

**NC Department of Insurance  
Office of the State Fire Marshal - Engineering Division  
1202 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1202  
919-647-0000**

**Horizontal Sliding Doors**

**Code:** 2018 Building Code  
**Sections:** 1010.1.4.3, and 716.5.2

**Date:** September 12, 2018

**Question:**

Are horizontal sliding doors installed per Section 1010.1.4.3:

- (1) permitted for exit enclosures?
- (2) acceptable in the required means of egress?
- (3) usable by the visually impaired?

**Answer:**

(1) Yes. Sections 1023.4 and 1024.5 limit openings in exit stairs and exit passageways to those necessary for means of egress. The opening size, therefore, is limited to what is required for egress only. Horizontal sliding doors are, typically, significantly larger than the required exit width. If the egress opening is required to be 3' wide then the opening cannot be made wider for other purposes such as but not limited to aesthetics or convenience.

(2) Yes. Horizontal sliding doors are recognized in Section 1010.1.4 as one of the "special" means of egress doors. Custom features are available for alternate approval and should be considered on a case-by-case basis dependant upon conditions such as egress pattern, egress width, fire protection systems, furnishings, occupancy, and occupant load.

(3) Yes. Custom features are available for alternate approval and should be considered on a case-by-case basis to accommodate the visually impaired. Additional fire exit hardware is recommended (8-to 10-foot intervals) for large openings. Voice notification (multi-language) is available to direct the occupant to the fire exit hardware.

**Question:**

Are horizontal sliding doors acceptable for use in fire protective openings per Section 716?

**Answer:**

Yes. ICC Evaluation Services Report 1394 dated December, 2017 confirms fire-resistance-rating for such a door. The installation instructions and possible size limits for each test report must be followed. Because these openings are often not recognized by the building users as fire doors, a method for ensuring the path of the door is kept clear of obstructions is required.

**Keywords:**

Fire door, fire-resistance-rated, exit, exiting, handicapped, handicap accessible, curtain, accordion door, accordion partition, Won-Door