

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

AN ACT

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

Introduced By: Senators Bell, Vargas, Euer, McKenney, DiMario, Valverde, Mack, Murray, Kallman, and Gu
Date Introduced: February 06, 2026

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Referred To: Senate Housing & Municipal Government

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:

ARTICLE 4

RHODE ISLAND INCLUSIVE HOME DESIGN ACT

§ 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.”

§ 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.

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

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

§ 23-27.3-802. Visibility 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.

§ 23-27.3-803. Basic adaptability requirement.

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

§ 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.

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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.

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