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## ***Emergency Evacuation and Stairwell Signage Requirements***

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*The intent of this requirement is to make signs visible and immediately recognizable to building occupants and emergency responders using the stairway.*

### **Purpose**

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The Fire Code of New York State sets forth minimum requirements for maintaining the life safety of building occupants. In this instance, stairwell identification signs are required at each floor landing in new and existing buildings with interior exit stairways and ramps connecting more than three stories.

Emergency evacuation and stairwell signage ensures that the location and information depicted, facilitates safe evacuation of the building and proper firefighter orientation in the stairwells during an emergency.

### **Scope**

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This guideline provides the specifications for emergency evacuation and stairwell signage to meet the requirements of Title 19 of the New York State Codes Rules and Regulations and the 2010 Fire Code of New York State (FCNYS). The information provided herein is intended to facilitate approval and installation of required signage primarily in the building core (elevator lobby, stairwells, and corridors connecting these).

Additional emergency signage may also be required by the Building Code of New York State, Fire Code of New York State or other adopted codes or standards in other areas of the building.

The following requirements for stairway identification provide a reliable approach for life safety. The signs must be positioned in a consistent and uniform manner within the interior exit stairways and ramps.

### **Stairway Identification Signs**

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Stairway identification signs provide information critical to firefighter orientation and occupant evacuation in the event of an emergency. They are required whenever an interior exit enclosure connects more than three stories.

#### **Sign Location**

The stairway identification signs shall be:

- 1) Located within the stairway enclosure at each floor landing;
- 2) Posted at five feet above the floor level;
- 3) Located in a position that is readily visible when the doors are in the open and closed positions.

#### **Assignment of Stairway Letters**

Assignment of stairway designation letters shall start with stairway closest or next to the main entrance with the letter "A" and continue in a clockwise or left to right pattern.

## Sign Details

The sign detail shall specify the following:

1. The size shall be a minimum of 18" X 12" and constructed of durable material
2. The letters designating the identification of the interior exit stairway and ramp, such as STAIR 1 or WEST STAIR, shall be placed at the top of the sign in 1-1/2" block lettering with 1/4" stroke.
3. ROOF ACCESS or NO ROOF ACCESS shall be placed under the stairway identification in 1" block lettering with 1/4" stroke. The stairway shall be marked "ACCESS TO ROOF" at street and floor levels indicating that the stairway has access to the roof. Stairways without roof access shall be marked "NO ACCESS TO ROOF"
4. The floor level number shall be placed in the center of the sign in 5" block lettering with 3/4" stroke. Basement levels shall have the letter B preceding the floor number. Mezzanine levels shall have the letter M preceding the floor number.
5. The floor levels served by the stair, such as B3 THROUGH 12, shall be identified at the bottom of the sign in 1" block lettering with 1/4" stroke. Signs shall identify the terminus of the top and bottom of the stairway. To meet this requirement, signs may simply indicate the lowest and highest floor or level served by the individual stairway.
6. The level of exit discharge and direction to that level shall be indicated on the sign in 1" block lettering with 1/4" stroke. Arrows may be used to show the direction to the level of exit discharge.
7. Characters and their backgrounds shall have a non-glare finish. All lettering shall be in sharp contrast to the background with either light characters on a dark background or dark characters on a light background.
8. When required signs are installed in the interior exit stairways and ramps of buildings subject to luminous egress markings (example: highrise buildings), the signs shall be made of the same materials as required for luminous egress markings.
9. Reentry. Where stairway doors are locked from the stairway side to prohibit reentry to a floor, NO REENTRY shall be placed under the lower and upper terminus designation in 1- inch (25 mm) high block lettering. Additionally, the nearest floor above and below where a person can enter the floor from the stairway or where a telephone or two-way communication system is located shall be placed at the bottom of the sign in 1- inch (25 mm) high block lettering

## Stairway Location Schematic

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A simplified schematic of the building footprint showing the building's exterior and general layout of the first floor or lobby level floor shall be displayed in the main entrance lobby and/or fire control room. All stairway designation letters shall be clearly illustrated on the schematic and shall correlate with each stairway. A "**YOU ARE HERE**" designation should be indicated on the schematic showing its location in main entrance lobby and/or fire control room.

**Three Stairways or More.** For buildings with three stairways or more, stairway information shall be included in the stairway location schematic indicating the following:

- Stairway Terminus (i.e., lowest and highest levels of the stairway) (*Example:* P-2 thru 14)
- Availability of Roof Access (*Example:* Access to Roof or No Access to Roof)
- Presence of a Standpipe (*Example:* Standpipe or No Standpipe)

## Other Stairway Evacuation Signage

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In addition to the stairway identification sign, a floor-level sign in raised characters and Braille complying with ICC A117.1 shall be located at each floor level landing adjacent to the door leading from the interior exit stairway and ramp into the corridor to identify the floor level.

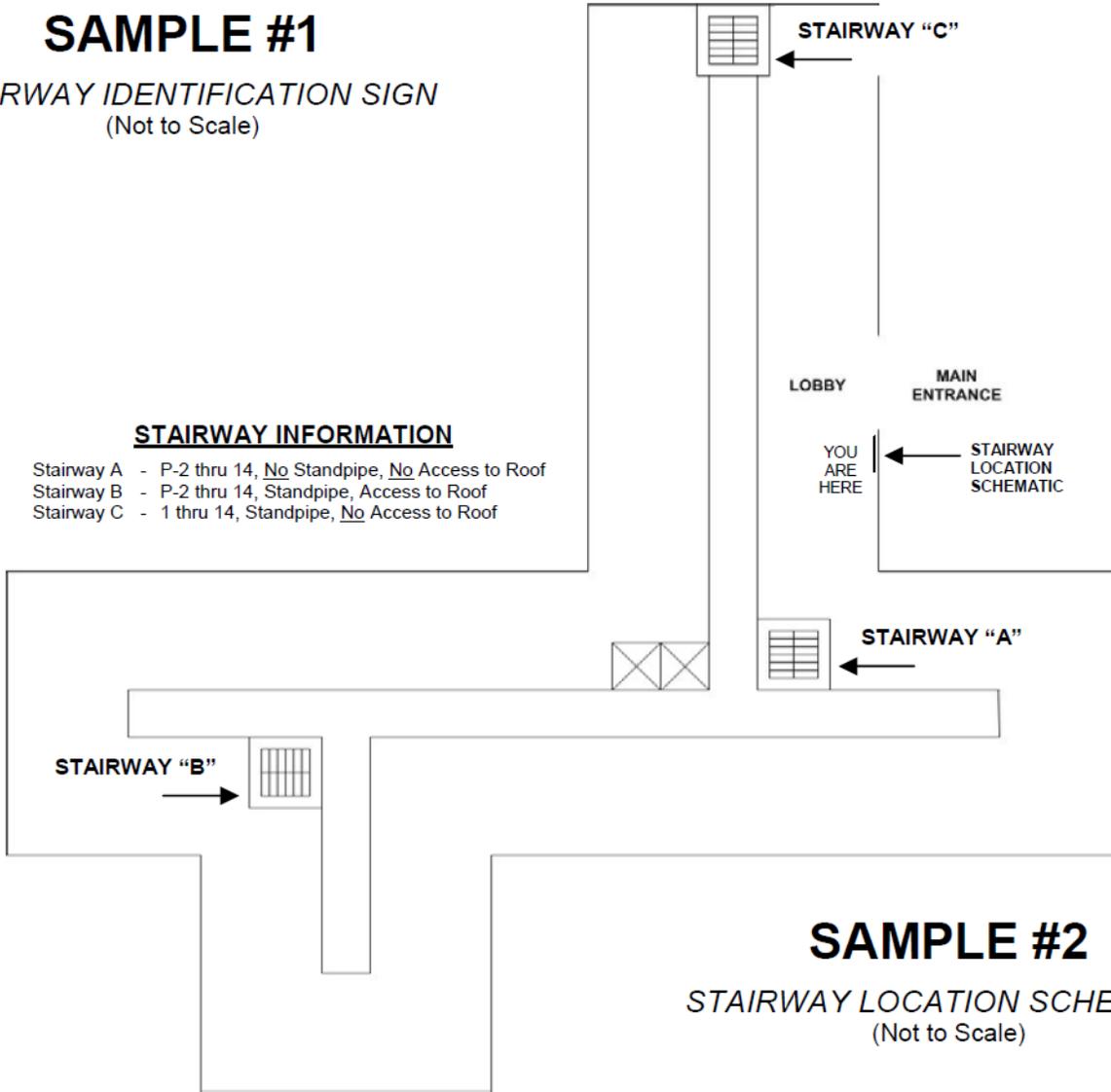
Where a stairway continues below the level of exit discharge, a gate shall be provided at the level of exit discharge to prevent unintentional access to floors below. Visual exit signs conforming to Fire Code of New York State shall be provided to direct occupants to the exit discharge.

# SAMPLE #1

STAIRWAY IDENTIFICATION SIGN  
(Not to Scale)

## STAIRWAY INFORMATION

- Stairway A - P-2 thru 14, No Standpipe, No Access to Roof
- Stairway B - P-2 thru 14, Standpipe, Access to Roof
- Stairway C - 1 thru 14, Standpipe, No Access to Roof



# SAMPLE #2

STAIRWAY LOCATION SCHEMATIC  
(Not to Scale)

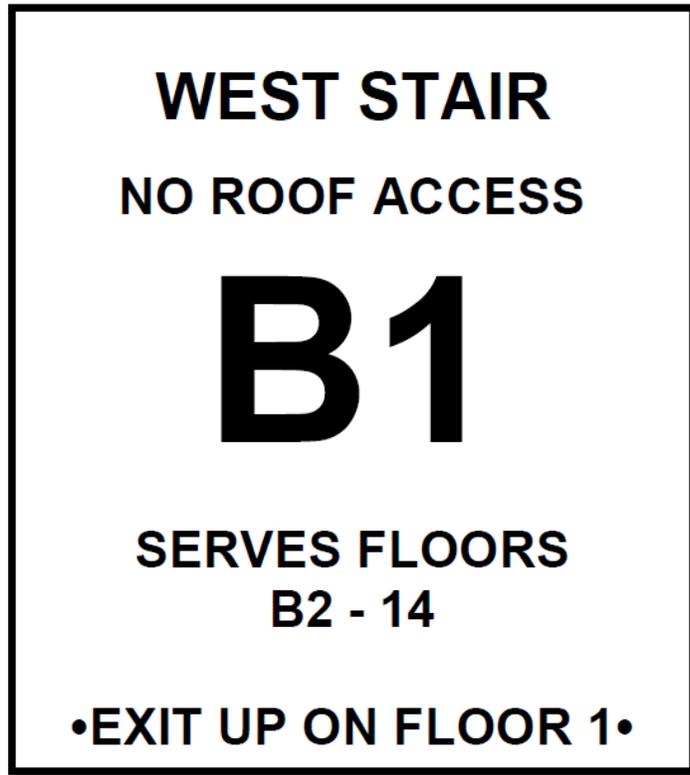
# SAMPLE STAIRWELL IDENTIFICATION SIGNS

1½ inch height  
¼ inch stroke

1 inch height  
¼ inch stroke

5 inch height  
¾ inch stroke

1 inch height  
¼ inch stroke



12 inches  
minimum

18 inches  
minimum

