

PROPOSED
CITY OF NORMAN
VISITABILITY CODE

PURPOSE. The purpose of this Ordinance is to establish the minimum regulations for the design, installation and construction of single-family homes or other dwellings with less than four units, by providing reasonable criteria for visitability by persons with disabilities. To qualify for consideration for incentives under this code, the presence of architectural design features as described herein which enhance access and usability for visitors and residents who have significant mobility impairments and which minimize the cost of full accessibility modifications, if necessary, later.

Section 100. Title. This code shall be known as the Visitability Code of the City of Norman hereinafter referred to as the Visitability Code or “this code”. The requirements in the Norman Building Code shall continue to apply to the extent any such requirements do not limit or inhibit the purpose of this code.

Section 101. Electrical Wall Switches. In all dwelling units subject to this code, all wall switches controlling light fixtures and fans, shall be located at a height not to exceed forty-eight (48) inches above finished floor. Height shall be determined by measuring from the finished floor to the center of the switch. Paddle switches shall be used for electrical wall switches.

EXCEPTION: This requirement does not apply where the use of special equipment dictates otherwise as required by the manufacturer.

Section 102. Electrical Wall Receptacles. In all dwelling units subject to this code, all wall receptacles shall be located at a height not less than twenty-four (24) inches above finished floor. Height shall be determined by measuring from the finished floor to the center of the receptacle.

EXCEPTION: This requirement does not apply where the use of special equipment dictates otherwise as required by the manufacturer.

Section 103. Thermostat. In all dwelling units subject to this code, the thermostat shall be located at a height not to exceed forty-eight (48) inches above the finished floor. The thermostat shall have push button style controls.

Section 104. Entry Level Windows. In all dwelling units subject to this code, at least one window located on the entry level of the dwelling unit shall have a single switch in the middle of the window that can be used to open the window; provided however, a differing form of window that has comparable ease of opening may be used.

Section 200. Step Free Entrance. Every dwelling unit subject to this code shall be provided with at least one (1) step free entrance, accessible from an accessible route from a parking area or public way. This step free entrance shall be approachable by a firm, stable and slip-resistant path. This step free entrance shall be approached by a slope no greater than 1 in 12 (less steep when possible).

This entrance can be approached by a sidewalk, a driveway, a garage floor, or other useable route. The step free entrance may be located at any entrance to the home. If the step free entrance is located in the garage, garage door openers must be present and no higher than forty-eight (48) inches above the finished garage floor, a clear, unobstructed path with a vehicle in place in the garage shall be present to access the step free entrance, and a door bell button no higher than forty-eight (48) inches above ground level shall be located outside the overhead garage door. A step free entrance shall also include a very low or no threshold as described in ANSI 4.13.8.

Section 201. Wall Reinforcement. All bathroom walls on the step-free entrance level shall be provided with wood blocking installed flush within wall framing, to support grab bars as needed. The wood blocking, when measured to the center, shall be located between thirty (30) inches and thirty-six (36) inches above the finished floor. The wood blocking shall be in all walls adjacent to a toilet, shower stall and bathtub. Reinforcement shall be capable of supporting grab bars that resist shear and bending forces of at least 250 pounds.

Tier 2: Wood blocking installed flush within the wall framing to support grab bars in at least two other rooms, such as bedrooms, or door frames, will qualify an applicant for Tier 2 incentives as further set forth herein.

Section 202. First Floor Restroom. On the no-step entrance level, there shall be at least one restroom containing at least 1 toilet and one sink. This restroom shall be designed and constructed in compliance with Section 203 of this code and shall provide wheelchair access to both the toilet and sink as provided for in the Fair Housing Act Design Manual.

Section 203. Restroom Design. On the no-step entrance, at least one restroom shall be designed to have a minimum of a five (5) foot turning radius inside the restroom. A minimum thirty-six (36) inch clear path must be provided to all fixtures and the room must be designed in a manner that will allow the user to be able to shut the door when using the room. The restroom door(s) may be hinged to swing out to provide more room, if the hallway design provides the proper clearances. Plumbing fixtures and entry doors accessing the visitable restroom shall be equipped with lever-style hardware. Any restroom intended to comply with this code shall be designed in a manner consistent with the requirements provided for in the Fair Housing Act Design Manual.

Tier 2: No less than two washrooms or bathrooms shall be designed to have a minimum of a five (5) foot turning radius inside the washroom / bathroom. A minimum thirty-six (36) inch clear path must be provided to all fixtures and the room must be designed in a manner that will allow the user to be able to shut the door when using the room. The bathroom, washroom and powder room door may be hinged to swing out to provide more room, if the hallway design provides the proper clearances. An electrical wall receptacle with a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) on a dedicated service line shall be installed on the wall behind the toilet.

Section 204. Doors and Hallways. On the no-step entrance, all exterior and interior doors shall not be less than three (3) feet in width and six (6) feet eight (8) inches in height. The minimum width of a hallway or exit access shall not be less than forty-two (42) inches. Level style hardware shall be used on these doors.

Tier 2: All exit doors shall be side hinged and no less than forty-two (42) inches.

Section 205. Routes Within a Dwelling Unit. Every dwelling subject to this code shall have an accessible route through the hallways and passageways of the floor level served by the step free entrance. Hallways shall not be less than forty-two (42) inches in width. All other passageways, other than doorways, shall be no less than thirty-six (36) inches in width.

Tier 2: Every dwelling subject to this code shall have an accessible route through the hallways and passageways of the floor level served by the step free entrance. Hallways shall not be less than forty-eight (48) inches in width. All passageways shall be no less than forty-two (42) inches in width.

Section 206. Exterior Path. The path from either a vehicle parking area or a pedestrian site arrival point to the dwelling's no step entrance shall be firm, stable and slip-resistant. The grade of the path shall not exceed the following acceptable slopes: (a) for slope lengths of five feet or less: 1:8, with a maximum rise of 7.5 inches; (b) for slope lengths of between five and 12 feet: 1:10, with a maximum rise of 14.4 inches; and (c) for all slope lengths of more than 12 feet: 1:12.

Tier 2: The path from either a vehicle parking area or a pedestrian site arrival point to the dwelling's no step entrance shall be firm, stable and slip-resistant. The grade of the path shall not exceed a slope of 1:12.

Section 301. Kitchen Design – Tier 2 Design Feature. The kitchen shall meet all applicable requirements of the Norman Building Code. The kitchen shall be designed to have a minimum of a five (5) foot turning radius between any cabinets, islands, and / or appliances, as applicable. A minimum thirty-six (36) inch clear path must be provided to all appliances and the kitchen must be designed in a manner that will allow the user to access each appliance. The height and opening for appliances, such as a stove (oven) and range shall be designed in such a manner that they are at a reasonable height for ease of use and access. The kitchen shall be designed to provide a minimum of a thirty-six (36) inch open area underneath the sink to provide ease of access. The kitchen design shall be consistent with the requirements provided for in the Fair Housing Act Design Manual.

Section 401. Use Tax Rebate authorized; applicability. In accordance with the terms of this code, a residential visitability design use tax rebate shall be granted to eligible property owners. The tax credit authorized under the terms of this code shall be limited to any new or renovated dwelling that contains visitability design features which will enhance the usability of the dwelling for individuals with significant mobility impairment and which minimize the cost of accessibility modifications, if necessary, at a later time.

Section 402. Term and amount of tax rebate. All tax rebates granted under the terms of this code shall be limited by the amount of the use tax generated by the specific project. The total amount of any tax rebate granted under the terms of this code shall be twenty-five (25) percent of the use tax applicable to the applicant's project; provided however, projects qualifying by providing tier 2 features shall qualify for seventy-five (75) percent of the use tax applicable to the project.