

Building Regulations and Codes

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1. Introduction

- Building regulations and codes are legal standards governing the design, construction and use of buildings.
- **Purpose:** Protect health, safety, accessibility and welfare of occupants and the public.

2. Types of Codes

- **Building codes:** Set minimum standards for structure, materials and construction.
- **Fire codes:** Govern fire resistance, escape routes and detection systems.
- **Specialty codes:** Cover plumbing, electrical, mechanical and energy performance.

3. Key Requirements

- **Structural safety:** Buildings must resist dead, live and environmental loads.
- **Means of egress:** Adequate exits, corridors and stairs enable safe evacuation.
- **Accessibility:** Provisions ensure use by people with disabilities.

4. Compliance Process

- **Plan review:** Authorities check drawings against code before permits are issued.
- **Inspections:** Site checks verify work meets approved plans at key stages.
- **Occupancy certificate:** Confirms a building is safe for use.

5. Significance

- Codes evolve with new materials, hazards and energy goals.
- Non-compliance can cause legal penalties, unsafe structures and delays.