

**ORDINANCE NO.**

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CITY CODE SECTION 25-12-243 RELATING TO ACCESSIBILITY AND VISITABILITY REQUIREMENTS OF THE RESIDENTIAL CODE FOR NEW SINGLE-FAMILY AND DUPLEX CONSTRUCTION.**

**BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:**

**PART 1.** City Code Section 25-12-243 (*Local Amendments*) is amended to add a new Section R320, as a local amendment to the Residential Code, to read as follows:

**SECTION R320**

**VISITABILITY**

**R320.1 Applicability.** A permit for construction of a new single-family or duplex dwelling with habitable space on the first floor must be designed and constructed as a visitable dwelling in compliance with the requirements of Section R320 (*Visitability*). The requirements of this section are limited to new construction and do not apply to remodels or additions.

**R320.2 Compliance required at plan review.** A permit application that is subject to this section must include detailed plans prepared by a registered design professional or other certified professional demonstrating compliance with all applicable requirements of this section.

**R320.3 Visitable bathrooms.** A visitable dwelling must be designed and constructed with at least one bathroom group or a half bath on the first floor that meets the following requirements:

1. a minimum clear opening of 30 inches is required;
2. lateral two-inch by six-inch or larger nominal wood blocking must be installed flush with stud edges of bathroom walls; and
3. the centerline of the blocking must be 34 inches from and parallel to the interior floor level, except for the portion of the wall located directly behind the lavatory.

1 **R320.4 Visitable light switches, receptacles, and environmental controls.** The first  
2 floor of a visitable dwelling must meet the following requirements:

- 3 1. light switches and environmental controls must be no higher than 48 inches  
4 above the interior floor level; and
- 5 2. outlets and receptacles must be a minimum of 15 inches above the interior  
6 floor level.

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8 **R320.5 Visitation bathroom route.** A bathroom group or half bath designated for  
9 visitability under Section R320.3 must be accessible by a route with a minimum clear  
10 opening of 32 inches beginning at the visitable entrance designated under Section 320.6  
11 and continuing through the living room, dining room, and kitchen, and be level with  
12 ramped or beveled changes at door thresholds.

13 **Exception:**

14 A visitable route is not required through an area located on a split-level or sunken  
15 floor, provided an alternative route is available.

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17 **R320.6 Visitable dwelling entrance.** A dwelling must be accessible by at least one no-  
18 step entrance with a beveled threshold of one-half inch or less and a door with a clear  
19 width of at least 32 inches. The entrance may be located at the front, rear, or side, or in  
20 the garage or carport, of the dwelling.

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22 **R320.7 Exterior visitable route.** A visitable entrance approved under Section R320.6  
23 must have at least one visitable route with a cross slope of no greater than two percent  
24 (1:50) that originates from a garage, driveway, public street, or public sidewalk. A ramp  
25 included in an exterior visitable route must comply with the Residential Code.

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27 **R320.7.1 Waiver of exterior visitable route provision for certain properties.** The  
28 requirements of Section R320.7 do not apply to:

- 29 1. lots with 10% or greater slope prior to development; or
- 30 2. properties for which compliance cannot be achieved without the use of  
31 switchbacks.

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33 **PART 2.** Section R320.7 and Subsection R320.7.1, as adopted in Part 1 of this  
34 ordinance, are effective on January 1, 2015 for new permits applied for on or after that  
35 date.

**PART 3.** This ordinance takes effect on \_\_\_\_\_, 2014.

**PASSED AND APPROVED**

\_\_\_\_\_, 2014

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Lee Leffingwell  
Mayor

**APPROVED:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Karen M. Kennard  
City Attorney

**ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Jannette S. Goodall  
City Clerk

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