

2. Accessible Route

Sections 11B-201, 11B-206, 11B-216, 11B-302, 11B-307, and 11B-403

1. Where there is more than one point of entry or exit to a building where the voting area is located, these guidelines apply to at least one from each of the following arrival points: accessible parking, accessible drop-off zones, public transportation, and public streets and sidewalks. When accessible drop-off zones or public transportation points are beyond the polling place property line, it is recommended that the accessible route to the voting area be measured to include an accessible route beyond the property line in an effort to include drop-off zones, on-street parking, or public transportation loading and unloading zones. At least one accessible route from the property line to the voting area shall be provided on Election Day. (CCR, Section 11B-206.2.1.) See Figure 4 below.

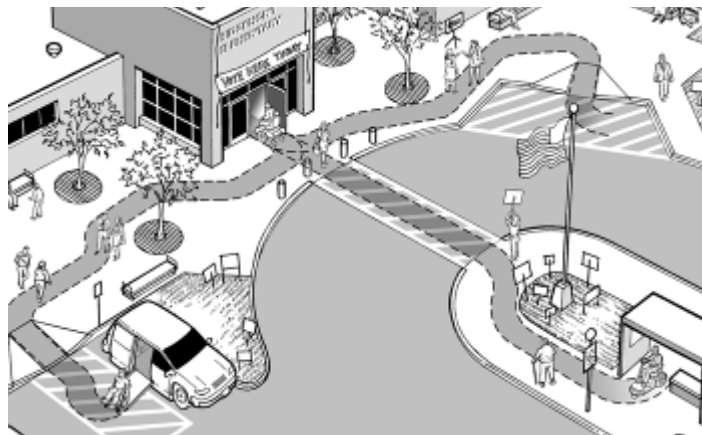


Figure 4: Multiple routes of travel from accessible locations to the polling place.

Sidewalks or other walkways shall be at least 48 inches wide. An exception to the 48-inch clear width is allowed when, due to right-of-way restrictions, natural barriers or other existing conditions, the enforcing agency determines that compliance with the 48-inch clear sidewalk width would create an unreasonable hardship. In this case the clear width may narrow to 36 inches wide (CCR, Section 11B-403.5.1 Exception 3.) An additional exception is allowed when a barrier causes the accessible route to narrow to a width of 32 inches. The 32-inch width may extend a maximum of 24 inches in length. (CCR, Section 11B-403.5.1 Exception 1.)

When sidewalks slope to the side, the maximum cross-slope (the slope that is perpendicular to the direction of travel) allowable is 2.08 percent. (CCR, Section 11B-403.3.) A 2.08 percent slope, (the technical definition of "level") is ¼ inch of height for each 12 inches of distance. A limit to the sideways slope of the sidewalk is important to voters with balance disabilities or voters using walkers or canes.

Exterior accessible routes to the polling place shall be free of steps. Abrupt changes in level from ¼ inch to ½ inch shall be beveled. (CCR, Sections 11B-403.4 and 11B-303.3.) Any changes in height on the accessible route greater than a ½ inch shall have a sloping surface that complies with the requirements in Section 6 Ramps, Curb-Ramps, and Slopes.

Accessible route surfaces shall be stable, firm, and slip resistant. (CCR, Section 11B-302.1.) For example, sand, gravel, broken cement/asphalt, or wet slippery surfaces may not be accessible.

Openings are restricted to a maximum of 1/2" regardless of direction of travel. If elongated openings are provided then they shall be placed so that the long dimension is perpendicular to the dominant direction of travel. 11B-302.3. Pedestrian routes intended for voters shall have a vertical clear space at least 80 inches high from the ground or floor. Tree limbs, signs, or other objects placed in the accessible route shall be at least 80 inches above the surface of the ground or floor. When the vertical clear space next to the accessible route is reduced to less than 80 inches, a barrier to warn blind or visually impaired persons shall be provided 27 inches maximum above the finish floor or ground. (CCR, Section 11B-307.4.)

Circulation paths shall be free of objects that project horizontally into the accessible route. When objects such as tree limbs or signs are located at a height between 27 inches and 80 inches above the surface of the ground or floor, they shall not extend into the accessible route more than 4 inches. (CCR, Section 11B-307.2.) Handrails are permitted to protrude a maximum of 4 ½ inches. (CCR, Section 11B-307.2 Exception.) Pole mounted objects between 27 inches and 80 inches above the walking surface can extend into the accessible route up to 12 inches. (CCR, Section 11B-307.3.) See Figure 5.

Objects that extend horizontally into the accessible route shall not reduce the width of the accessible route to less than required by this Section. (CCR, Section 11B-307.5.)

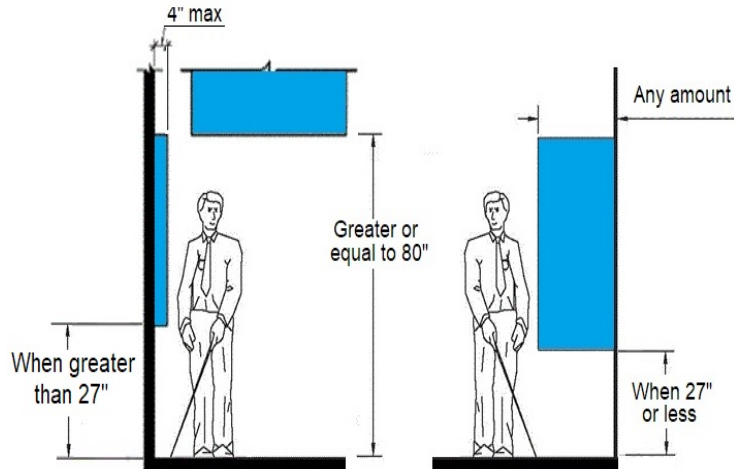


Figure 5: Man using a walking cane to travel under an 80-inch obstruction.

Occasionally there is more than one circulation path to the polling place but only one is accessible. Signs that meet the requirements of Section 5 of these Guidelines shall be used to direct elderly voters and voters with disabilities to the accessible route. (CCR, Section 11B-216.6.) See Figure 6.



Figure 6: ISA signs directing individuals to the accessible route to a polling place.

When necessary, temporary modifying equipment or measures may be used to provide compliance along the exterior accessible route.