
Wisconsin Legislative Council

ACT MEMO



Prepared by: Ethan Lauer, Staff Attorney

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2019 Wisconsin Act 91 [2019 Assembly Bill 445]

Stairway Chair Lifts in Certain Churches

Under current law, the Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) promulgates administrative rules to implement the state's commercial building code. These rules include requirements relating to the minimum width of a stairway in a commercial building, including a church.

2019 Wisconsin Act 91 provides that these rules may not prevent the owner of a church that was constructed before January 1, 1919, from installing or operating a stairway chair lift in the church if: (1) each floor level connected by the stairway in which the stairway chair lift is installed has at least one other stairway or other type of fire escape that affords safe egress from the floor for all occupants; and (2) the installation and operation of the stairway chair lift complies with all requirements relating to elevators, escalators, and other conveyances, other than requirements relating to the minimum width of a stairway.

Act 91 also allows the chief of the relevant city, village, or town fire department, or DSPS if there is no city, village, or town fire department, to require the owner of the church to comply with other safety measures if the stairway chair lift would render any part of the church not safe.

Effective date: February 7, 2020

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