

Barrier-Free Environment Law of the PRC

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Chapter I — General Provisions

Article 1 — This Law is enacted for the purposes of strengthening the construction of a barrier-free environment, safeguarding the rights and interests of persons with disabilities and the elderly to equally, fully, and conveniently participate in and integrate into social life, promoting the sharing of the fruits of social development by all members of society, and carrying forward the core socialist values.

Article 2 — The State shall adopt measures to promote the construction of a barrier-free environment, and create favorable conditions for persons with disabilities and the elderly to travel independently and safely, access and use roads, buildings, means of transportation, information, and obtain social services. For the purposes of this Law, "barrier-free environment" means an environment that is convenient for all members of society, including persons with disabilities and the elderly, to travel independently and safely, and to access roads, buildings, means of transportation, information, and services.

Article 3 — The construction of a barrier-free environment shall adhere to the leadership of the Communist Party of China, give play to the leading role of the government, mobilize the participation of market forces and social forces, and follow the principles of being people-oriented, highlighting key points, providing classified guidance, and combining hardware and software.

Article 4 — The housing and urban-rural development department under the State Council shall be responsible for the overall planning and coordination of the construction of a nationwide barrier-free environment, and shall urge and guide relevant departments to carry out the construction of a barrier-free environment. The departments of civil affairs, industry and information technology, transport, culture and tourism, education, health, and other relevant departments under the State Council shall, within their respective scopes of duties, carry out the construction of a barrier-free environment.

Article 5 — The local people's governments at or above the county level shall incorporate the construction of a barrier-free environment into their plans for national economic and social development and their overall land use plans, and shall arrange the required funds. The townships, towns, and sub-district offices shall, within the scope of their duties, carry out the construction of a barrier-free environment.

Article 6 — The people's governments at or above the county level shall establish a coordination mechanism for the construction of a barrier-free environment, make overall planning and coordinate, and urge and guide relevant departments to carry out the construction of a barrier-free environment within their respective scopes of duties.

Article 7 — The State shall encourage the promotion of new concepts, the application of new technologies, and the provision of new services for the construction of a barrier-free environment, and promote the exchange, application, and promotion of barrier-free environment construction technologies, products, and services. The State shall carry out publicity and education on the concept of a barrier-free environment, popularize knowledge on the construction of a barrier-free environment, and disseminate the culture of a barrier-free environment.

Article 8 — Disabled persons' federations, organizations for the elderly, and other relevant organizations shall, in accordance with the provisions of laws and regulations and their respective articles of association, assist the people's governments at various levels and their relevant departments in carrying out the construction of a barrier-free environment. Relevant industry organizations shall, in accordance with their articles of association, promote the construction of a barrier-free environment within their respective industries.

Chapter II — Construction of Barrier-Free Facilities

Article 9 — Newly constructed, renovated, or expanded buildings, roads, public transport facilities, and public places shall comply with the mandatory standards for the construction of barrier-free facilities. The owners or managers of existing buildings, roads, public transport facilities, and public places that do not comply with the mandatory standards for the construction of barrier-free facilities shall carry out barrier-free renovation in accordance with the prescribed plans and standards.

Article 10 — The State shall encourage the renovation of residential buildings and communities to accommodate barrier-free facilities. For existing residential buildings and communities that do not comply with the mandatory standards for the construction of barrier-free facilities, the people's governments at or

above the county level shall formulate renovation plans and organize their implementation based on the actual circumstances. The installation of elevators and other barrier-free facilities in existing multi-story residential buildings shall be actively promoted.

Article 11 — Barrier-free facilities shall be set up with standardized signs in conspicuous positions. Barrier-free signs shall be clear, accurate, and easy to identify. It is prohibited to illegally occupy or damage barrier-free facilities, or to change the use of barrier-free facilities without authorization.

Article 12 — Newly constructed, renovated, or expanded public transport facilities shall comply with the mandatory standards for the construction of barrier-free facilities. Public transport operators shall, based on the needs of various types of persons with disabilities, gradually equip barrier-free vehicles and install barrier-free equipment such as voice announcement devices and display screens.

Chapter III — Barrier-Free Information Exchange

Article 13 — The people's governments at all levels and their relevant departments shall, when releasing important government information and handling public affairs, provide barrier-free means such as voice, large print, Braille, and sign language, to facilitate persons with disabilities and the elderly in obtaining public information. Television stations shall, in accordance with the regulations, broadcast sign language programs and set up subtitles for key news programs.

Article 14 — The State shall encourage the publication of Braille and large-print books and periodicals for persons with visual impairments. Public libraries shall be equipped with reading rooms for the visually impaired and provide Braille books and audio books. The State shall encourage the research, development, application, and promotion of barrier-free information exchange technologies, products, and services.

Article 15 — Telecommunications operators shall provide barrier-free telecommunications services. Websites and mobile applications shall comply with barrier-free website design standards to facilitate access and use by persons with disabilities and the elderly. Where government affairs information services and public services involve the use of intelligent technologies, appropriate alternatives or assistance shall be provided for persons with disabilities and the elderly.

Chapter IV — Barrier-Free Social Services

Article 16 — Public service institutions such as administrative service centers, community service centers, medical institutions, educational institutions, cultural and sports venues, financial and telecommunications institutions, and commercial institutions shall provide barrier-free services, and provide necessary assistance, sign language, Braille services, and other convenience for persons with disabilities and the elderly.

Article 17 — The State shall improve and implement the system for the evaluation and certification of barrier-free services, and improve the quality of barrier-free social services. Tourism operators shall, in compliance with the relevant regulations, provide barrier-free tourism services for persons with disabilities and the elderly.

Article 18 — The State shall encourage the provision of barrier-free services such as home-based assistance, barrier-free travel companionship, and barrier-free communication for persons with disabilities and the elderly.

Chapter V — Safeguard Measures

Article 19 — The State shall formulate standards for the construction of a barrier-free environment. Standards for barrier-free environment construction shall be scientific, reasonable, and continuously improved, and shall promote the coordination and unification of barrier-free environment construction standards.

Article 20 — The State shall establish a system for the certification and evaluation of barrier-free environment construction, and conduct certification and evaluation of the effectiveness of barrier-free environment construction. The State shall encourage enterprises, institutions, and social organizations to participate in the construction of a barrier-free environment through methods such as donations, voluntary services, and establishment of foundations.

Article 21 — The State shall strengthen the cultivation of professionals in barrier-free environment construction and encourage higher education institutions and vocational schools to set up relevant programs and courses.

Chapter VI — Supervision and Administration

Article 22 — The people's governments at or above the county level and their relevant departments shall strengthen the supervision, inspection, and evaluation of the construction of a barrier-free environment, and promptly discover and address problems. The State shall establish a unified national information platform for the construction of a barrier-free environment.

Article 23 — News media shall carry out public interest publicity on the construction of a barrier-free environment. Any organization or individual shall have the right to report or complain to the relevant government departments about any act that damages or illegally occupies barrier-free facilities. The relevant government departments shall promptly handle such reports or complaints.

Chapter VII — Legal Liability

Article 24 — Where any entity, in violation of the provisions of this Law, fails to construct, renovate, or equip barrier-free facilities in accordance with the prescribed standards, the relevant department shall order it to make corrections within a prescribed time limit; where it refuses to make corrections, a fine shall be imposed in accordance with the law. Where any entity or individual illegally occupies or damages barrier-free facilities, or changes the use of barrier-free facilities without authorization, the relevant department shall order it to make corrections and impose a fine in accordance with the law; where the case constitutes a violation of public security administration, public security administration penalties shall be imposed in accordance with the law; where a crime is constituted, criminal liability shall be pursued in accordance with the law.

Article 25 — Where any functionary of a department responsible for supervision and administration abuses his or her power, neglects his or her duties, or engages in malpractice for personal gain, sanctions shall be imposed in accordance with the law.

Chapter VIII — Supplementary Provisions

Article 26 — 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 25, 2012 shall be repealed simultaneously.

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