

NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
1973 SESSION

CHAPTER 718  
HOUSE BILL 1296

AN ACT TO PRESCRIBE STANDARDS FOR CURB RAMPS OR CURB CUTS FOR  
HANDICAPPED PERSONS.

Whereas, more than 500,000 North Carolinians are dependent on crutches, braces, or canes; confined to wheelchairs; crippled by arthritis; suffering from heart or lung diseases; enfeebled by old age; limited in mobility by blindness; and otherwise limited in mobility by physical disability; and

Whereas, thousands of North Carolinians become "temporarily disabled" every year due to broken legs, sprained ankles, pregnancy (latter stages); and

Whereas, due to advances in medicine and rehabilitation, the number of disabled and aged people in the population is steadily increasing, and fewer of them need be housebound; and

Whereas, many elderly citizens who are limited by disabilities late in life want to enjoy the fullness of community life which their efforts helped to build; and

Whereas, access to and use of sidewalks, walkways, streets, and highways is necessary for the physically disabled to fulfill their rights and responsibilities as citizens, to become employed and become taxpayers, and to exercise their constitutional right to "life, liberty, and property"; and

Whereas, the Final Report of the Governor's Study Committee on Architectural Barriers included recommendations which, if implemented, would enable the physically handicapped to more fully utilize sidewalks and walkways, and highways and streets; Now, therefore,

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**Section 1.** Curbs constructed on each side of any street or road, where both curbs and sidewalks are provided and at other major points of pedestrian flow, shall meet the following minimum requirements:

- (1) No less than two (2) curb ramps or curb cuts shall be provided per lineal block, located at intersections.
- (2) In no case, shall the width of a curb ramp or curb cut be less than 40 inches.
- (3) The maximum gradient of such curb ramps or curb cuts shall be 8.33% (12 inches slope for every 1 inch rise) in relationship to the grade of the street or road.
- (4) One (1) curb ramp or curb cut may be provided under special conditions between each radius point of a street turn-out of an intersection, if adequate provisions are made to prevent vehicular traffic from encroaching on the ramp.

**Sec. 2.** Minimum requirements for curb ramps or curb cuts under Section 1 shall be met (1) in the initial construction of such curbs, and (2) whenever such curbs are reconstructed, including, but not limited to, reconstruction for maintenance procedures and traffic operations, repair, or correction of utilities.

**Sec. 3.** The Department of Transportation, Division of Highways, Highway Design Section, is authorized and directed to develop guidelines to implement this act in consultation with the Governor's Study Committee on Architectural Barriers (or the Committee on Barrier-Free Design of the Governor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped if the Governor's Study Committee on Architectural Barriers ceases to exist). All curb ramps or curb cuts constructed or reconstructed in North Carolina shall conform to the guidelines of the Highway Design Section.

**Sec. 4.** The Department of Transportation, Division of Highways, Highway Design Section, is authorized and directed to provide free copies of this act together with implementary guidelines and standards, to municipal and county governments and public utilities operating within the State.

**Sec. 5.** This act shall become effective September 1, 1973.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified, this the 23rd day of May, 1973.