



SIGNIFICANT CHANGES TO THE

A117.1 ACCESSIBILITY STANDARD

2009 EDITION



Australia • Brazil • Japan • Korea • Mexico • Singapore • Spain • United Kingdom • United States

**Significant Changes to the A117.1 Accessibility
Standard: 2009 Edition****International Code Council**

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No changes covered

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Preface

The purpose of *Significant Changes to the A117.1 Standard* is to familiarize code officials, plans examiners, inspectors, design professionals, contractors, and others in the construction industry with many of the important changes in the 2009 A117.1 standard. This publication is designed to assist all users of the standard with identifying the specific code changes that have occurred and, more important, understanding the reasons behind the changes and how they will affect accessibility. It is also a valuable resource for jurisdictions in their adopting process.

Only a portion of the total number of changes to the A117.1 standard are discussed in this book. The changes selected were identified for a number of reasons, including their frequency of application, special significance, or change in application. However, the importance of those changes not included is not to be diminished. Further information on all code changes can be found on the International Code Council (ICC) website, <http://www.iccsafe.org>.

This book is organized to follow the general layout of the standard, including code sections and section number format. The table of contents, in addition to providing guidance in use of this publication, allows for quick identification of those significant changes that occur in the 2009 A117.1 standard.

Throughout the book, each change is accompanied by a photograph or an illustration to assist and enhance the reader's understanding of the specific change. A summary and a discussion of the significance of the changes are also provided. Each code change is identified by type, be it an addition, modification, clarification, or deletion.

The change to the text of the standard itself is presented in a format similar to the style utilized for submitting and reviewing proposed changes. Text deleted from the standard is shown with a strike-through, whereas new text that is added is indicated by underlining. As a result, the actual text of the 2009 standard is provided as well as a comparison with the 2003 language, so the user can easily determine changes to the specific text.

As with any code-change document, *Significant Changes to the A117.1 Standard* is best used as a study companion to the *ICC A117.1-2009*.

Because only a limited discussion of each change is provided, the standard itself should always be referenced in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of a specific change and its application.

The commentary and opinions set forth in this text are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position of the ICC and are not to be considered as the opinion of the A117.1 Accredited Standards Committee. In addition, they may not represent the views of any enforcement agency, as such agencies have the sole authority to provide a review and approval process. In many cases, the explanatory material is derived from the reasoning expressed by the proponent of the change or by the A117.1 committee during its evaluation of the proposal.

Comments concerning this publication are encouraged and may be directed to the ICC at significantchanges@iccsafe.org.

About the A117.1 Standard

Building officials, design professionals, and others involved with building construction and accessibility recognize the need for a modern, easy-to-understand, up-to-date standard addressing the design and construction of elements that serve or are used by building occupants. The A117.1 standard, in the 2009 edition, is intended to meet these needs by providing the technical details to ensure that the buildings and facilities are accessible and usable. The A117.1 standard is kept up to date through an open development process that meets the requirements of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) so that it can be recognized as an American National Standard (ANS). The provisions of the 2003 edition, along with those changes approved through the current development cycle, make up the 2009 edition.

The 1961 edition of the A117.1 standard presented the first criteria for accessibility to be approved as an ANS and was the result of research conducted by the University of Illinois under a grant from the Easter Seal Research Foundation. The National Easter Seal Society and the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities began serving as the Secretariat, and the 1961 edition was reaffirmed in 1971.

In 1974, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development joined the Secretariat and sponsored needed research, which resulted in the 1980 edition. After further revision that included a special effort to remove application criteria (scoping requirements), the 1986 edition was published. In 1987 the committee requested that the Council of American Building Officials (CABO) assume the role of the Secretariat. Central to the intent of the change in the Secretariat was the development of a standard that, when adopted as part of a building code, would be compatible with the building code and its enforcement. The 1998 edition of the A117 standard largely achieved that goal. The 2009 edition of the standard is the latest example of the A117.1 committee's effort to continue developing a standard that is compatible with the building code. In 1998 CABO became the International Code Council.

The ICC, the current Secretariat and publisher of the A117.1, was established as a nonprofit organization dedicated to developing, maintaining,

and supporting a single set of comprehensive and coordinated national model building construction codes. Its mission is to provide the highest quality codes, standards, products, and services for all concerned with the safety and performance of the built environment.

The A117.1 is one of 7 standards and 14 international codes being developed and published by the ICC. This comprehensive standard establishes minimum requirements to ensure that buildings and facilities are accessible and usable. The A117.1 is available for adoption and use by jurisdictions internationally. Its use within a governmental jurisdiction is intended to be accomplished through adoption by reference, in accordance with proceedings establishing the jurisdiction's laws.

Acknowledgments

A special thank you is extended to Kim Paarlberg, Senior Staff Architect in the ICC's Codes and Standards Development department. Kim's review and input has truly helped to improve this publication. I would also like to thank A117.1 committee members Marsha Mazz, Dominic Marinelli, and Ed Roether for their assistance in securing several photos, as well as other committee members who helped explain the new requirements to me. The entire A117.1 committee should be recognized for their effort and dedication in developing the new provisions and maintaining the standard. Their efforts truly do impact and improve people's lives.

About the Author

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International Code Council

Jay is a senior staff architect with the ICC's Business and Product Development department and works out of the Lenexa, Kansas, Distribution Center. His current responsibilities include serving as the Secretariat for the ICC A117.1 standard committee and assisting in the development of new ICC publications.

With more than 28 years of experience in building design, construction, code enforcement, and instruction, Jay's experience provides him with the ability to address issues of code application and design for code enforcement personnel as well as architects, designers, and contractors. Jay has previously served as the Secretariat for the ICC's *International Energy Conservation Code* and the *International Building Code's* Fire Safety Code Development committee.

A graduate of the University of Kansas and a registered architect, Jay has also worked as an architect for the Leo A. Daly Company in Omaha, Nebraska; as a building Plans Examiner for the City of Wichita, Kansas; and as a Senior Staff Architect for the International Conference of Building Officials (ICBO) prior to working for the ICC.

About the ICC

The ICC is a nonprofit membership association dedicated to protecting the health, safety, and welfare of people by creating better buildings and safer communities. The mission of the ICC is to provide the highest-quality codes, standards, products, and services for all concerned with the safety and performance of the built environment. The ICC is the publisher of the family of the International Codes[®] (I-Codes[®]), a single set of comprehensive and coordinated model codes. This unified approach to building codes enhances safety, efficiency, and affordability in the construction of buildings. The ICC is also dedicated to innovation, sustainability, and energy efficiency. In addition, the ICC Evaluation Service, an ICC subsidiary, issues Evaluation Reports for innovative products and Reports of Sustainable Attributes Verification and Evaluation (SAVE).

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