

From Town of Perinton, Assistant Building Inspector, Updated 9/2024

We've had a few requests from residents in Cambridge Court looking to get rid of their decks and install stairs to grade or to patios. There are some code requirements I thought I would pass on. Most units will need a platform outside their back doors then have steps to grade. Code requires any exterior door (other than the main egress door, that HAS to have a platform) to have a minimum 3ft x 3ft platform outside the door UNLESS there are only two RISERS (one step) to grade. I have included links to Town Code for decks, which contains much of this information, as well as copy & pasted applicable code sections below.

Town of Perinton Deck Guide: <https://perinton.org/wp-content/uploads/Decks.pdf>

ADA style aluminum handrail ends at Home Depot - <https://www.homedepot.com/p/90-Degree-White-Aluminum-ADA-Hand-Rail-Return-Post-235967/206692223>

ADA PVC handrail at Home Depot - <https://www.homedepot.com/p/95-in-PVC-White-ADA-Handrail-with-Aluminum-Insert-401328/313220315>

Applicable Code Sections

LANDINGS OUTSIDE DOORS

R311.3 Floors and landings at exterior doors. There shall be a landing or floor on each side of each exterior door. The width of each landing shall be not less than the door served. Landings shall have a dimension of not less than 36 inches measured in the direction of travel. The slope at exterior landings shall not exceed 1/4 unit vertical in 12 units horizontal (2 percent).

R311.3.2 Floor elevations at other exterior doors. Doors other than the required egress door shall be provided with landings or floors not more than 7-3/4 inches below the top of the threshold.

Exception: A top landing is not required where a stairway of not more than two risers is located on the exterior side of the door, provided that the door does not swing over the stairway.

R311.3.3 Storm and screen doors. Storm and screen doors shall be permitted to swing over exterior stairs and landings.

STEPS/STAIRCASES

R311.7.5.1 Risers. The riser height shall be not more than 8-1/4 inches. The riser shall be measured vertically between leading edges of the adjacent treads. The greatest riser height within any flight of stairs shall not exceed the smallest by more than 3/8 inch

R311.7.5.2 Treads. The tread depth shall be not less than 9 inches

HANDRAILS

R311.7.8 Handrails. Handrails shall be provided on not less than one side of each flight of stairs with four or more risers.

R311.7.8.1 Height. Handrail height, measured vertically from the sloped plane adjoining the tread nosing, or finish surface of ramp slope, shall be not less than 34 inches and not more than 38 inches.

R311.7.8.2 Handrail projection. Handrails shall not project more than 4-1/2 inches on either side of the stairway.

R311.7.8.4 Continuity. Handrails shall be continuous for the full length of the flight, from a point directly above the top riser of the flight to a point directly above the lowest riser of the flight. Handrail ends shall be returned or shall terminate in newel posts or safety terminals.

R311.7.8.5 Grip size. Required handrails shall be of one of the following types or provide equivalent grasp ability. (See attached JPEG)

1. Type I. Handrails with a circular cross section shall have an outside diameter of not less than 1-1/4 inches and not greater than 2 inches. If the handrail is not circular, it shall have a perimeter of not less than 4 inches and not greater than 6-1/4 inches and a cross section of not more than 2-1/4 inches. Edges shall have a radius of not less than 0.01 inch.

2. Type II. Handrails with a perimeter greater than 6-1/4 inches shall have a graspable finger recess area on both sides of the profile. The finger recess shall begin within 3/4 inch measured vertically from the tallest portion of the profile and have a depth of not less than 5/16 inch within 7/8 inch below the widest portion of the profile. This required depth shall continue for not less than 3/8 inch to a level that is not less than 1-3/4 inches below the tallest portion of the profile. The width of the handrail above the recess shall be not less than 1-1/4 inches and not more than 2-3/4 inches. Edges shall have a radius of not less than 0.01 inch.

R311.7.9 Illumination. Stairways shall be provided with illumination in accordance with Sections R303.7 and R303.8.

R303.8 Exterior stairway illumination. Exterior stairways shall be provided with an artificial light source located at the top landing of the stairway. Exterior stairways providing access to a *basement* from the outdoor *grade* level shall be provided with an artificial light source located at the bottom landing of the stairway.

Exception: Owner-occupied one-family dwellings not supplied with electrical power in accordance with Section RE3401.2.1.

GUARD RAILS (aka RAILINGS)

R312.1 Guards. *Guards* shall be provided in accordance with Sections R312.1.1 through R312.1.4.

R312.1.1 Where required. *Guards* shall be provided for those portions of open-sided walking surfaces, including stairs, ramps and landings, that are located more than 30 inches measured vertically to the floor or *grade* below at any point within 36 inches horizontally to the edge of the open side. Insect screening shall not be considered as a *guard*.

R312.1.2 Height. Required *guards* at open-sided walking surfaces, including stairs, porches, balconies or landings, shall be not less than 36 inches in height as measured vertically above the adjacent walking surface or the line connecting the *nosings*.

Exceptions:

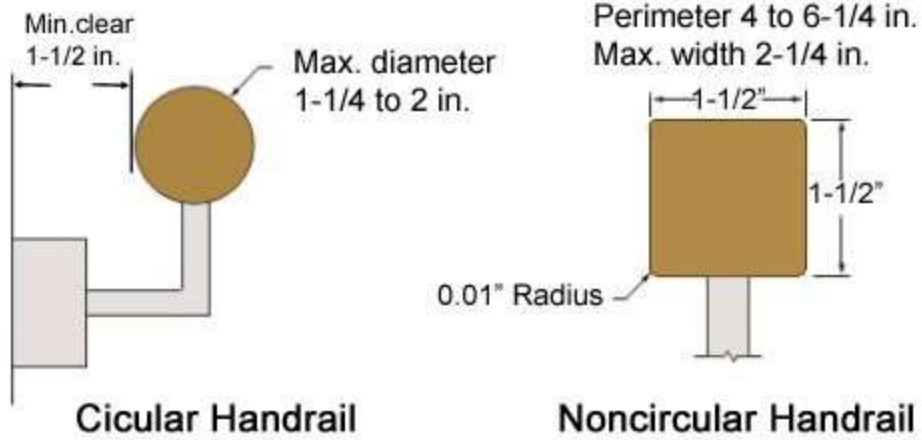
1. *Guards* on the open sides of stairs shall have a height of not less than 34 inches measured vertically from a line connecting the *nosings*.
2. Where the top of the *guard* serves as a handrail on the open sides of stairs, the top of the *guard* shall be not less than 34 inches and not more than 38 inches as measured vertically from a line connecting the *nosings*.

R312.1.3 Opening limitations. Required *guards* shall not have openings from the walking surface to the required *guard* height that allow passage of a sphere 4 inches in diameter.

Exceptions:

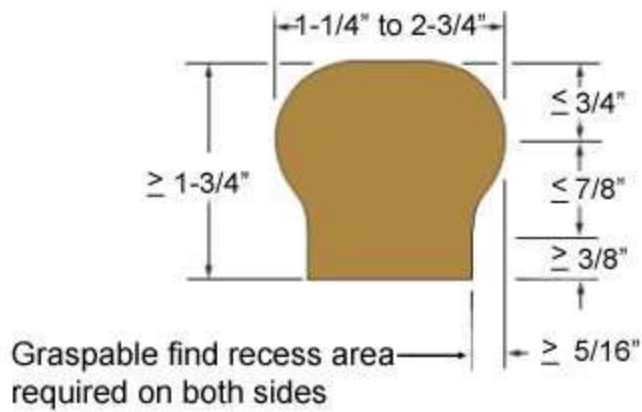
1. The triangular openings at the open side of stair, formed by the riser, tread and bottom rail of a *guard*, shall not allow passage of a sphere 6 inches in diameter.
2. *Guards* on the open side of stairs shall not have openings that allow passage of a sphere $4\frac{3}{8}$ inches in diameter.

Type I Handrail



Type II Handrail

Perimeter > 6-1/4 in.



Adapted from 2015 IRC R311.7.8