



How would you escape from your workplace in an emergency? Do you know where all the exits are in case your first choice is too crowded? Are you sure the doors will be unlocked and that the exit access, such as a hallway, will not be blocked during a fire, explosion, or other crisis? Knowing the answers to these questions could keep you safe during an emergency.

What is an exit route? An exit route is a continuous and unobstructed path of exit travel from any point within a workplace to a place of safety.

An exit route consists of three parts:

- Exit access – portion of an exit route that leads to an exit.
- Exit – portion of an exit route that is generally separated from other areas to provide a protected way of travel to the exit discharge.
- Exit discharge – part of the exit route that leads directly outside or to a street, walkway, refuge area, public way, or open space with access to the outside.

How many exit routes must a workplace have?

Normally, a workplace must have at least two exit routes to permit prompt evacuation of employees and other building occupants during an emergency. More than two exits are required, however, if the number of employees, size of the building, or arrangement of the workplace will not allow employees to evacuate safely. Exit routes must be located as far away as practical from each other in case one is blocked by fire or smoke.

What are the maintenance, safeguarding, and operational features for exit routes?

OSHA standards require employers to do the following:

- Keep exit routes free of explosive or highly flammable furnishings and other decorations.
- Ensure that exit routes are unobstructed such as by materials, equipment, locked doors, or dead-end corridors.
- Provide lighting for exit routes adequate for employees with normal vision.
- Keep exit route doors free of decorations or signs that obscure the visibility of exit route doors.
- Post signs along the exit access indicating the direction of travel to the nearest exit and exit discharge if that direction is not immediately apparent. Also, the line-of-sight to an exit sign must be clearly visible at all times.
- Mark doors or passages along an exit access that could be mistaken for an exit “Not an Exit” or with a sign identifying its use (such as “Closet”).
- Install “EXIT” signs in plainly legible letters.
- Provide an emergency alarm system to alert employees, unless employees can promptly see or smell a fire or other hazard in time to provide adequate warning to them.
 - 1 carbon monoxide detector
 - 1 fire alarm per room
 - 1 smoke detector per room