



**HOUSING ALLIANCE FOR  
PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

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**Alliance on Aging**

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The Housing Alliance for People With Disabilities (HAPD) is a coalition of service providers for people with disabilities that came together in 2004 to develop a better understanding of the housing needs of persons with disabilities and age-related impairments and to develop housing opportunities specifically targeted for extremely-low to moderate-income people with disabilities of all ages and ethnicities. HAPD consists of key personnel from: Alliance on Aging, Central Coast Center for Independent Living (CCCIL), Community Housing Improvement Systems and Planning Association (CHISPA), and the Housing Authority of the County of Monterey.

HAPD is sharing our final Universal Design (UD) Best Practices document in order to educate stakeholders about UD concepts and encourage incorporating these design features in Monterey County. Universal Design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. For example, stairs at entrances are not accessible to everyone. If a no-step entry is used, a building becomes accessible to more people—a small child, a man carrying a large box, an elderly woman, a person using a walker or wheelchair.

HAPD's Universal Design Best Practices is useful for housing developers, builders, prospective buyers and anyone who is interested in housing that is accessible for all. We would love to hear how you were able to utilize this information. Please contact Shelly Smith, Project Coordinator at [zacht2@juno.com](mailto:zacht2@juno.com) with your feedback.



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## Universal Design Best Practices

Universal Design concepts simplify life by making homes and associated living environments more useable by more people including children, aging populations and persons with disabilities. These design features accommodate the aging of family members by incorporating universal design principles and elements in the materials, technology and products in the construction of a new home.

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## General

- Accessible path of travel to dwelling
- Maximum 1/2" vertical change in level at thresholds
- 32" wide interior doors
- Strike edge clearance at doors: 18" interior; 24" exterior doors
- Lever door hardware
- Entry door sidelight or high/low peep hole viewer
- Doorbell at 48" maximum height in accessible location (36")
- Visual fire alarms and visual doorbells
- Switches, outlets and thermostats at 15" to 48" above the floor
- Rocker light switches
- Closet rods and shelves adjustable from 3' to 5'6" high
- Residential elevator or lift

## Bathrooms

- Grab bar backing in walls
- Grab bars
- 5' diameter turning circle
- 36" x 36" or 30" x 48 clear space
- Lavatory with lever faucet controls
- Open-front lavatory with knee space and protection panel
- Contrasting color edge border at countertops
- Anti-scald devices on all plumbing fixtures
- 17" to 19" high water closet seat
- Roll-in shower in lieu of standard tub or shower
- Shower stall with 4" lip in lieu of standard tub
- Hand-held adjustable shower head

## Kitchen

- 30" x 48" clear space at appliances or 60" diameter clear space for U-shaped kitchen
- Removable base cabinets at sink
- Countertop height repositioning to 28" high
- Lever controls at kitchen sink faucet
- Base cabinets with pull-out shelves
- Base cabinets with Lazy Susans
- Contrasting color edge border at countertops
- Microwave oven at countertop height
- Under cabinet task lighting

Source:  
City of Irvine, CA

[www.cityofirvine.org](http://www.cityofirvine.org)