



INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN

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Chief Building Official

PLUMBING FIXTURE CLEARANCE REQUIREMENTS

Reference: 2019 California Plumbing Code (CPC)

Purpose: The purpose of this informational bulletin is to provide general information on the clearance requirements of common bathroom plumbing fixtures and provide clarification on obstructions. This information bulletin does not cover accessibility requirements that may be applicable to your project. Refer to Chapters 11A and 11B of the 2019 California Building Code for additional requirements.

The California Plumbing Code (CPC) provides specific requirements for clearances around water closets, urinals, bidets, and lavatories. The clearance requirements prescribed in the CPC are essential for the proper use of the plumbing fixture. Section 402.5 of the CPC requires the following clearance thresholds, and Figure A below provides an illustration of the minimum clearance thresholds:

Water Closets & Bidets:

- 15" or more – Center of fixture to sidewall or obstruction
- 30" or more – Center to center to similar fixture
- 24" or more – Clear space in front of fixture

Lavatories:

- 24" or more – Clear space in front of fixture

Urinals:

- 12" or more – Center of fixture to sidewall or partition
- 24" or more – Center to center to another urinal

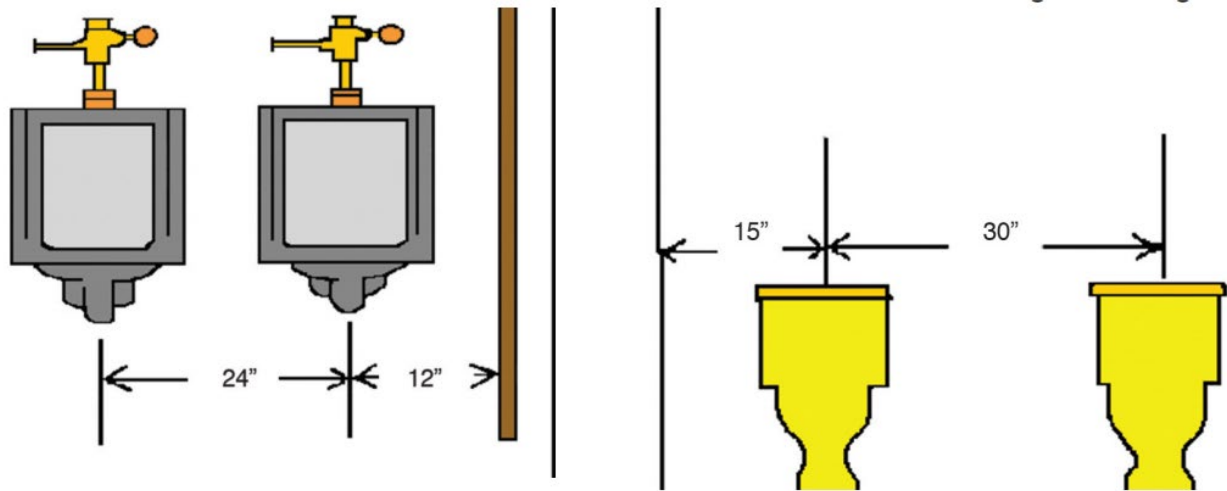


FIGURE A
SETTING MEASUREMENTS

(Source: 2015 Uniform Plumbing Code Illustrated Training Manual)

Objects that protrude beyond the clearance threshold are considered an obstruction. Obstructions, such as a wall, cabinets or other plumbing fixtures, interfere with the user's ability to effectively utilize the fixture and special consideration must be given during the design and installation process.

It is important to note that the CPC specifically exempts paper dispensers and accessibility grab bars from being considered an obstruction and therefore are allowed to protrude into the clearance thresholds indicated above. In discussion with the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials (IAPMO), objects protruding minimally beyond the clearance threshold, which do not impede or hinder the use of the fixture may be acceptable on a case by case basis, such as a lavatory countertop extending up to a maximum of 1 inch into the clearance threshold of an adjacent fixture.