



# Florida Division of State Fire Marshal

The Florida Fire Marshals and Inspectors Association,  
"Organization" (§633.026)

## **Informal Interpretation**

**Date:** 09/22/20

**NFPA Document Number:** NFPA 101 2015 Florida Specific

**Paragraph Reference:** 7.2.2.4.5.5

*Explain how the Petitioner's substantial interests are being affected by the question below: I am a fire inspector and employee of the LFO that is dealing with this issue in the field.*

*Enter the Petitioner's question concerning an interpretation of the FFPC: Is it the intent of NFPA 101:7.2.2.4.5.5 (2015 edition) to apply the 2 1/4 inch minimum spacing requirement to a guard or other similar barrier that is not a wall? (Section 7.2.2.4.5.5 specifically utilizes the term "wall.")*  
See example below:



**Answer: Yes**

The intent is to provide clearance for the proper grasping of the handrail. The clearance is needed whether it is a guard or a wall or any other type of barrier that could prevent proper grasping of the handrail.

Section from the Life Safety hand book:

In earlier editions of the *Code*, a minimum 1-1/2 in. (38 mm) clearance was required between a new handrail and the wall to which it was fastened. The current provision, as detailed in [7.2.2.4.5.5](#), increases the required minimum clearance to 2-1/4 in. (57 mm) for new handrails in recognition of the fact that 1-1/2 in. (38 mm) is an inadequate clearance for both a normal grasp and an emergency grasp of the handrail. [Exhibit 7.101](#) depicts the required 2-1/4 in. (57 mm) finger clearance.

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Rulings herein expressed are not the formal position of the Florida State Fire Marshal's Office

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Committee Answer Submitted by,  
James Groff, Chairman  
Informal Fire Code Interpretation Committee

**Region 1** - Delegate: Vacant  
Alternate: N/A\*

**Region 2** - Delegate: Vacant  
Alternate: N/A\*

**Region 3** - Delegate: James Groff, Jacksonville Fire Rescue. (Committee Chair) (Yes)  
Alternate: Robert Growick Division Chief /Fire Marshall City of St. Augustine (Yes)

**Region 4** - Delegate: Cheryl Edwards, Lakeland Fire Rescue (Yes)  
Alternate: Scott Finely Auburndale Fire Department (Yes)

**Region 5** - Delegate: Anthony Apfelbeck , Altamonte Springs Building Department (Abstain)  
Alternate: Tim Ippolito, Casselberry F. R. (Yes)

**Region 6** - Delegate: Robert Salvaggio, Cape Corral Fire Rescue (Yes)  
Alternate: Janet Washburn, Bonita Springs (Yes)

**Region 7** - Delegate: Matthew E. Welhaf, Boca Raton Fire Rescue Services Department  
Alternate: Sean Brown, Broward Sheriff Fire Rescue & Emergency Services Department. (Yes)

## Committee Region Map



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