IBC 4-3 and 2-3

Questions:

- Is an open stairway in an atrium an exit stairway or an exit access stairway? Exit access stairway
- Is an atrium with an open stairway, by virtue of smoke protection, provides the same level of protection as a rated stairway enclosure?
- How should the travel distance be measure on those stairways? To the top of the stairways similar to open parking garages? Down the stairway to the exit below? If down the stairway, should this be permitted for more than one story?

There are three options proposed. Supporting information after the options.

Option 1:

_Travel distance is down the stairway one story and then to an exit (current text for exit access stairways)_

**404.8 Exit access travel distance.** Exit access travel distance for areas open to an atrium shall comply with the requirements of this section.

**404.8.1 Egress not through the atrium.** Where required access to the exits is not through the atrium, exit access travel distance shall comply with Section 1017.

**404.8.2 Exit access travel distance at the level of exit discharge.** Where the path of egress travel is through an atrium space, exit access travel distance at the level of exit discharge shall be determined in accordance with Section 1017.

**404.8.3 Exit access travel distance at other than the level of exit discharge.** Where the path of egress travel is not at the level of exit discharge from the atrium, that portion of the total permitted exit access travel distance that occurs within the atrium shall be not greater than 200 feet (60 960 mm). Travel distance shall be measured in accordance with Sections 1006.3 and 1017.3.

**1006.3 Egress from stories or occupied roofs.** The means of egress system serving any story or occupied roof shall be provided with the number of separate and distinct exits or access to exits based on the aggregate occupant load served in accordance with this section. Where stairways serve more than one story, only the occupant load of each story considered individually shall be used in calculating the required number of exits or access to exits serving that story.

**1006.3.1 Adjacent story.** The path of egress travel to an exit shall not pass through more than one adjacent story.

*Exception:* The path of egress travel to an exit shall be permitted to pass through more than one adjacent story in any of the following:

1. In Group R-1, R-2 or R-3 occupancies, exit access stairways and ramps connecting four stories or less serving and contained within an individual dwelling unit or sleeping unit or live/work unit.
2. Exit access stairways serving and contained within a Group R-3 congregate residence or a Group R-4 facility.
3. Exit access stairways and ramps in open parking garages that serve only the parking garage.
4. Exit access stairways and ramps serving open-air assembly seating complying with the exit access travel distance requirements of Section 1029.7.
5. Exit access stairways and ramps between the balcony, gallery or press box and the main assembly floor in occupancies such as theaters, places of religious worship, auditoriums and sports facilities.
1017.3 Measurement. *Exit access* travel distance shall be measured from the most remote point of each room, area or space along the natural and unobstructed path of horizontal and vertical egress travel to the entrance to an *exit*.

**Exception:** In open parking garages, *exit access* travel distance is permitted to be measured to the closest riser of an *exit access stairway* or the closest slope of an *exit access ramp*.

1017.3.1 Exit access stairways and ramps. Travel distance on *exit access stairways* or *ramps* shall be included in the *exit access* travel distance measurement. The measurement along *stairways* shall be made on a plane parallel and tangent to the *stair* tread *nosings* in the center of the *stair* and *landings*. The measurement along *ramps* shall be made on the walking surface in the center of the *ramp* and *landings*.

1023.2 Construction. Enclosures for *interior exit stairways* and *ramps* shall be constructed as *fire barriers* in accordance with Section 707 or *horizontal assemblies* constructed in accordance with Section 711, or both. *Interior exit stairway* and *ramp* enclosures shall have a *fire-resistance rating* of not less than 2 hours where connecting four stories or more and not less than 1 hour where connecting less than four stories. The number of stories connected by the *interior exit stairways* or *ramps* shall include any *basements*, but not any *mezzanines*. *Interior exit stairways* and *ramps* shall have a *fire-resistance rating* not less than the floor assembly penetrated, but need not exceed 2 hours.

**Exceptions:**
1. *Interior exit stairways* and *ramps* in Group I-3 occupancies in accordance with the provisions of Section 408.3.8.
2. *Interior exit stairways* within an *atrium* enclosed in accordance with Section 404.6.

Option 2

*Travel distance for 200 feet (currently in atrium provisions) which could be multiple floors*

404.9 Exit access travel distance. *Exit access* travel distance for areas open to an *atrium* shall comply with the requirements of this section.

404.9.1 Egress not through the atrium. Where required access to the *exits* is not through the *atrium*, *exit access* travel distance shall comply with Section 1017.

404.9.2 Exit access travel distance at the level of exit discharge. Where the path of egress travel is through an *atrium* space, *exit access* travel distance at the *level of exit discharge* shall be determined in accordance with Section 1017.

404.9.3 Exit access travel distance at other than the level of exit discharge. Where the path of egress travel is not at the *level of exit discharge from the atrium*, that portion of the total permitted *exit access* travel distance that occurs within the *atrium* shall be not greater than 200 feet (60 960 mm). *Travel distance shall be measured in accordance with Sections 1006.3 and 1017.3."

1006.3 Egress from stories or occupied roofs. The *means of egress* system serving any *story* or *occupied roof* shall be provided with the number of separate and distinct *exits* or access to *exits* based on the aggregate *occupant load* served in accordance with this section. Where stairways serve more than one story, only the occupant load of each story considered individually shall be used in calculating the required number of exits or access to *exits* serving that story.

1006.3.1 Adjacent story. The path of egress travel to an exit shall not pass through more than one adjacent story.

**Exception:** The path of egress travel to an exit shall be permitted to pass through more than one adjacent story in any of the following:

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1006.3 Egress from stories or occupied roofs. The *means of egress* system serving any *story* or *occupied roof* shall be provided with the number of separate and distinct *exits* or access to *exits* based on the aggregate *occupant load* served in accordance with this section. Where stairways serve more than one story, only the occupant load of each story considered individually shall be used in calculating the required number of exits or access to *exits* serving that story.

1006.3.1 Adjacent story. The path of egress travel to an exit shall not pass through more than one adjacent story.

**Exception:** The path of egress travel to an exit shall be permitted to pass through more than one adjacent story in any of the following:
1. In Group R-1, R-2 or R-3 occupancies, exit access stairways and ramps connecting four stories or less serving and contained within an individual dwelling unit or sleeping unit or live/work unit.
2. Exit access stairways serving and contained within a Group R-3 congregate residence or a Group R-4 facility.
3. Exit access stairways and ramps within an atrium complying with the provisions of Section 404.
4. Exit access stairways and ramps in open parking garages that serve only the parking garage.
5. Exit access stairways and ramps serving open-air assembly seating complying with the exit access travel distance requirements of Section 1029.7.
6. Exit access stairways and ramps between the balcony, gallery or press box and the main assembly floor in occupancies such as theaters, places of religious worship, auditoriums and sports facilities.

1017.3 Measurement. Exit access travel distance shall be measured from the most remote point of each room, area or space along the natural and unobstructed path of horizontal and vertical egress travel to the entrance to an exit.
   Exception: In open parking garages, exit access travel distance is permitted to be measured to the closest riser of an exit access stairway or the closest slope of an exit access ramp.

1017.3.1 Exit access stairways and ramps. Travel distance on exit access stairways or ramps shall be included in the exit access travel distance measurement. The measurement along stairways shall be made on a plane parallel and tangent to the stair tread nosings in the center of the stair and landings. The measurement along ramps shall be made on the walking surface in the center of the ramp and landings.

1023.2 Construction. Enclosures for interior exit stairways and ramps shall be constructed as fire barriers in accordance with Section 707 or horizontal assemblies constructed in accordance with Section 711, or both. Interior exit stairway and ramp enclosures shall have a fire-resistance rating of not less than 2 hours where connecting four stories or more and not less than 1 hour where connecting less than four stories. The number of stories connected by the interior exit stairways or ramps shall include any basements, but not any mezzanines. Interior exit stairways and ramps shall have a fire-resistance rating not less than the floor assembly penetrated, but need not exceed 2 hours.
   Exceptions:
   1. Interior exit stairways and ramps in Group I-3 occupancies in accordance with the provisions of Section 408.3.8.
   2. Interior exit stairways within an atrium enclosed in accordance with Section 404.6.

Option 3
Travel distance to the top of the stairways. This would be consistent with the allowance for open parking garages and the intent of what is in Section 1023.2 Exp. 2.

404.10 Exit access travel distance. Exit access travel distance for areas open to an atrium shall comply with the requirements of this section.

404.10.1 Egress not through the atrium. Where required access to the exits is not through the atrium, exit access travel distance shall comply with Section 1017.

404.10.2 Exit access travel distance at the level of exit discharge. Where the path of egress travel is through an atrium space, exit access travel distance at the level of exit discharge shall be determined in accordance with Section 1017.

404.10.3 Exit access travel distance at other than the level of exit discharge. Where the path of egress travel is not at the level of exit discharge from the atrium, that portion of the total permitted exit access travel distance that occurs within the atrium shall be not greater than 200 feet (60 960 mm).
Travel distance shall be measured in accordance with Sections 1006.3 and 1017.3.

1006.3 Egress from stories or occupied roofs. The means of egress system serving any story or occupied roof shall be provided with the number of separate and distinct exits or access to exits based on the aggregate occupant load served in accordance with this section. Where stairways serve more than one story, only the occupant load of each story considered individually shall be used in calculating the required number of exits or access to exits serving that story.

1006.3.1 Adjacent story. The path of egress travel to an exit shall not pass through more than one adjacent story.
   Exception: The path of egress travel to an exit shall be permitted to pass through more than one adjacent story in any of the following:
   1. In Group R-1, R-2 or R-3 occupancies, exit access stairways and ramps connecting four stories or less serving and contained within an individual dwelling unit or sleeping unit or live/work unit.
   2. Exit access stairways serving and contained within a Group R-3 congregate residence or a Group R-4 facility.
   3. Exit access stairways and ramps within an atrium complying with the provisions of Section 404.
   4. Exit access stairways and ramps in open parking garages that serve only the parking garage.
   5. Exit access stairways and ramps serving open-air assembly seating complying with the exit travel distance requirements of Section 1029.7.
   6. Exit access stairways and ramps between the balcony, gallery or press box and the main assembly floor in occupancies such as theaters, places of religious worship, auditoriums and sports facilities.

1017.3 Measurement. Exit access travel distance shall be measured from the most remote point of each room, area or space along the natural and unobstructed path of horizontal and vertical egress travel to the entrance to an exit.
   Exceptions:
   1. Within atriums, exit access travel distance is permitted to be measured to the closest riser of an exit access stairway or the closest slope of an exit access ramp.
   2. In open parking garages, exit access travel distance is permitted to be measured to the closest riser of an exit access stairway or the closest slope of an exit access ramp.

1017.3.1 Exit access stairways and ramps. Travel distance on exit access stairways or ramps shall be included in the exit access travel distance measurement. The measurement along stairways shall be made on a plane parallel and tangent to the stair tread nosings in the center of the stair and landings. The measurement along ramps shall be made on the walking surface in the center of the ramp and landings.

1023.2 Construction. Enclosures for interior exit stairways and ramps shall be constructed as fire barriers in accordance with Section 707 or horizontal assemblies constructed in accordance with Section 711, or both. Interior exit stairway and ramp enclosures shall have a fire-resistance rating of not less than 2 hours where connecting four stories or more and not less than 1 hour where connecting less than four stories. The number of stories connected by the interior exit stairways or ramps shall include any basements, but not any mezzanines. Interior exit stairways and ramps shall have a fireresistance rating not less than the floor assembly penetrated, but need not exceed 2 hours.
   Exceptions:
   1. Interior exit stairways and ramps in Group I-3 occupancies in accordance with the provisions of Section 408.3.8.
   2. Interior exit stairways within an atrium enclosed in accordance with Section 404.6.

Notes:
Issue with current text: Allowance for open stairway in a smoke protected atrium in Section 1023.2 to be considered an ‘exit stairway’ is in conflict with the definition of ‘atrium’ and with the general
concept of all open stairways being considered ‘exit access stairways’. Section 1019.3 says open stairways in atriums is an ‘exit access stairway’, so the same stairway is called two different things in the code. Since this concept for open stairway being always called ‘exit access stairway’ is in open parking garages, in outdoor assembly seating and within dwelling unit, these proposals on based on that the work from CTC for open stairways should stay consistent.

In conclusion, the open stairway in the atrium is an open exit access stairway.

There are three options offered for how to measure travel distance. Travel distance portions are highlighted below. See below the 2018 related text for proposals.

Option 1 – travel distance is down the stairway one story and then to an exit (current text for exit access stairways)

Option 2 – travel distance for 200 feet (currently in atrium provisions) which could be multiple floors

Option 3 – travel distance to the top of the stairways. This would be consistent with the allowance for open parking garages and the intent of what is in Section 1023.2 Exp. 2.

2018 IBC draft text related to open stairways in atriums.

[BG] ATRIUM. An opening connecting two or more stories other than enclosed stairways, elevators, hoistways, escalators, plumbing, electrical, air-conditioning or other equipment, which is closed at the top and not defined as a mall. Stories, as used in this definition, do not include balconies within assembly groups or mezzanines that comply with Section 505.

[BE] INTERIOR EXIT STAIRWAY. An exit component that serves to meet one or more means of egress design requirements, such as required number of exits or exit access travel distance, and provides for a protected path of egress travel to the exit discharge or public way.

[BE] EXIT ACCESS STAIRWAY. A stairway with the exit access portion of the means of egress system.

SECTION 404 ATRIUMS

404.1 General. In other than Group H occupancies, and where permitted by Section 712.1.7, the provisions of Sections 404.1 through 404.10 shall apply to buildings or structures containing vertical openings defined as "Atriums."

404.2 Smoke control. A smoke control system shall be installed in accordance with Section 909. Exception: In other than Group I-2, and Group I-1, Condition 2, smoke control is not required for atriums that connect only two stories.

404.5 Enclosure of atriums. Atrium spaces shall be separated from adjacent spaces by a 1-hour fire barrier constructed in accordance with Section 707 or a horizontal assembly constructed in accordance with Section 711, or both.

Exceptions:

1. A fire barrier is not required where a glass wall forming a smoke partition is provided. The glass wall shall comply with all of the following:
   i. Automatic sprinklers are provided along both sides of the separation wall and doors, or on the room side only if there is not a walkway on the atrium side. The sprinklers shall be located between 4 inches and 12 inches (102 mm and 305 mm) away from the glass and at intervals along the glass not greater than 6 feet (1829 mm). The sprinkler system shall be designed so that the entire surface of the glass is wet upon
activation of the sprinkler system without obstruction;
1.2. The glass wall shall be installed in a gasketed frame in a manner that the framing system deflects without breaking (loading) the glass before the sprinkler system operates; and
1.3. Where glass doors are provided in the glass wall, they shall be either self-closing or automatic-closing.

2. A fire barrier is not required where a glass-block wall assembly complying with Section 2110 and having a 3/4-hour fire protection rating is provided.
3. A fire barrier is not required between the atrium and the adjoining spaces of up to three floors of the atrium provided such spaces are accounted for in the design of the smoke control system.
4. A fire barrier is not required between the atrium and the adjoining spaces where the atrium is not required to be provided with a smoke control system.

404.11 Exit access travel distance. Exit access travel distance for areas open to an atrium shall comply with the requirements of this section.

404.11.1 Egress not through the atrium. Where required access to the exits is not through the atrium, exit access travel distance shall comply with Section 1017.

404.11.2 Exit access travel distance at the level of exit discharge. Where the path of egress travel is through an atrium space, exit access travel distance at the level of exit discharge shall be determined in accordance with Section 1017.

404.11.3 Exit access travel distance at other than the level of exit discharge. Where the path of egress travel is not at the level of exit discharge from the atrium, that portion of the total permitted exit access travel distance that occurs within the atrium shall be not greater than 200 feet (60 960 mm).

404.12 Interior exit stairways. A maximum of 50 percent of interior exit stairways are permitted to egress through an atrium on the level of exit discharge in accordance with Section 1028.

SECTION 1006
NUMBER OF EXITS AND EXIT ACCESS DOORWAYS

1006.1 General. The number of exits or exit access doorways required within the means of egress system shall comply with the provisions of Section 1006.2 for spaces, including mezzanines, and Section 1006.3 for stories or occupied roofs.

(E16-15 AM, E25-15 AM, E27-15 AS) 1006.3 Egress from stories or occupied roofs. The means of egress system serving any story or occupied roof shall be provided with the number of separate and distinct exits or access to exits based on the aggregate occupant load served in accordance with this section. Where stairways serve more than one story, only the occupant load of each story considered individually shall be used in calculating the required number of exits or access to exits serving that story.

(E27-15 AS) 1006.3.1 Adjacent story. The path of egress travel to an exit shall not pass through more than one adjacent story.

Exception: The path of egress travel to an exit shall be permitted to pass through more than one adjacent story in any of the following:
1. In Group R-1, R-2 or R-3 occupancies, exit access stairways and ramps connecting four stories or less serving and contained within an individual dwelling unit or sleeping unit or live/work unit.
2. Exit access stairways serving and contained within a Group R-3 congregate residence or a
   Group R-4 facility.
3. Exit access stairways and ramps in open parking garages that serve only the parking garage.
4. Exit access stairways and ramps serving open-air assembly seating complying with the exit
   access travel distance requirements of Section 1029.7.
5. Exit access stairways and ramps between the balcony, gallery or press box and the main
   assembly floor in occupancies such as theaters, places of religious worship, auditoriums and
   sports facilities.

SECTION 1017
EXIT ACCESS TRAVEL DISTANCE

1017.1 General. Travel distance within the exit access portion of the means of egress system shall be in
accordance with this section.

1017.2 Limitations. Exit access travel distance shall not exceed the values given in Table 1017.2.

(E23-15 AS, G133-15 AM) TABLE 1017.2
EXIT ACCESS TRAVEL DISTANCE*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OCCUPANCY</th>
<th>WITHOUT SPRINKLER SYSTEM (feet)</th>
<th>WITH SPRINKLER SYSTEM (feet)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A, E, F-1, M, R, S-1</td>
<td>200(^{e})</td>
<td>250(^{b})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I-1</td>
<td>Not Permitted</td>
<td>250(^{b})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>300(^{c})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F-2, S-2, U</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>400(^{c})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-1</td>
<td>Not Permitted</td>
<td>75(^{d})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-2</td>
<td>Not Permitted</td>
<td>100(^{d})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-3</td>
<td>Not Permitted</td>
<td>150(^{d})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-4</td>
<td>Not Permitted</td>
<td>175(^{d})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-5</td>
<td>Not Permitted</td>
<td>200(^{c})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I-2, I-3, I-4</td>
<td>Not Permitted</td>
<td>200(^{c})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I-4</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>200(^{c})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For SI: 1 foot = 304.8 mm.
a. See the following sections for modifications to exit access travel distance requirements:
   Section 402.8: For the distance limitation in malls.
   Section 404.8: For the distance limitation through an atrium space.
   Section 407.4: For the distance limitation in Group I-2.
   Sections 408.6.1 and 408.8.1: For the distance limitations in Group I-3.
   Section 411.3: For the distance limitation in special amusement buildings.
   Section 412.6: For the distance limitations in aircraft manufacturing facilities.
   Section 1006.2.2.2: For the distance limitation in refrigeration machinery rooms.
   Section 1006.2.2.3: For the distance limitation in refrigerated rooms and spaces.
   Section 1006.3.3: For buildings with one exit.
   Section 1017.2.2: For increased distance limitation in Groups F-1 and S-1.
Section 1029.7: For increased limitation in assembly seating.
Section 3103.4: For temporary structures.
Section 3104.9: For pedestrian walkways.

b. Buildings equipped throughout with an automatic sprinkler system in accordance with Section 903.3.1.1 or 903.3.1.2. See Section 903 for occupancies where automatic sprinkler systems are permitted in accordance with Section 903.3.1.2.

c. Buildings equipped throughout with an automatic sprinkler system in accordance with Section 903.3.1.1.

d. Group H occupancies equipped throughout with an automatic sprinkler system in accordance with Section 903.2.5.1.

e. Group R-3 and R-4 buildings equipped throughout with an automatic sprinkler system in accordance with Section 903.3.1.3. See Section 903.2.8 for occupancies where automatic sprinkler systems are permitted in accordance with Section 903.3.1.3.

1017.2.1 Exterior egress balcony increase. Exit access travel distances specified in Table 1017.2 shall be increased up to an additional 100 feet (30 480 mm) provided the last portion of the exit access leading to the exit occurs on an exterior egress balcony constructed in accordance with Section 1021. The length of such balcony shall be not less than the amount of the increase taken.

1017.2.2 Groups F-1 and S-1 increase. The maximum exit access travel distance shall be 400 feet (122 m) in Group F-1 or S-1 occupancies where all of the following conditions are met:
1. The portion of the building classified as Group F-1 or S-1 is limited to one story in height.
2. The minimum height from the finished floor to the bottom of the ceiling or roof slab or deck is 24 feet (7315 mm).
3. The building is equipped throughout with an automatic sprinkler system in accordance with Section 903.3.1.1.

(E100-15 AS) 1017.3 Measurement. Exit access travel distance shall be measured from the most remote point of each room, area or space along the natural and unobstructed path of horizontal and vertical egress travel to the entrance to an exit.

Exception: In open parking garages, exit access travel distance is permitted to be measured to the closest riser of an exit access stairway or the closest slope of an exit access ramp.

1017.3.1 Exit access stairways and ramps. Travel distance on exit access stairways or ramps shall be included in the exit access travel distance measurement. The measurement along stairways shall be made on a plane parallel and tangent to the stair tread nosings in the center of the stair and landings. The measurement along ramps shall be made on the walking surface in the center of the ramp and landings.

SECTION 1019
EXIT ACCESS STAIRWAYS AND RAMPS

1019.1 General. Exit access stairways and ramps serving as an exit access component in a means of egress system shall comply with the requirements of this section. The number of stories connected by exit access stairways and ramps shall include basements, but not mezzanines.

1019.2 All occupancies. Exit access stairways and ramps that serve floor levels within a single story are not required to be enclosed.

(E104-15 AS, E132-15 AS) 1019.3 Occupancies other than Groups I-2 and I-3. In other than Group I-2 and I-3 occupancies, floor openings containing exit access stairways or ramps that do not comply with one of the conditions listed in this section shall be enclosed with a shaft enclosure constructed in accordance with Section 713.
1. Exit access stairways and ramps that serve or atmospherically communicate between only two stories. Such interconnected stories shall not be open to other stories.
2. In Group R-1, R-2 or R-3 occupancies, exit access stairways and ramps connecting four stories or less serving and contained within an individual dwelling unit or sleeping unit or live/work unit.

3. Exit access stairways serving and contained within a Group R-3 congregate residence or a Group R-4 facility are not required to be enclosed.

4. Exit access stairways and ramps in buildings equipped throughout with an automatic sprinkler system in accordance with Section 903.3.1.1, where the area of the vertical opening between stories does not exceed twice the horizontal projected area of the stairway or ramp and the opening is protected by a draft curtain and closely spaced sprinklers in accordance with NFPA 13. In other than Group B and M occupancies, this provision is limited to openings that do not connect more than four stories.

5. Exit access stairways and ramps within an atrium complying with the provisions of Section 404.

6. Exit access stairways and ramps in open parking garages that serve only the parking garage.

7. Exit access stairways and ramps serving smoke-protected or open-air assembly seating complying with the exit access travel distance requirements of Section 1029.7.

8. Exit access stairways and ramps serving between the balcony, gallery or press box and the main assembly floor in occupancies such as theaters, places of religious worship, auditoriums and sports facilities.

1019.4 Group I-2 and I-3 occupancies. In Group I-2 and I-3 occupancies, floor openings between stories containing exit access stairways or ramps are required to be enclosed with a shaft enclosure constructed in accordance with Section 713.

**Exception:** In Group I-3 occupancies, exit access stairways or ramps constructed in accordance with Section 408 are not required to be enclosed.

**SECTION 1023**

**INTERIOR EXIT STAIRWAYS AND RAMPS**

1023.1 General. Interior exit stairways and ramps serving as an exit component in a means of egress system shall comply with the requirements of this section. Interior exit stairways and ramps shall be enclosed and lead directly to the exterior of the building or shall be extended to the exterior of the building with an exit passageway conforming to the requirements of Section 1024, except as permitted in Section 1028.1. An interior exit stairway or ramp shall not be used for any purpose other than as a means of egress and a circulation path.

1023.2 Construction. Enclosures for interior exit stairways and ramps shall be constructed as fire barriers in accordance with Section 707 or horizontal assemblies constructed in accordance with Section 711, or both. Interior exit stairway and ramp enclosures shall have a fire-resistance rating of not less than 2 hours where connecting four stories or more and not less than 1 hour where connecting less than four stories. The number of stories connected by the interior exit stairways or ramps shall include any basements, but not any mezzanines. Interior exit stairways and ramps shall have a fire resistance rating not less than the floor assembly penetrated, but need not exceed 2 hours.

**Exceptions:**

1. Interior exit stairways and ramps in Group I-3 occupancies in accordance with the provisions of Section 408.3.8.

2. Interior exit stairways within an atrium enclosed in accordance with Section 404.6.