

New rules for the way homes are built

LIVABLE HOUSING AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The **National Construction Code (NCC)** includes new requirements for all new dwellings and major renovations in Queensland.

The changes are intended to increase the number of houses suitable for people with a mobility disability, as well as increase energy efficiency of new housing.

Master Builders has been telling government that the changes are not ready to implement and that there is more that needs to be done for the requirements to be practical and affordable.

However, the changes will apply from **1 October 2023** (livable housing) and **1 May 2024** (energy efficiency) to new homes and major renovations and to all types of dwellings regardless of size (houses, townhouses, units and granny flats etc.).

The new requirements include:

- **Step-free access path** from the site boundary or connected parking area
An exemption is available where there is no suitable location to provide a compliant path. There are strict rules around when an exemption may apply.
The access (or exemption) must be in place for a dwelling to be occupied. It cannot be excluded from the build contract to be completed later.
- **Landing** at the entrance at least 1200 mm by 1200 mm (unless exempt from the step-free path) or where the step-free path is via the parking area, **Parking space** must be a minimum of 3200 mm wide and 5400 mm long.
- **Entrance door and internal doors** on the entry level and to the bathroom with the accessible shower have:
 - An 820 mm clear opening (a minimum 870 mm wide door)
 - Doorway thresholds are step free (up to 5 mm step or small threshold ramp are allowed)
- **Corridors** are 1000 mm minimum wide on the entry level and along the path of travel to the accessible shower (if on another level)
- One **toilet** with a minimum 900 mm by 1200 mm clear space in front. The vanity cannot be placed in this space and doors cannot open into it. The toilet must be on the entry level or the first level where there are habitable rooms.
- One hobless and step-free **shower** (can have a lip up to 5 mm)
- **Reinforced walls** around the hobless shower, accessible toilet and bath (if provided) for the future installation of grabrails.
- Increase in **energy efficiency** from 6 stars to 7 stars on the Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme (NatHERS) and introduction of a 'whole of house' assessment.
The inclusions that are needed for each project will be determined by an energy assessor and can be things like increasing the 'R-value' of insulation and changing glazing for windows.

While these changes will add to the cost of building homes in Queensland, Master Builders members remain committed to working hard on the best solutions for your home.

If you would like to contact the Queensland Government Minister with responsibility for these changes email: epw@ministerial.qld.gov.au