

BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing
AIBC, EGBC, BOABC

File No: 18-0301

INTERPRETATION

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Interpretation Date: June 18, 2024

Building Code Edition: BC Building Code 2018

Subject: Landing at Entrance Stair to Single Family Dwelling

Keywords: Stair, Landing, Dwelling Unit

Building Code Reference(s): 9.8.6.2, 9.8.3.2

Questions:

1. Is a landing required at the main exterior entrance stair to a single family dwelling unit?
2. How many risers constitute a stair?

Interpretation:

1. Yes.

Article 9.8.6.2 requires a landing at the top and bottom of each flight of interior and exterior stairs, except that the landing can be omitted at each of the following:

- The top of a stair within a dwelling unit, where the door swings away from the stair.
- The top of an exterior flight serving a secondary entrance to a single dwelling unit or a house with a secondary suite including their common spaces, provided the stair does not contain more than 3 risers, the principal door is a sliding door or swings away from the stair, and only a storm door or screen door, if any, swings over the stair and it is equipped with hardware to hold it open.
- The bottom of an exterior stair if there is no obstruction such as a gate or door within 900 mm.

The first two exceptions noted above do not apply to an exterior stair to the main entrance of a dwelling unit. The third exception could apply, if the stair travel is downward toward the dwelling unit entry door. However, the requirement for no obstruction such as a gate or door within 900 mm of the bottom of the stair effectively means that a 900 mm deep landing is



Patrick Shek, P.Eng., CP, FEC, Committee Chair

The views expressed are the consensus of the joint committee with members representing AIBC, EGBC and BOABC, which form the BC Building Code Interpretation Committee. The Building and Safety Standards Branch, Province of BC and the City of Vancouver participate in the committee's proceedings with respect to interpretations of the BC Building Code. The purpose of the committee is to encourage uniform province wide interpretation of the BC Building Code. These views should not be considered as the official interpretation of legislated requirements based on the BC Building Code, as final responsibility for an interpretation rests with the local *Authority Having Jurisdiction*. The views of the joint committee should not be construed as legal advice.

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required between the stair and the entry door to the unit. There are no exceptions that would permit the landing to be omitted at the top of the main exterior entrance stair to a dwelling unit.

2. Two.

The term “stair” is not defined in the BCBC. Sentence 9.8.3.2.(1) requires interior flights of stairs to have at least 3 risers, except for stairs within a dwelling unit. Where a stair flight is permitted to have less than 3 risers, there is no lower limit to the number of risers. However, BC Building Code Appeal Board decision 1452 stated that a single step would be better described as serving a stoop, porch or platform, instead of a stair landing. There may also be locations where applying the BCBC stair requirements to a single riser would not be appropriate. Locations with a single step should be reviewed with the authority having jurisdiction but in general a single step should not be considered as a stair.



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