

Key Changes in the 2018 International Building Code for Georgia

1. **503.1, 706.1 Fire wall separation of buildings.** Previously, the code required all buildings to be considered independent and separate from other portions of the structure when a fire wall was present. This often required the buildings on either side of the fire wall to be provided with independent means of egress, separate utilities, individual addresses, and self-contained life safety systems. This change now clarifies that the fire wall is only provided to ensure that the portions of the building separated by the fire wall is to solely limit the height and area of the building into individual compartments that do not exceed the limitations established by the code.
2. **Table 504.3 Allowable Building Height in Feet Above Grade Plane, Table 504.4 Allowable Number of Stories Above Grade Plane and Table 506.2 Allowable area Factor in Square Feet.** The requirements for allowable building height, story and area are now separated into three different tables, but the technical application is unchanged. The three tables also incorporate sprinkler increases for the height and areas which were calculated separately in earlier versions of the code.
3. **Table 504.4 Allowable Number of Stories Above Grade Plane.** Revised for the number of stories allowed for Occupancy Classification "I-1 Condition 2". A new footnote "i" was also added that reads "i. For all I-1 Condition 2, the building shall be protected throughout with an approved automatic sprinkler system, installed in accordance with NFPA 13 as adopted by the Rules and Regulations of the Safety Fire Commissioner. No increase in story height shall be permitted." (GA amendment)
4. **510.2 Horizontal building separation allowance.** Vertical Offset in Pedestal Buildings. Change revises the option for pedestal buildings allowing a vertical off-sets in pedestal buildings if the fire-resistance rating of the vertical offset is not less than 3 hours.
5. **713.14.1 Designated floor lobbies for elevator return.** Revised to clarify this amendment applies only when elevator lobbies are required on designated floors for elevator return. (GA amendment)
6. **[F] 903.2.8 Group R.** Revised to add a new Exception: Group R-1 and R-2 occupancies which meet the exceptions allowed by the 'Rules and Regulations of the Safety Fire Commissioner Chapter 120-3-3 Rules and Regulations for the State Minimum Fire Safety Standards' are exempt from this requirement. (GA amendment)
7. **[F] 903.2.8.1 Group R-3.** An automatic sprinkler system installed in accordance with Section 903.3.1.3 (NFPA13D) was changed to read with 903.3.1.2 (NFPA 13R) shall be permitted in Group R-3 occupancies. (GA amendment)
8. **[F] 903.2.8.2 Group R-4, Condition 1.** An automatic sprinkler system installed in accordance with Section 903.3.1.3 (NFPA 13 D) was changed to with 903.3.1.2 (NFPA 13R) shall be permitted in Group R-4, Condition 1 occupancies. (GA amendment)
9. **[F] 903.2.8.4 Care facilities.** An automatic sprinkler system installed in accordance with Section 903.3.1.3 (NFPA 13D) was changed to with 903.3.1.2 (NFPA 13R) shall be permitted in care facilities with five or fewer individuals in a single-family dwelling. (GA amendment)
10. **[F] 903.3.1.3 NFPA 13D sprinkler systems.** Automatic sprinkler systems installed in one- and two-family dwellings; Group R-3; Group R 4, Condition 1; and townhouses separated by 2 hour firewalls shall be permitted to be installed throughout in accordance with NFPA 13D. (GA amendment)

Key Changes in the 2018 International Building Code for Georgia

11. **Table 1004.5 Maximum Floor Area Allowances Per Occupant.** The occupant load factor for business uses has been revised from 100 to 150 square feet per occupant. Also added new category for “concentrated business use areas” added referring to Sec. 1004.8.
12. **1607.15.2 Fire walls.** In order to meet the structural stability of Section 706.2 where the structure on either side of the wall has collapsed, fire walls and their supports shall be designed to withstand a minimum allowable horizontal stress of 5 pounds per square foot for stability (per NFPA 221).
13. **1704.2 Special inspections and tests.** Revised to state these inspections are in addition to the inspections by the building official identified in Section 110. The first exception was also revised to read: Special inspections are not required for construction of a minor nature that does not require the practice of professional engineering or architecture, as defined by Georgia statutes and regulations governing the professional registration and certification of engineers or architects or as warranted by conditions in the jurisdiction as approved by the building official. (GA Amendment)
14. **Table 1704.2 Minimum Special Inspector Qualifications.** Revised to require concrete strength testing must be performed by an American Concrete Institute (ACI) Strength Testing Technician. (GA amendment)
15. **Table 1810.3.2.6 Allowable Stresses for Materials Used in Deep Foundation Elements.** Revised under Item 4. Other conditions, to read:
 - For load combinations not including wind or seismic loads - $0.5 f_y \leq 24,000$ 30,000 psi
 - For load combinations including wind or seismic loads - $0.5 f_y \leq 40,000$ psi (GA amendment)
16. **3005.4 Machine rooms, control rooms, machinery spaces and control spaces.** These spaces must be enclosed with fire barriers or horizontal assemblies with a fire-resistance-rating not less than 2 hours. Exception: When sprinklers and a shunt trip breaker are installed. (GA amendment)
17. **3408.2.1 Assisted living communities.** Existing buildings or portions of buildings proposed as a change of occupancy to Assisted Living Communities, licensed by the State, housing twenty-five or more persons, shall be allowed to meet the Georgia State Fire Marshal’s Office Life Safety Code requirements for primary equivalent compliance to the International Building Code Chapters 3, 4, 8, 9, and 10. (GA amendment)
18. **Chapter 34 Reserved.** Changed to read ‘Existing Buildings’ and all the provisions from Chapter 34 ‘Existing Buildings’ of the 2012 IBC were carried forward to the 2018 IBC. (GA amendment)
19. **3401.7 Existing systems conformance.** The 50% rule for the extent to which the existing systems are made to conform to the code requirements for new construction was clarified to state these requirements specifically apply to mechanical, electrical, plumbing and life safety systems. (GA amendment)
20. **Appendix O ‘Disaster Resilient Construction.** Adopted by the Department as optional. This document can be downloaded at <https://dca.ga.gov/local-government-assistance/construction-codes-industrialized-buildings/construction-codes>. (GA amendment)