ★ Ensure that exit routes are unobstructed such as by materials, equipment, locked doors, or dead-end corridors.
- ★ Ensure that safeguards designed to protect employees during an emergency remain in good working order.
- ★ Provide lighting for exit routes adequate for employees with normal vision.
- ★ Keep exit route doors free of decorations or signs that obscure the visibility of exit route doors.
- ★ Post signs along the exit access indicating the direction of travel to the nearest exit and exit discharge if that direction is not immediately apparent. Also, the line-of-sight to an exit sign must be clearly visible at all times.
- ★ Mark doors or passages along an exit access that could be mistaken for an exit "Not an Exit" or with a sign identifying its use (such as "Closet").
- ★ Install "EXIT" signs in plainly legible letters.
- ★ Renew fire-retardant paints or solutions often enough to maintain their fire-retardant properties.
- ★ Maintain exit routes during construction, repairs, or alterations.
- ★ Provide an emergency alarm system to alert employees, unless employees can promptly see or smell a fire or other hazard in time to provide adequate warning to them.

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HOW CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION ON EXIT ROUTE SAFETY?

For more detail on exit routes and related standards see *Exit Routes, Emergency Action Plans, and Fire Prevention Plans* in Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1910.33-39.



DO YOU KNOW YOUR EMERGENCY ASSEMBLY AREAS?

- Gilbert Lindsay Plaza (A)
- Security/Oversize Parking Lot (B)
- Pico Parking Entry/Levy Dock (C)
- South Hall Exterior Plaza (D)

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. **True or False:** Mark doors or passages along an exit access that could be mistaken for an exit with “Not an Exit” or with a sign identifying its use (such as “Closet”).
2. The portion of an exit route that leads to an exit best describes ____ **A)** Exit, **B)** Exit Discharge, **C)** Exit Access, **D)** Exit Lane
3. **True or False:** During construction, repairs, or alterations exit routes may temporarily be blocked.
4. Normally, a workplace must have at least ____ exit routes to permit prompt evacuation of employees and other building occupants during an emergency. **A)** 1, **B)** 2, **C)** 3, **D)** 4
5. Which of the following is not an LACC designated employee assembly area? **A)** South Hall Exterior, **B)** Gilbert Lindsay Plaza, **C)** South Loading Dock, **D)** Pico Entry to West Garage.
6. **True or False:** Exit route doors must be unlocked from the inside. They must be free of devices or alarms that could restrict use of the exit route if the device or alarm fails?
7. The part of the exit route that leads directly outside or to a street, walkway, refuge area, public way, or open space with access to the outside. best describes ____ **A)** Exit Discharge, **B)** Exit Access, **C)** Exit Zone, **D)** Exit



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