

BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing
AIBC, EGBC, BOABC

File No: 24-0093

INTERPRETATION

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Interpretation Date:	June 17, 2025
Building Code Edition:	BC Building Code 2024
Subject:	Exterior door that is not a required exit door
Keywords:	Exterior door, exit, egress
Building Code Reference(s):	3.4.2.1., 3.2.4.16.(1), 3.4.5.1.(1)

Question:

Must all exterior pedestrian doors be designed as exit doors if they allow an occupant to egress the building to exterior walkways at grade that lead to a public thoroughfare?

1. For Part 3 buildings
2. For Part 9 buildings

Interpretation:

1. No.

Article 3.4.2.1. describes the minimum number of “**required exits**” to serve each floor area. If a floor area is provided with more than the “**required**” number of exits, these additional means of egress need not be designed as “**exits**”.

Sentence 3.2.4.16.(1) requires manual pull stations at

- a) Every principal entrance to a building.
- b) Every “**required exit**”, and
- c) Every other egress facility that has been designed and identified as an exit and has all the features of an exit.

Sentence 3.4.5.1.(1) requires every exit door to have an exit sign when the building height is more than 2 storeys, the building occupant load is more than 150 persons, or the room or floor area is served by a fire escape.

So, if an exterior door does not have an exit sign and has not been designed as an exit, it does not require a manual pull station.



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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Careful consideration is required to identify the “**required exits**” for a project.

Sentence 3.4.2.1.(1) requires, except as permitted in Sentences 2 & 3, every floor area intended for occupancy be provided with at least 2 exits, but depending upon the configuration of the floor area, certain portions of the floor area may require additional exterior exit doors such as:

- to meet travel distance,
- for cut off portions of a floor area.

2. No.

Article 9.9.8.2. describes the minimum number of “**required exits**” to serve each floor area. If a floor area is provided with more than the “**required**” number of exits, these additional means of egress need not be designed as “**exits**”.

Sentence 9.10.18.3.(1) requires fire alarm systems in Part 9 buildings be designed to Subsection 3.2.4.

Sentence 3.2.4.16.(1) requires manual pull stations at

- d) Every principal entrance to a building.
- e) Every “**required exit**”, and
- f) Every other egress facility that has been designed and identified as an exit and has all the features of an exit.

Sentence 9.9.11.3.(1) requires every exit door to have an exit sign when the building height is 3 storeys, the building occupant load is more than 150 persons, or the room or floor area is served by a fire escape. So, if an exterior door does not have an exit sign and has not been designed as an exit, it does not require a manual pull station.

Careful consideration is required to identify the “**required exits**” for a project.

Sentence 9.9.8.2.(1) requires, except as permitted in Sentence 2 and Subsection 9.9.9., every floor area be provided with at least 2 exits, but depending upon the configuration of the floor area, certain portions of the floor area may require additional exterior exit doors such as:

- to meet travel distance,
- for cut off portions of a floor area.



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