

Construction Industry Communication #38

From: Amit Ghosh, Chief Building Official Columbus
Re: Thumb-Turn and Key Lock Devices in Existing Buildings
Date: December 29, 2011

Requirements: Ohio Building Code **Section 1010.2.2 - Hardware**, states that door handles, pulls, latches, locks and other operating devices on main entrance door(s) shall not require tight grasping, tight pinching or twisting of the wrist to operate.

Background: Existing buildings have been previously approved with thumb turn or key operated locking devices on the main entrance door(s) to existing tenant spaces. The City of Columbus has permitted these devices to remain on doors in Use Groups A having an occupant load of 300 or less and in Use Groups B, F, M and S and in places of religious worship under the following conditions:

In accordance with **Section 1010.2.4 – Locks and latches**, of the Ohio Building Code,

1. The locking device is readily distinguishable as locked.
2. A readily visible durable sign is posted on the egress side on or adjacent to the door stating “This Door To Remain Unlocked When This Space is Occupied”. The sign shall be in letters 1 inch in height on a contrasting background.

Memorandum: When existing buildings and or tenant spaces are being remodeled/alterd and the existing door hardware is equipped with a thumb turn or key operated latching device, the door hardware shall be replaced with hardware to comply with **Section(s) 1010.2.2 or 1010.2.4** of the Ohio Building Code as required in **Section 306.7.1.1, item 2.2.1** of the Ohio Existing Building Code - **Accessible entrance**

When a change of occupancy within the same use group or change of use occurs in buildings or spaces in Use Group A and E, the existing door hardware in a means of egress shall also be made to comply with OBC **Section 1010.2.9 – Panic and fire exit hardware**.

Note: For work approved under previous code cycles, the referenced section numbers may have changed but the language is identical.

Revised 4/3/2026