



**SCHOOL DISTRICT PALM BEACH COUNTY
BUILDING CODE SERVICES
CODE INTERPRETATION**

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Subject Title: ASSEMBLY EGRESS
Applicable Codes: FBC, 2020, 7th Edition, NFPA 101, 2018, and 69A-58, 2020
Date: January 5, 2004
Revised: April 16, 2007, May 19, 2023

Question:

What does "In assembly occupancies, each required exit from an assembly space must exit into a separate atmosphere or to the exterior, to be considered as a separate exit" mean?

Answer:

After, researching the Florida Building Code, NFPA 101, and 69A-58, the interpretation of this section is as follows:

- All rooms with 50 and less than 300 occupants require two ways out of the room meeting the remote requirements of NFPA and FBC. They can be to the same corridor, but that corridor shall lead to two exits, to the exterior or separate atmospheres within the maximum allowable travel distance.
- All rooms or spaces with 300 but less than 500 occupants require two ways out to separate atmospheres or to the exterior within the maximum allowable travel distance.
- All rooms greater than 500 but less than 1000 occupants require three ways out to at least two separate atmospheres or to the exterior within the maximum allowable travel distance.
- All rooms greater than 1000 occupants require four ways out to at least two separate atmospheres or to the exterior within the maximum allowable travel distance

Comment:

Based on definitions and other code requirements setting maximum travels distances to exits, the requirement of exiting to two separate atmospheres means these exits must meet the maximum allowable travel distance. It does not mean that those exits have to be immediately from the room or space. It is possible the means of egress may pass through a rated or unrated corridor of the same atmosphere to the exits. If the room or space has an occupant load of 50 or more, the code requires two ways out of that room or space that lead to two separate exits/atmospheres or the exterior with in the maximum allowable travel distance.

Section 1006 FBC and Section 7.4.1.1, NFPA 101, both require minimum of two means of egress from spaces of 50 or more occupants (FBC stipulates a maximum travel distance of 75 feet with in the space to the exit).

Table 1017.2 FBC, sets the maximum exit access travel distance to 200' (un spr) and 250' (spr), where NFPA 101, section 14.2.6, sets the maximum exit access travel distance to 150' (un spr) and 200' (spr). Most stringent enforced.

69A-58 requires using NFPA 1 and 101 Florida editions, unless noted otherwise in 69A-58. Both section 14.4.3.2 & 15.4.3.2 stipulate, "Each room occupied by more than 300 persons shall have two or more means of egress entering into separate atmospheres".

Definition in FBC and NFPA for "Means of Egress. A continuous and unobstructed way of travel from any point in a building or structure to a public way consisting of three separate and distinct parts: (1) the exit access, (2) the exit, and (3) the exit discharge."