Barrier-Free Environment Construction Law of the People’s Republic of China

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Adopted at the 3rd Meeting of the Standing Committee of the 14th National People's Congress on June 28, 2023
Effective: September 1, 2023

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Chapter I — General Provisions

Article 1 — This Law is enacted in accordance with the Constitution in order to strengthen the construction of a barrier-free environment, protect the lawful rights and interests of persons with disabilities, the elderly, and other members of society, and promote the full participation and integration of all members of society into social life.

Article 2 — The State shall take measures to promote the construction of a barrier-free environment, and create conditions for persons with disabilities, the elderly, and other members of society to travel independently and safely, use facilities conveniently, access information, and access social services. This Law applies to barrier-free facilities, barrier-free information exchange, and barrier-free social services.

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Where there are special provisions in other laws and administrative regulations on barrier-free environment construction, such provisions shall apply.

Article 3 — Barrier-free environment construction shall adhere to the principles of prioritizing the needs of persons with disabilities and the elderly, comprehensive planning, rational layout, systematic design, and joint construction and sharing. The State shall promote the integration of barrier-free environment construction with the economic and social development of the country, and with the transformation of old urban communities and the building of a beautiful countryside.

Article 4 — The departments of housing and urban-rural development under the people's governments at or above the county level shall be responsible for the organization, coordination, guidance, and supervision of barrier-free environment construction. The departments of civil affairs, industry and information technology, transport, culture and tourism, education, health, and the working bodies for persons with disabilities shall, within the scope of their respective duties, do a good job in the work relating to barrier-free environment construction. The people's governments of townships, towns, and sub-district offices shall assist in the work relating to barrier-free environment construction.

Chapter II — Barrier-Free Facilities

Article 5 — Newly constructed, renovated, and expanded public buildings, public places, transportation facilities, and residential communities shall comply with the standards for barrier-free facilities. Supporting barrier-free facilities shall be designed, constructed, and delivered for use simultaneously with the main project.

Article 6 — The builders, designers, construction enterprises, and supervision enterprises of construction projects shall, in accordance with the law, bear responsibility for the quality of barrier-free facilities in the project. Where the design, construction, or supervision fails to comply with the standards for barrier-free facilities, the relevant competent departments shall order corrections to be made within a prescribed time limit.

Article 7 — The State shall encourage the formulation of enterprise standards and group standards for barrier-free facilities that are more stringent than national standards and industry standards. The State shall promote barrier-free facility standards for homes of the elderly and families of persons with disabilities, and provide necessary financial subsidies and technical support.

Article 8 — Public transportation facilities and public transport vehicles shall be equipped with barrier-free facilities and equipment. Newly put-into-use civil aviation aircraft, railway passenger trains, urban buses, tramcars, and passenger vessels shall meet the requirements for barrier-free facilities. Public parking lots shall, in accordance with the provisions, set up and mark barrier-free parking spaces for persons with disabilities.

Article 9 — The owners or managers of barrier-free facilities shall manage and maintain barrier-free facilities to ensure their normal and safe use. No organization or individual may damage, unlawfully occupy, or change the use of barrier-free facilities without authorization. Where barrier-free facilities require renovation, the owners or managers shall carry out the renovation in a timely manner.

Chapter III — Barrier-Free Information Exchange

Article 10 — The State shall promote barrier-free information exchange technologies and products, and create conditions to facilitate access by persons with disabilities and the elderly to public information. In the event of a natural disaster, accidental calamity, public health incident, or other emergencies, the people's governments at all levels and the relevant departments shall ensure that information is communicated and delivered in a barrier-free manner.

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Article 11 — Government affairs information released by the people's governments at all levels and their relevant departments, radio and television programs broadcast by radio and television stations, and internet websites and mobile applications shall gradually meet the requirements for barrier-free information exchange. The State shall encourage the publication of reading materials and the production of films, television dramas, and online audiovisual programs in a barrier-free format.

Article 12 — Public service venues such as banks, hospitals, urban rail transit stations, civil aviation transport airports, railway passenger transport stations, and passenger motor vehicle transport stations shall provide persons with disabilities and the elderly with necessary voice prompts, text prompts, sign language, or other barrier-free information services. Where emergency calls or alarm calls need to be made, special needs persons shall be provided with barrier-free functions such as text and voice alarm calling.

Chapter IV — Barrier-Free Social Services

Article 13 — Public service venues shall set up barrier-free service windows and provide barrier-free services for persons with disabilities and the elderly. Where government service venues are established, barrier-free service channels such as on-site guidance, manual interpretation, and character and speech conversion shall be provided.

Article 14 — The State shall improve the level of barrier-free public services in the fields of education, medical and health care, culture, sports, and social security. Schools of all types and at all levels shall ensure that persons with disabilities and other persons with special needs equally receive education and shall provide reasonable accommodations.

Article 15 — The State shall encourage employers to provide barrier-free working environments and reasonable accommodations for employees with disabilities. The State shall support institutions for the elderly in establishing barrier-free environments and provide age-friendly services.

Article 16 — The State shall promote the construction of barrier-free environments for communities, develop barrier-free community service systems, and provide convenient and accessible community services for persons with disabilities and the elderly. Electoral activities shall provide barrier-free conditions for persons with disabilities to exercise their right to vote and to stand for election.

Chapter V — Supervision and Guarantee

Article 17 — The State shall establish a system of assessment, evaluation, and certification for barrier-free environments, entrust third-party institutions to conduct assessments and evaluations of the construction of barrier-free environments, and publish the results of such assessments and evaluations.

Article 18 — The working bodies for persons with disabilities and organizations of the elderly shall, in accordance with the law, carry out supervision of barrier-free environment construction and may put forward opinions and suggestions to the relevant departments. The relevant departments shall give full consideration to such opinions and suggestions and provide feedback on the handling of the same.

Article 19 — The State shall provide financial input to guarantee the construction of barrier-free environments. The State encourages and supports the participation of social forces in the construction of barrier-free environments through donations, voluntary services, and other means.

Chapter VI — Legal Liability

Article 20 — Where an entity or individual, in violation of the provisions of this Law, commits any of the following acts, the relevant competent department shall order the entity or individual to make corrections and may, based on the circumstances, impose a fine; where any loss is caused, the entity or individual shall be liable for compensation in accordance with the law: (1) new, renovated, or expanded construction projects that fail to comply with the standards for barrier-free facilities; (2) damaging, unlawfully occupying, or

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changing the use of barrier-free facilities without authorization; or (3) failing to perform management and maintenance obligations in relation to barrier-free facilities.

Article 21 — Where the relevant state organs or their functionaries, in violation of the provisions of this Law, abuse their powers, neglect their duties, or engage in malpractices for personal gain, the directly responsible person in charge and other directly responsible persons shall be subject to sanctions in accordance with the law; where the case constitutes a crime, criminal liability shall be pursued in accordance with the law.

Chapter VII — Supplementary Provisions

Article 22 — The relevant departments under the State Council shall, in accordance with this Law and the relevant laws and administrative regulations, formulate supporting provisions and standards for barrier-free environment construction.

Article 23 — This Law shall come into force on September 1, 2023. The Regulations on the Construction of a Barrier-Free Environment, promulgated by the State Council on June 4, 2012, shall be repealed simultaneously.

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