090. ASSEMBLY OCCUPANCIES

01. Scope: (7-1-97)

a. Assembly occupancies shall conform to all other applicable requirements of this standard, as well as the following provisions. Nothing in this standard shall be construed to prohibit better or otherwise safer conditions than specified herein. (7-1-97)

02. Definitions: For definitions of other terms used in this section, see sub-section 010 of this standard. (7-1-97)

a. Assembly occupancy includes, but is not limited to; all facilities, buildings, structures or portions thereof used for the gathering together of fifty (50) or more persons for such purposes as deliberation, worship, education, instruction, civic/social functions, dining or drinking, entertainment, recreation, amusement, or awaiting transportation. (7-1-97)

b. Exit is a continuous and unobstructed means of egress to a public way and shall include intervening aisles, doors, doorways, gates, corridors, exterior exit balconies, ramps, stairways, pressurized enclosures, horizontal exits, exit passageways, exit courts and yards. (7-1-97)

c. Festival Seating is that form of audience/spectator accommodation in which no seating, other than a floor or ground surface, is provided for the audience/spectators gathered to observe some performance. (7-1-97)
d. Fly Gallery is a raised floor above a stage from which the movement of scenery and operation of other stage effects are controlled. (7-1-97)

e. Gridiron is the structural framing over a stage supporting equipment for hanging or flying scenery and other stage effects. (7-1-97)

f. Pinrail is a rail on or above a stage through which belaying pins are inserted and to which lines are fastened. (7-1-97)

g. Platform is a raised area within a building used for the presentation of music, plays, or other entertainment; the head tables for special guests; the raised area for lectures and speakers; boxing and wrestling rings; theater-in-the-round; and for similar purposes wherein there are no overhead drops, pieces of scenery, or stage effects other than lighting and a screening valances. (7-1-97)

h. Proscenium Wall is the wall that separates the stage from the auditorium or house. (7-1-97)

i. Stage is an area within a facility, building, or structure used for entertainment or presentations, with a stage height of fifty (50) feet or less. Curtains, drops, scenery, lighting devices and other stage effects are hung and not retractable except for a single lighting bank; single main curtain, border and legs; and single backdrop, or other stage effects, which shall be classified as one of the following:

i. Legitimate Stage is a stage wherein curtains, drops, leg drops, scenery, lighting devices, or other stage effects are retractable horizontally or suspended overhead and the stage height is greater than fifty (50) feet;

ii. Regular Stage is a stage wherein scenery is not retractable. A valance or light trough, the main curtain, and a single backdrop can be retractable without the stage being considered a legitimate stage;

iii. Thrust Stage is a platform extending beyond the proscenium arch and into the audience. (7-1-97)

03. General Requirements: (7-1-97)

a. The main exit shall be of sufficient width to accommodate one-half (1/2) of the total occupant load but shall be not less than the total required width of all aisles, exit passageways and stairways leading thereto and shall connect to a stairway or ramp leading to a public way. (7-1-97)

b. Balcony exits. Every balcony having an occupant load of ten (10), fifty (50) after July 1, 2002, or more shall be provided with a minimum of two exits. Balcony exits shall open directly to an exterior stairway or other approved stairway or ramp. When there is more than one balcony, exits shall open into an exterior or enclosed stairway or ramp. Balcony exits shall be accessible from a cross aisle. (7-1-03)
c. Access and egress routes shall be maintained so that any individual is able to move without obstruction, on personal initiative and at any time, from an occupied position to exits. (7-1-97)

d. Access and egress routes shall be maintained so that crowded management, security, and emergency medical personnel shall be able to move without obstruction at any time to any individual. (7-1-97)

e. Where aisle access ways or aisles converge to form a single path of egress travel, the required egress capacity of that path shall not be less than the combined capacity of the converging aisle access ways and aisles. See Figure 090.03-A. (7-1-97)

**FIGURE 090.03-A**

_Aisle access way. The space between each row of chairs is an aisle access way. An aisle access way serves as the initial portion of the exit access and leads to an aisle as shown by the arrows._

f. Those portions of an aisle access way and aisles where egress is possible in either of two directions shall be uniform in width but in no case shall be narrower than twelve (12) inches not including the seat space. (7-1-97)

g. Where nonfixed seating is located between a table and an aisle access way or aisle, the measurement of required clear width of the aisle access way or aisle shall be made to a line nineteen (19) inches away from the edge of the table. The nineteen (19) inches shall be measured perpendicular to the edge of the table. Figure 090.03-B illustrates how aisles with movable chairs are to be measured. (7-1-97)

**FIGURE 090.03-B**
In the case of side boundaries other than non-fixed seating at tables, for aisle access ways or aisles, the clear width shall be measured to boundary elements such as walls, guardrails, handrails, edges of seating, tables, and side edges of treads, with the measurement made horizontally to the vertical projection of the elements resulting in the smallest width measured perpendicularly to the line of travel. (7-1-97)

The aisle access way between rows of seating shall have a clear width of not less than twelve (12) inches, (see Figure 090.03-C) and this minimum width shall be increased as a function of row length. Rows of seating served by aisles or doorways at both ends shall have no more than one-hundred (100) seats per row. The twelve (12) inch minimum clear width of aisle access way between such rows shall be increased by zero point three (0.3) inch for every seat over a total fourteen (14) seats, but need not exceed twenty-two (22) inches of aisle width. EXCEPTION: If used by not more than four persons, there is no minimum clear width requirement for the portion of the aisle access way having a length not exceeding six (6) feet measured from the center of the seat farthest from the aisle. See Figure 090.03-D. (7-1-97)

Row spacing with fixed seating where the back of one seat to the back of the next seat to the rear when the seats have back rests shall be no less than thirty (30) inches. (10-1-06)

Row spacing with non-fixed seating where the back of one chair to the back of the next chair to the rear shall be no less than thirty-three (33) inches. (10-1-06)

The aisle width when serving seats on both sides shall be a minimum of forty-two (42) inches wide. (10-1-06)

The aisle width when serving seats on only one side shall be a minimum thirty-six (36) inches wide. (10-1-06)

The cross aisle width shall be a minimum of fifty-four (54) inches wide. (10-1-06)
Measuring the width of an aisle access way formed by rows of chairs. In Figure A, the seats are not self-rising. In Figure B, the seats are self-rising.

No minimum aisle access way width required for first 6 ft (1.8m) serving four or fewer persons.

j. Rows of seating served by an aisle or doorway at only one end shall have a distance to the point where the occupant has a choice of two directions of travel to an exit not to exceed thirty (30) feet from the point where the occupant is seated. The minimum clear width of twelve (12)
inches between rows shall be increased by point-zero-six (.06) inch for every seat beyond seven (7), but the minimum clear width need not exceed twenty-two (22) inches. (7-1-97)

k. Where bleacher or grandstand seating without backs, rows of seats shall be spaced not less than twenty-two (22) inches back to back. (7-1-97)

04. Panic Hardware: (7-1-97)

a. Exit doors in an assembly occupancy shall not be provided with a latch or lock unless it is panic hardware. (7-1-97)

b. Exception: Such occupancies as restaurants, bars, bowling alleys, auditoriums, and similar commercial uses, and in churches, panic hardware may be omitted from the main exit when the main exit consists of a single door or one pair of doors. A locking device may be used in place of the panic hardware, provided there is a readily visible sign adjacent to the doorway stating, "THIS DOOR MUST REMAIN UNLOCKED DURING BUSINESS HOURS" and meets the requirements of sub-section 040.10.d of this standard. (7-1-97)

05. Protection of Vertical Openings: (7-1-97)

a. All interior stairways and other vertical openings shall be enclosed and protected as provided in section 040 and section 072 of this standard. EXCEPTION: Stairs may be open between balconies and main assembly floors in theaters, churches, or auditoriums where the travel distance is within the allowable limits. (7-1-97)

b. Grandstands, bleachers, folding and telescopic seating shall have standard guardrails meeting the requirements of sub-section 070.14.b of this section where the seats are thirty (30) inches above the floor or grade. There shall not be any openings between the seat boards and foot boards that will allow the passage of a six (6) inch diameter sphere. The triangular opening formed by the seat face, floor board, and the standard guardrail shall be of a size that a sphere six (6) inches in diameter cannot pass through. See Figure 090.05-A and 090.05-B. (7-1-97)

c. Bleachers shall be supported, stabilized, and anchored to withstand a forces generated by active use which might cause them to clasp, over-turn, tip, slide, or move in anyway. (10-1-06)
AISLES MAY BE OMITTED WHEN ALL OF THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS EXIST:

1. SEATS ARE WITHOUT BACKRESTS.

2. THE RISE FROM ROW TO ROW DOES NOT EXCEED 12 INCHES PER ROW.
3. **THE NUMBER OF ROWS DOES NOT EXCEED 11 IN HEIGHT.**

4. **THE TOP SEAT BOARD IS NOT OVER 10 FEET ABOVE GRADE.**

5. **THE FIRST BOARD IS NOT MORE THAN 20 INCHES ABOVE GRADE.**

**06. Protection from Hazards:** (7-1-97)

a. All exterior openings in a boiler room or room containing central heating equipment if located below openings in another story or if less than ten (10) feet from other doors or windows of the same building shall be protected by a fire assembly having a three-fourths hour fire-protection rating. Such fire assemblies shall be fixed, automatic, or self-closing. Every room containing a boiler or central heating plant shall be separated from the rest of the building by not less than a one (1) hour fire-resistive occupancy separation. EXCEPTION: boilers or central heating plants where the largest piece of fuel equipment does not exceed four-hundred-thousand (400,000) BTU per hour input. (7-1-97)

b. The proscenium opening of every legitimate stage shall be protected by either an approved curtain, an automatic fixed water spray deluge system, or other approved means. (7-1-97)

**07. Emergency Lighting:** (7-1-97)

a. All places of assembly and their means of egress shall be provided with emergency lighting in accordance with section 042 of this standard. (7-1-97)

**08. Ventilation:** (7-1-97)

a. Ventilation shall be provided in accordance with the provisions of this standard. (7-1-97)

**09. Exit Illumination:** (7-1-97)

a. Exits shall be illuminated at any time the building is occupied with light having intensity of not less than 1 foot-candle at floor level. EXCEPTION: In auditoriums, theaters, concert or opera halls, and similar assembly uses, the illumination at floor level may be reduced during performances to not less than zero-point-two (0.2) foot-candles. (7-1-97)

b. The power supply for exit illumination shall normally be provided by the premises wiring system. In the event of its failure, illumination shall be automatically provided from an emergency system in assembly occupancies where the exiting system serves an occupant load of one-hundred (100) or more. (7-1-97)

**10. Fire Alarms:** (7-1-97)

a. An approved fire alarm system shall be installed. (7-1-97)