

2026 -- H 8021

=====  
LC004864  
=====

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

—————  
A N A C T

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- STATE BUILDING CODE -- RHODE ISLAND  
INCLUSIVE HOME DESIGN ACT

Introduced By: Representatives Stewart, Tanzi, Handy, Cruz, Morales, Potter, Speakman,  
and Spears

Date Introduced: February 27, 2026

Referred To: House Municipal Government & Housing

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 23-27.3 of the General Laws entitled "State Building Code" is hereby  
2 amended by adding thereto the following article:

3 ARTICLE 4

4 RHODE ISLAND INCLUSIVE HOME DESIGN ACT

5 **§ 23-27.3-800. Short title.**

6 This article shall be known and may be cited as the "Rhode Island Inclusive Home Design  
7 Act."

8 **§ 23-27.3-801. Definitions.**

9 As used in this article, the following terms shall have the following meanings, except where  
10 the context clearly indicates otherwise:

11 (1) "Article" means the Rhode Island inclusive home design act.

12 (2) "American National Standards Institute (ANSI)" means the organization that facilitates  
13 the development of American National Standards through the accreditation of the procedures of  
14 standards developing organizations and approves their documents as American National Standards  
15 (ANS). These documents provide technical guidelines on how to make residences accessible to  
16 people with disabilities to varying degrees. Designers and builders use ANSI standards to  
17 demonstrate compliance with industry best practices. Codes like the International Building Code  
18 (IBC) reference ANSI standards.

1 (3) "Covered dwelling unit" is defined by §§ 23-27.3-802 and 23-27.3-803 of this article;

2 (4) "International Building Code (IBC)" means a comprehensive regulatory building code  
3 that is legally enforceable standards adopted by jurisdictions. The IBC applies to general building  
4 construction and major renovations, setting safety and welfare requirements.

5 **§ 23-27.3-802. Visitability requirement.**

6 (a) All new single-family construction, townhouse construction, and multi-family  
7 construction which does not include an elevator as part of its overall design, permitted after July 1,  
8 2027, shall include no fewer than one level that complies with the Standards for Type C (Visitable)  
9 Units of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Standards for Accessible and Usable  
10 Buildings and Facilities (section 1105 of ICC ANSI A117.1-2017). Any updates to the ANSI  
11 Standards for Type C (Visitable) Units shall be applied to this section upon adoption by the building  
12 code standards committee.

13 (b) All new multifamily construction which does include an elevator as part of its overall  
14 design, permitted after July 1, 2027, shall provide that all units comply with the Standards for Type  
15 C (Visitable) Units of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Standards for Accessible  
16 and Usable Buildings and Facilities (section 1105 of ICC ANSI A117.1-2017). Any updates to the  
17 ANSI Standards for Type C (Visitable) Units shall be applied to this section upon adoption by the  
18 building code standards committee.

19 (c) This requirement does not apply to manufactured housing, adaptive re-use within the  
20 existing building envelope, or redevelopment of existing buildings.

21 **§ 23-27.3-803. Basic adaptability requirement.**

22 (a) All new multi-family construction with two (2) or more units, permitted after July 1,  
23 2027, shall include no fewer than one level that complies with the Standards for Type B (basic  
24 adaptability) Units of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Standards for Accessible  
25 and Usable Buildings and Facilities (section 1105 of ICC ANSI A117.1-2017). Any updates to the  
26 ANSI Standards for Type B (basic adaptability) Units shall be applied to this section upon adoption  
27 by the building code standards committee.

28 (b) This requirement does not apply to manufactured housing, adaptive re-use within the  
29 existing building envelope, or redevelopment of existing buildings.

30 **§ 23-27.3-804. Implementation and enforcement.**

31 (a) In the instance that a covered dwelling unit subject to the provisions outlined by this  
32 article, cannot comply with its requirements, in whole or in part, the aggrieved party may make an  
33 appeal in accordance with § 23-27.3-127.1(b)(1).

34 (b) Local permitting authorities shall not issue a build permit for any covered dwelling

1 units that do not comply with the applicable standards after July 1, 2027, unless the development  
2 has received a variance and the proposed design is consistent with that variance.

3 (c) Local permitting authorities shall not issue a certificate of occupancy on any covered  
4 units that do not comply with the applicable standards which were permitted after July 1, 2027,  
5 unless the development has received a variance and the completed units are consistent with the  
6 requirements of that variance.

7 (d) The standards set forth in §§ 23-27.3-802 and 23-27.3-803 are intended to supplement  
8 and not replace other accessibility requirements. Where specific requirements in this article differ  
9 from or conflict with other state or federal accessibility requirements, the most stringent required  
10 accessible standard applies.

11 **§ 23-27.3-805. Disclaimer of preemptive effect.**

12 Nothing in this article shall limit any right, procedure, or remedy available under the  
13 Constitution of the United States, the Rhode Island Constitution, or any other chapter of the general  
14 laws.

15 **§ 23-27.3-806. Severability.**

16 If any provision of this article or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is  
17 held invalid, the remaining provisions of this article and the application of those provisions to other  
18 persons or circumstances shall not be affected thereby.

19 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon passage.

=====  
LC004864  
=====

EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
A N A C T  
RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- STATE BUILDING CODE -- RHODE ISLAND  
INCLUSIVE HOME DESIGN ACT

\*\*\*

1           This article would be known as the Rhode Island Inclusive Home Design Act. The act  
2 would address any single-family construction, townhouse construction, and multi-family  
3 construction complying with the Standards for Type C (Visitable) Units of the American National  
4 Standards Institute (ANSI) Standards for Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities (section  
5 1105 of ICC ANSI A117.1-2017). The act would also require that any updates to the ANSI  
6 Standards for Type C (Visitable) Units be applied upon adoption by the building code standards  
7 committee.

8           This act would take effect upon passage.

=====  
LC004864  
=====