

REMOVE LOCKS AND LATCHES FROM DOORS WITH PANIC HARDWARE

9

CODE SECTIONS

International Fire Code 2006 Edition

1008.1.9 Panic and fire exit hardware. Where panic and fire exit hardware is installed, it shall comply with the following:

1. The actuating portion of the releasing device shall extend at least one-half of the door leaf width.
2. A maximum unlatching force of 15 pounds (67 N).

Each door in a means of egress from an occupancy of Group A or E having an occupant load of 50 or more and any Group H occupancy shall not be provided with a latch or lock unless it is panic hardware or fire exit hardware.

Exception: A main exit of a Group A occupancy in compliance with Section 1008.1.8.3, Item 2.

Electrical rooms with equipment rated 1,200 amperes or more and over 6-feet wide that contain overcurrent devices, switching devices or control devices with exit doors must be equipped with panic hardware and doors must swing in the direction of egress.

If balanced doors are used and panic hardware is required, the panic hardware shall be the push-pad type and the pad shall not extend more than one-half the width of the door measured from the latch side.

EXPLANATION

Panic hardware on exit doors is required in Assembly and Educational Occupancies when the occupant load is greater than 100 persons, and in Hazardous Occupancies. Panic hardware is defined as "A door latching assembly incorporating an unlatching device, the activating portion of which extends across at least one-half the width of the door leaf on which it is installed." By simply pushing on this unlatching device, usually a bar, the door will easily and freely swing open. No other locks or latches such as additional deadbolts, surface bolts, or barrel bolts, may be attached to a door equipped with panic hardware.

For the front or main exit door of an A occupancy with an occupant load of 300 or less, panic hardware may be omitted and key operating latching devices may be installed if.

1. The locking device is readily distinguishable as being locked
2. A sign stating "THIS DOOR MUST REMAIN UNLOCKED WHEN BUILDING IS OCCUPIED" is installed above the door.

RATIONALE

Exit doors serving a large amount of people (more than 49 persons) Must be equipped with panic hardware as the only locking or securing device. Tragically, many people have lost their lives in fires when they could not escape a burning building because the door was locked and could not be opened by the occupants. Panic hardware is designed and installed to prevent this from occurring as the device allows the door to open when the activating device is pushed. By installing any additional locking or latching devices on your doors, the purpose of the panic hardware is defeated, which could trap people in your building in the event of a fire or other emergency.