Law on Barrier-Free Environment Construction of the PRC

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Chapter I — General Provisions

Article 1 — This Law is enacted, in accordance with the Constitution and relevant laws, for the purposes of strengthening the construction of a barrier-free environment, ensuring that persons with disabilities and elderly persons participate in and integrate into social life on an equal, full and convenient basis, promoting the sharing of the fruits of economic and social development by all members of society, and carrying forward the core socialist values.

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Article 2 — The State shall take measures to advance the construction of a barrier-free environment, and provide convenience for persons with disabilities and elderly persons to independently and safely travel along roads, enter and exit buildings and use their ancillary facilities, take public transport, obtain, use and exchange information, and receive social services. Persons other than persons with disabilities and elderly persons who have accessibility needs may enjoy the conveniences of a barrier-free environment.

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 initiative of market entities, guide social organizations and the public to participate extensively, and promote joint contribution, joint governance and shared benefits across the whole society.

Article 4 — The construction of a barrier-free environment shall be combined with age-friendly renovation, and follow the principles of safety and convenience, practicality and ease of use, and broad benefit.

Article 5 — The construction of a barrier-free environment shall be commensurate with the level of economic and social development, make overall plans for urban and rural development, and gradually narrow the gap between urban and rural construction of the barrier-free environment.

Article 6 — People's governments at or above the county level shall incorporate the construction of a barrier-free environment into the national economic and social development plan, include the required funds in the budget at the corresponding level, and establish a stable funding guarantee mechanism.

Article 7 — People's governments at or above the county level shall coordinate, urge and guide the relevant departments to do a good job of constructing a barrier-free environment within their respective duties. The housing and urban-rural development, civil affairs, industry and information technology, transport, natural resources, culture and tourism, education, health and other departments of people's governments at or above the county level shall, within their respective duties, carry out the work of constructing a barrier-free environment. The people's governments of townships and towns and sub-district offices shall assist the relevant departments in doing a good job of constructing a barrier-free environment.

Article 8 — Organizations such as disabled persons' federations and associations for the elderly shall, in accordance with laws, regulations and their respective charters, assist people's governments at all levels and their relevant departments in doing a good job of constructing a barrier-free environment.

Article 9 — When formulating or amending laws, regulations, rules, plans and other normative documents involving the construction of a barrier-free environment, the opinions of representatives of persons with disabilities and elderly persons, as well as organizations such as disabled persons' federations and associations for the elderly, shall be solicited.

Article 10 — The State encourages and supports enterprises, public institutions, social organizations, individuals and other social forces to participate in the construction of a barrier-free environment through donations, voluntary services and other means. The State supports international exchanges and cooperation in carrying out the construction of a barrier-free environment.

Article 11 — Units and individuals that have made outstanding achievements in the construction of a barrier-free environment shall be commended and rewarded in accordance with the relevant provisions of the State.

Chapter II — Construction of Barrier-Free Facilities

Article 12 — Newly constructed, renovated and expanded residential buildings, residential areas, public buildings, public places, transport facilities, urban and rural roads, and the like shall comply with the construction standards for barrier-free facility projects. Barrier-free facilities shall be planned, designed, constructed, accepted and delivered for use simultaneously with the main project, and shall be effectively connected with the surrounding barrier-free facilities so as to achieve continuity. Barrier-free facilities shall be

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provided with barrier-free signs that comply with the standards, and shall be incorporated into the guidance sign system of the surrounding environment or the interior of buildings.

Article 13 — The State encourages units engaged in engineering construction, design, construction and the like to adopt advanced concepts and technologies to build barrier-free facilities that are human-oriented, systematic and intelligent, and coordinated with the surrounding environment.

Article 14 — Project construction entities shall include the funds for constructing barrier-free facilities in the preliminary estimate and budget of the construction project. Project construction entities shall not expressly or implicitly instruct design or construction units to violate the construction standards for barrier-free facility projects, and shall not, without authorization, deliver for use barrier-free facilities that have not been accepted or that have failed acceptance.

Article 15 — Engineering design units shall carry out design in accordance with the construction standards for barrier-free facility projects. Where review of construction drawing design documents is required by law, the construction drawing review institutions shall review the design content of barrier-free facilities in accordance with laws, regulations and the construction standards for barrier-free facility projects; where it does not comply with the relevant provisions, the review shall not be passed.

Article 16 — Engineering construction and supervision units shall carry out the construction and supervision of barrier-free facilities in accordance with the construction drawing design documents and relevant standards. Where barrier-free facilities are not accepted, or fail acceptance, in accordance with laws, regulations and the construction standards for barrier-free facility projects, the housing and urban-rural development and other competent departments shall not handle the completion acceptance filing procedures.

Article 17 — The State encourages project construction entities to invite representatives of persons with disabilities and elderly persons, as well as organizations such as disabled persons' federations and associations for the elderly, to participate in activities such as opinion solicitation and trial use in the planning, design and completion acceptance stages of newly constructed, renovated and expanded construction projects.

Article 18 — With respect to existing residential buildings, residential areas, public buildings, public places, transport facilities, urban and rural roads, and the like that do not comply with the construction standards for barrier-free facility projects, people's governments at or above the county level shall, based on actual conditions, formulate targeted renovation plans for barrier-free facilities and organize their implementation. The renovation of barrier-free facilities shall be the responsibility of the owner or manager. Where the owner, manager and user have agreed on the renovation responsibility, the agreed responsible person shall be responsible. Where the conditions for renovating barrier-free facilities are not met, the responsible person shall take necessary alternative measures.

Article 19 — People's governments at or above the county level shall support and guide the renovation of household barrier-free facilities. Appropriate subsidies shall be granted to the households of persons with disabilities and elderly persons that meet the conditions. Residents' committees, villagers' committees, management service units of residential areas and owners' committees shall support and cooperate with the renovation of household barrier-free facilities.

Article 20 — Units where persons with disabilities are employed in a concentrated manner shall construct and renovate barrier-free facilities in accordance with the relevant standards and requirements. The State encourages and supports employers to carry out the construction and renovation of barrier-free facilities in workplaces, and provide necessary working conditions and conveniences for employees with disabilities.

Article 21 — For newly constructed, renovated and expanded public buildings, public places, transport facilities and public service facilities in residential areas, barrier-free facilities shall be constructed as

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supporting facilities in accordance with the construction standards for barrier-free facility projects; where the existing buildings, places and facilities mentioned above do not comply with the construction standards for barrier-free facility projects, necessary renovation shall be carried out.

Article 22 — The State supports the installation of elevators or other barrier-free facilities in existing multi-storey residential buildings in old urban residential areas, so as to provide convenience for persons with disabilities and elderly persons. People's governments at or above the county level and their relevant departments shall take measures and create conditions, give play to the role of community-level organizations, and promote the installation of elevators or other barrier-free facilities in existing multi-storey residential buildings. Housing owners shall carry forward the traditional virtues of the Chinese nation, such as living in harmony with neighbors and helping one another, strengthen communication and consultation, and cooperate in accordance with the law in installing elevators or other barrier-free facilities in existing multi-storey residential buildings.

Article 23 — For newly constructed, renovated and expanded pedestrian overpasses and pedestrian underpasses on urban trunk roads, in major commercial areas and in large residential areas, as well as those that meet the conditions for renovation, barrier-free facilities shall be constructed or renovated in accordance with the construction standards for barrier-free facility projects. Tactile paving shall be installed in accordance with standards on sidewalks in areas with relatively concentrated accessibility needs, such as urban trunk roads and major commercial areas; audio prompt devices for crossing the street shall be installed in accordance with standards on the traffic signal facilities of crosswalks around urban central areas, units where persons with disabilities are employed in a concentrated manner, and schools where persons with disabilities are enrolled in a concentrated manner.

Article 24 — Parking lots shall set up barrier-free parking spaces in accordance with the construction standards for barrier-free facility projects, and set up conspicuous signs. Barrier-free parking spaces shall be used on a priority basis by motor vehicles driven or occupied by persons with physical disabilities. Those using barrier-free parking spaces on a priority basis shall place the special sign for vehicles of persons with disabilities in a conspicuous position or provide the disability certificate. Where barrier-free parking spaces are sufficient, they may also be used by motor vehicles driven or occupied by other persons with mobility difficulties, such as persons with disabilities, elderly persons, pregnant women, and infants and young children.

Article 25 — For newly put-into-operation public transport means such as civil aircraft, passenger trains, passenger ships, public buses and trolleybuses, and urban rail transit vehicles, it shall be ensured that a certain proportion comply with barrier-free standards. Where existing public transport means meet the conditions for renovation, barrier-free renovation shall be carried out so as to gradually meet the requirements of barrier-free standards; where the conditions for renovation are not met, the operating units of the public transport means shall take necessary alternative measures. Local people's governments at or above the county level shall, based on local conditions, gradually establish urban barrier-free bus guidance systems, and plan and allocate an appropriate number of barrier-free taxis.

Article 26 — Owners or managers of barrier-free facilities shall perform the following maintenance and management responsibilities for barrier-free facilities, ensuring that the functions of barrier-free facilities are normal and their use is safe: (1) repairing or replacing damaged barrier-free facilities and signs; (2) renovating barrier-free facilities that need renovation; (3) correcting acts of occupying barrier-free facilities; and (4) carrying out other necessary maintenance and upkeep. Where there is an agreement among the owner, manager and user, the agreed responsible person shall be responsible for maintenance and management.

Article 27 — Temporary barrier-free facilities set up under special circumstances shall comply with the construction standards for barrier-free facility projects.

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Article 28 — No unit or individual may, without authorization, change the use of barrier-free facilities or illegally occupy or damage barrier-free facilities. Where barrier-free facilities are temporarily occupied under special circumstances, a public notice shall be issued and guardrails, warning signs or signal facilities shall be set up, and necessary alternative measures shall be taken at the same time. Upon expiration of the temporary occupation, the original condition shall be restored in a timely manner.

Chapter III — Barrier-Free Information Exchange

Article 29 — People's governments at all levels and their relevant departments shall provide convenience for persons with disabilities and elderly persons to obtain public information; when releasing information on emergencies such as natural disasters, accident disasters, public health incidents and social security incidents, they shall, where conditions permit, simultaneously adopt barrier-free information exchange methods such as voice, large print, Braille and sign language.

Article 30 — Television stations established with fiscal funds shall provide synchronized subtitles when broadcasting television programs, and where conditions permit, broadcast at least one news program with sign language interpretation every day, and gradually expand the scope of programs with sign language interpretation. The State encourages publicly published and distributed film and television video products and online video programs to be provided with subtitles, sign language or audio description tracks.

Article 31 — The State encourages publicly published and distributed books, newspapers and periodicals to be equipped with barrier-free format versions such as audio, large print, Braille and electronic versions, so as to facilitate reading by persons with disabilities and elderly persons. The State encourages textbook compilation and publishing units to compile and publish Braille and low-vision teaching books according to the actual conditions of different educational stages, so as to meet the learning needs of blind students and students with other visual impairments.

Article 32 — Internet websites, service platforms and mobile internet applications established with fiscal funds shall gradually comply with barrier-free website design standards and the national information accessibility standards. The State encourages internet websites and mobile internet applications in fields such as news and information, social communication, daily shopping, medical and health care, financial services, learning and education, and transport and travel to gradually comply with barrier-free website design standards and the national information accessibility standards. The State encourages map navigation and positioning products to gradually improve the marking of barrier-free facilities and the navigation functions for barrier-free travel routes.

Article 33 — Products provided by manufacturers of audio-video and multimedia equipment, mobile intelligent terminal equipment and telecommunications terminal equipment shall gradually have barrier-free functions such as voice and large print. Self-service public service terminal equipment in banks, hospitals, urban rail transit stations, terminal areas of civil transport airports, passenger stations, passenger wharves, large scenic areas, and the like shall have barrier-free functions such as voice, large print and Braille.

Article 34 — Telecommunications business operators shall, when providing basic telecommunications services, provide necessary voice and large print information services or manual services for persons with disabilities and elderly persons.

Article 35 — Government service convenience hotlines and emergency call systems for police and assistance, fire emergency, traffic accidents and medical first aid shall gradually have barrier-free functions such as voice, large print, Braille and one-key calling.

Article 36 — Libraries, museums, cultural centers, science and technology museums, and the like that provide public cultural services shall take into account the characteristics of persons with disabilities and elderly persons, actively create conditions, and provide literature and information, barrier-free facilities, equipment and services suitable for their needs.

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Article 37 — The relevant departments of the State Council shall improve the management norms for drug labels and instructions, and require drug manufacturers and distributors to provide labels and instructions in barrier-free format versions such as voice, large print, Braille and electronic versions. The State encourages manufacturers and distributors of other commodities to provide labels and instructions in barrier-free format versions such as voice, large print, Braille and electronic versions, so as to facilitate identification and use by persons with disabilities and elderly persons.

Article 38 — The State promotes and uses the national common sign language and the national common Braille. When basic public services use sign language and Braille, and when schools of various types carry out sign language and Braille education and teaching, the national common sign language and the national common Braille shall be used.

Chapter IV — Barrier-Free Social Services

Article 39 — Public service places shall be equipped with necessary barrier-free equipment and assistive devices, mark and guide barrier-free facilities, and provide barrier-free services for persons with disabilities and elderly persons. Where public service places involve service matters such as medical and health care, social security, financial business and living payment, traditional service methods such as on-site guidance and manual handling shall be retained.

Article 40 — Administrative service institutions, community service institutions and public service institutions for water supply, power supply, gas supply, heat supply and the like shall set up low-level service counters or barrier-free service windows, and be equipped with equipment such as electronic information display screens, handwriting tablets and voice prompts, so as to provide barrier-free services for persons with disabilities and elderly persons.

Article 41 — Judicial organs, arbitration institutions and legal aid institutions shall, in accordance with the law, provide barrier-free services for persons with disabilities and elderly persons to participate in litigation and arbitration activities and to obtain legal aid. The State encourages legal service institutions such as law firms, notary institutions, forensic appraisal institutions and grassroots legal service offices to provide barrier-free services in combination with the service content they provide.

Article 42 — Operating units of transport facilities and public transport means shall, based on the service characteristics of various modes of transport and in combination with the conditions of facilities and equipment and the service content provided, set up barrier-free service windows, dedicated waiting areas, green channels and priority seats for persons with disabilities and elderly persons, and provide barrier-free services such as assistive devices, consultation and guidance, subtitle stop announcements, voice prompts and reservation customization.

Article 43 — Education administrative departments and educational institutions shall strengthen the construction of a barrier-free environment in educational places, and provide barrier-free services for teachers, students and staff with disabilities. Educational examinations, vocational qualification examinations, technical skill examinations and recruitment examinations held by the State, as well as unified examinations organized by schools of various types, shall provide convenient services for examinees with disabilities.

Article 44 — Medical and health institutions shall, in combination with the service content they provide, provide convenience for persons with disabilities and elderly persons to seek medical treatment. Service institutions related to persons with disabilities and elderly persons shall be equipped with barrier-free equipment, and provide barrier-free services in aspects such as living care, rehabilitation and nursing.

Article 45 — The State encourages service places in fields such as culture, tourism, sports, finance, postal services, telecommunications, transport, commerce, catering, accommodation and property management to provide barrier-free services such as assistive devices, consultation and guidance for persons with

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disabilities and elderly persons in combination with the service content they provide. The State encourages postal and express delivery enterprises to provide door-to-door pickup and delivery services for persons with disabilities and elderly persons with mobility difficulties.

Article 46 — Business management units of public places and operating units of transport facilities and public transport means shall provide convenience for persons with disabilities to carry service dogs such as guide dogs, hearing dogs and assistance dogs. Persons with disabilities who carry service dogs into and out of public places and use transport facilities and public transport means shall comply with the relevant provisions of the State, wear conspicuous identification equipment for the service dogs, and take necessary protective measures.

Article 47 — When formulating and implementing work plans, managers of emergency shelters shall take into account the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities and elderly persons, set up prompt devices such as voice, large print and flashing lights as appropriate, and improve barrier-free service functions.

Article 48 — Departments and units organizing elections shall take measures to provide convenience and necessary assistance for voters who are persons with disabilities and elderly persons to vote.

Article 49 — The State encourages and supports the construction of barrier-free information service platforms, and provides remote real-time barrier-free information services for persons with disabilities and elderly persons.

Chapter V — Support Measures

Article 50 — The State carries out publicity and education on the concept of a barrier-free environment, popularizes knowledge of the barrier-free environment, disseminates the culture of the barrier-free environment, and enhances the awareness of the barrier-free environment of the whole society. News media shall actively carry out public-interest publicity on the construction of a barrier-free environment.

Article 51 — The State promotes the concept of universal design, establishes and improves national standards, industry standards and local standards, encourages the development of leading group standards and enterprise standards, strengthens the connection and coordination among standards, and builds a standard system for the construction of a barrier-free environment. Local standards formulated by localities in light of their actual conditions shall not be lower than the relevant technical requirements of national standards.

Article 52 — When formulating or amending standards involving the construction of a barrier-free environment, the opinions of representatives of persons with disabilities and elderly persons, as well as organizations such as disabled persons' federations and associations for the elderly, shall be solicited. Organizations such as disabled persons' federations and associations for the elderly may, in accordance with the law, put forward suggestions for formulating or amending standards for the construction of a barrier-free environment.

Article 53 — The State establishes and improves the certification of barrier-free design, facilities, products and services, and the evaluation system for accessibility information, and promotes the adoption and application of the results.

Article 54 — The State promotes the application of new scientific and technological achievements in the construction of a barrier-free environment through funding support, government procurement, tax preferences and other means, encourages the research and development, production, application and promotion of barrier-free technologies, products and services, and supports the integrated development of barrier-free facilities, information and services.

Article 55 — The State establishes a talent training mechanism in fields related to the construction of a barrier-free environment. The State encourages institutions of higher education, secondary vocational

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schools and the like to set up specialties and courses related to the construction of a barrier-free environment, and carry out theoretical research, international exchanges and practical activities on the construction of a barrier-free environment. Disciplines and specialties such as architecture, transport, and computer science and technology shall increase the teaching and practice content of the construction of a barrier-free environment, and the examination content for professional qualifications, continuing education and other training in relevant fields shall include knowledge of the construction of a barrier-free environment.

Article 56 — The State encourages organs, enterprises, public institutions, social groups and other social organizations to provide training on barrier-free service knowledge and skills for their staff.

Article 57 — In the creation activities of civilized cities, civilized villages and towns, civilized units, civilized communities, civilized campuses and the like, the situation of the construction of a barrier-free environment shall be taken as important content.

Chapter VI — Supervision and Administration

Article 58 — People's governments at or above the county level and their relevant competent departments shall, in accordance with the law, supervise and inspect the construction of a barrier-free environment, and carry out joint supervision and inspection according to work needs.

Article 59 — The State implements a target responsibility system and an assessment and evaluation system for the construction of a barrier-free environment. Local people's governments at or above the county level shall formulate specific assessment methods according to the actual conditions of their regions.

Article 60 — The relevant competent departments of local people's governments at or above the county level shall regularly commission third-party institutions to carry out assessments of the construction of a barrier-free environment, and publish the assessment results to the public and accept public supervision.

Article 61 — People's governments at or above the county level shall establish an information disclosure system for the construction of a barrier-free environment, and regularly release the situation of the construction of a barrier-free environment.

Article 62 — Any organization or individual has the right to put forward opinions and suggestions on strengthening and improving the construction of a barrier-free environment to the relevant competent government departments, and to complain about and report acts that violate the provisions of this Law. The relevant competent departments of people's governments at or above the county level shall promptly handle and reply to complaints and reports involving the construction of a barrier-free environment. Organizations such as disabled persons' federations and associations for the elderly may, as needed, engage representatives of persons with disabilities and elderly persons, as well as persons with relevant professional knowledge, to supervise the situation of the construction of a barrier-free environment. News media may carry out supervision by public opinion over the situation of the construction of a barrier-free environment.

Article 63 — With respect to acts that violate the provisions of this Law and harm the public interest, the people's procuratorates may put forward procuratorial suggestions or initiate public interest litigation.

Chapter VII — Legal Liability

Article 64 — Where engineering construction, design, construction and supervision units fail to carry out construction, design, construction and supervision in accordance with the provisions of this Law, the housing and urban-rural development, civil affairs, transport and other relevant competent departments shall order them to make corrections within a prescribed time limit; where they fail to make corrections within the time limit, they shall be punished in accordance with the provisions of relevant laws and regulations.

Article 65 — Where the provisions of this Law are violated and one of the following circumstances exists, the housing and urban-rural development, civil affairs, transport and other relevant competent departments shall

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order corrections to be made within a prescribed time limit; where corrections are not made within the time limit, a fine of not less than 10,000 yuan but not more than 30,000 yuan shall be imposed on the unit, and a fine of not less than 100 yuan but not more than 500 yuan shall be imposed on the individual: (1) the responsible person of barrier-free facilities fails to perform maintenance and management duties and cannot ensure the normal functioning and safe use of barrier-free facilities; (2) temporary barrier-free facilities are set up in violation of the relevant provisions; or (3) the use of barrier-free facilities is changed without authorization, or barrier-free facilities are illegally occupied or damaged.

Article 66 — Where the provisions of this Law are violated and the obligation of barrier-free information exchange is not performed in accordance with the law, the cyberspace administration, industry and information technology, telecommunications, radio and television, press and publication and other relevant competent departments shall order corrections to be made within a prescribed time limit; where corrections are not made within the time limit, a circular of criticism shall be issued.

Article 67 — Where telecommunications business operators fail to provide barrier-free information services in accordance with the law, the telecommunications competent department shall order corrections to be made within a prescribed time limit; where corrections are not made within the time limit, a fine of not less than 10,000 yuan but not more than 100,000 yuan shall be imposed.

Article 68 — Where departments and units with public service responsibilities fail to provide barrier-free social services in accordance with the law, the people's government at the corresponding level or the competent department at a higher level shall order corrections to be made within a prescribed time limit; where corrections are not made within the time limit, the directly responsible persons in charge and other directly responsible persons shall be given sanctions in accordance with the law.

Article 69 — Where examination organizers fail to provide convenient services to examinees with disabilities in accordance with the law, the people's government at the corresponding level or the competent department at a higher level shall criticize them and order them to make corrections; where they refuse to make corrections, the directly responsible persons in charge and other directly responsible persons shall be given sanctions in accordance with the law.

Article 70 — Where staff members of the relevant competent departments and relevant organizations for the construction of a barrier-free environment abuse their power, neglect their duties or engage in malpractices for personal gain, they shall be given sanctions in accordance with the law.

Article 71 — Where the provisions of this Law are violated and personal injury or property loss is caused, civil liability shall be borne in accordance with the law; where a crime is constituted, criminal liability shall be investigated in accordance with the law.

Chapter VIII — Supplementary Provisions

Article 72 — This Law shall come into force on September 1, 2023.

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