



Tampa Fire Marshals Office Sidewalk Café Standards

Technical Standard 2007-1

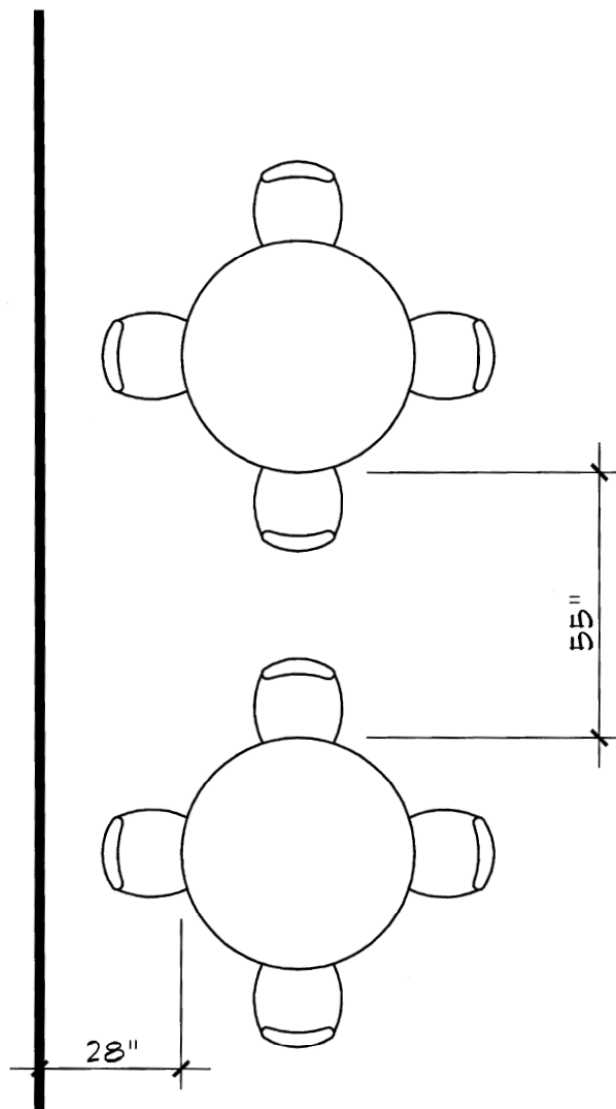
The City of Tampa enacted an ordinance allowing the creation of sidewalk cafes on City right of way. The Tampa Fire Marshals Office was one of the offices that reviewed plans for proposed sidewalk cafes to determine if the cafes posed any risk to life safety of the patrons of the sidewalk cafes or their associated restaurants or clubs.

During the first year, this office reviewed plans only to see that outside tables and chairs were not placed in a way to block exit doorways or fire department sprinkler connections (FDCs). No standard was applied to the spacing of tables and chairs.

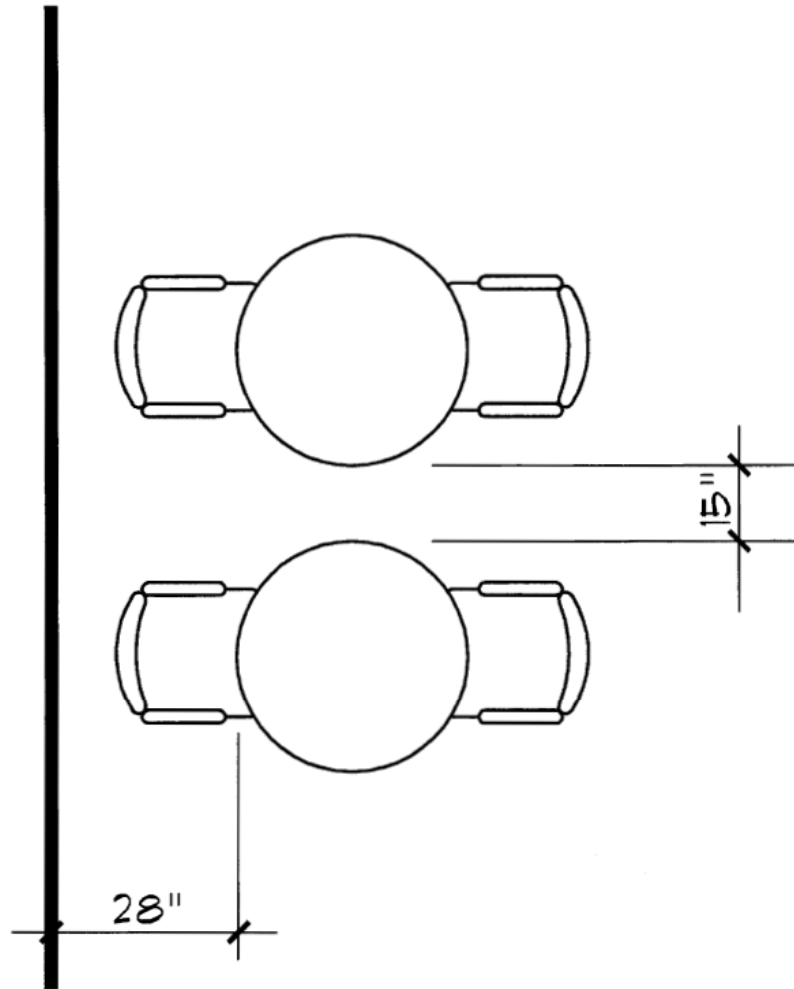
Our experience in this first year was that in some instances, the spacing of tables and chairs was close enough that the customers tended to move them apart to create a space that was comfortable, thus creating an enforcement issue by encroaching upon the protected space needed for the exits and the FDCs. The Fire Marshal determined that a more defined standard must be applied to prevent that routine table and chair movement that created safety hazards.

The Florida Fire Prevention Code has provisions that require certain spacing between tables for inside areas. As there is little risk that those occupying sidewalk cafes will have difficulty exiting during an emergency, the spacing standards have been relaxed somewhat to provide a workable compromise. As the sidewalk café areas impact the exits from the various clubs and restaurants, these standards will be published and enforced as a “technical standard” under city ordinance. These will be applied to existing sidewalk cafes, and may result in a reduction in the number of patrons that may occupy the area. The Fire Marshals Office will be happy to assist proprietors who are designing sidewalk cafés, 813-274-7000.

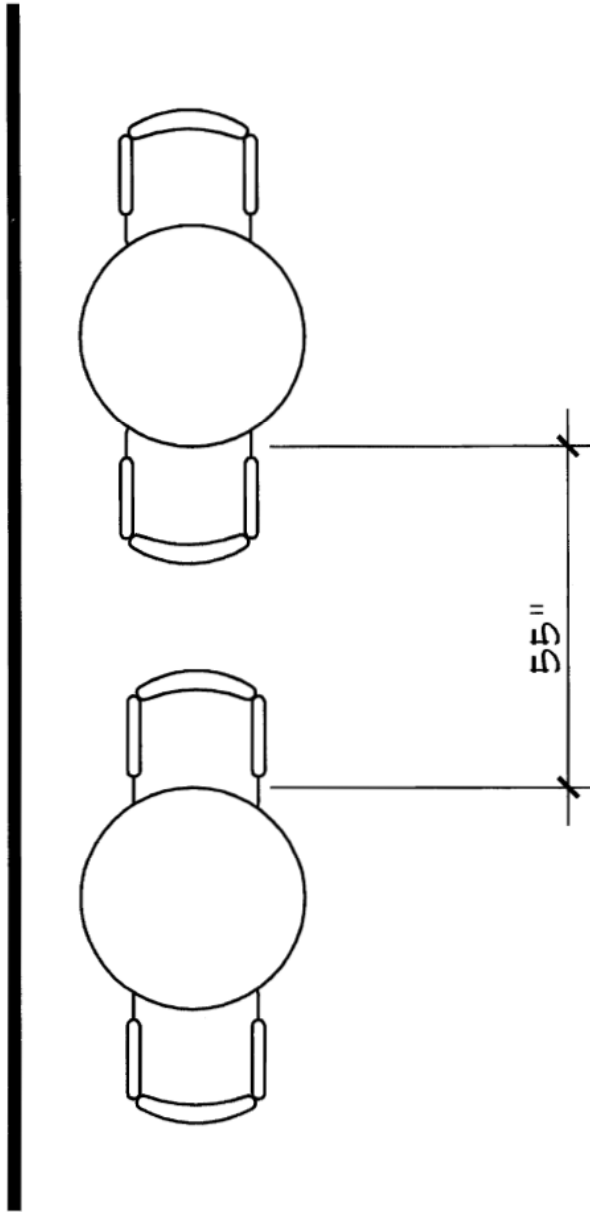
The following diagrams illustrate the spacing standards.



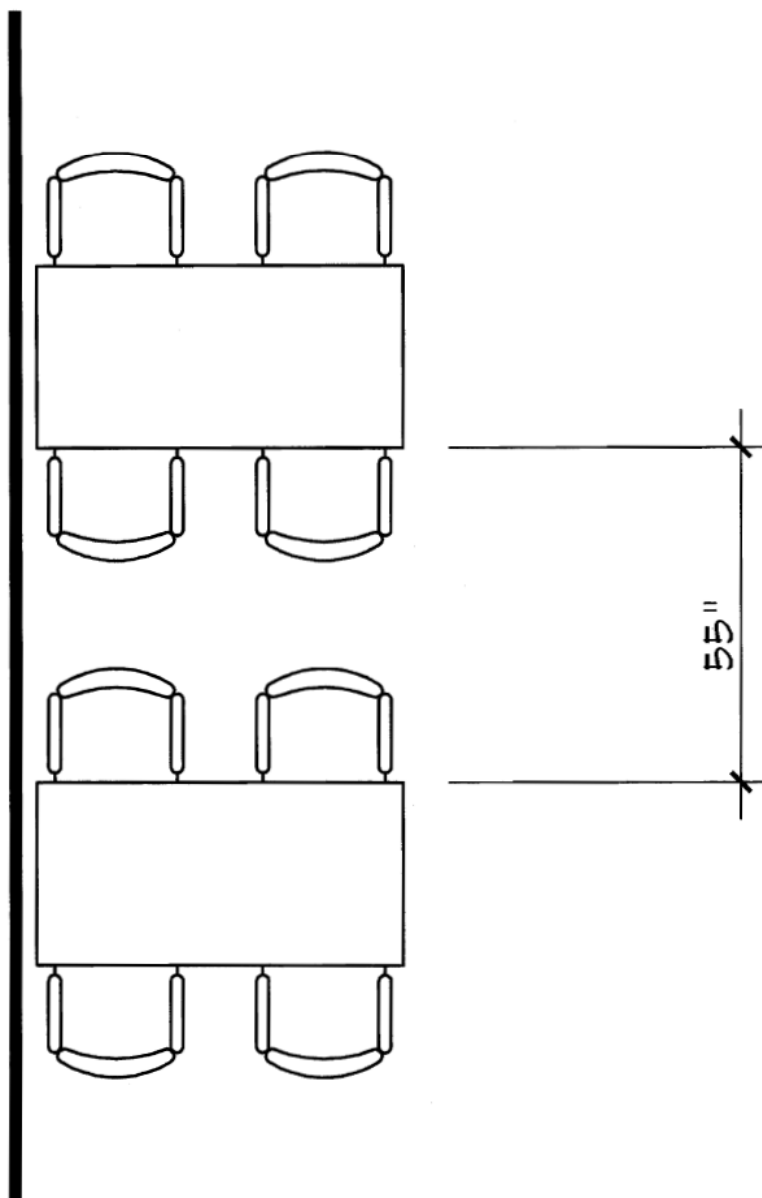
When tables are arranged side by side, with four chairs arranged either parallel or perpendicular to the wall, there shall be 55 inches between tables when the chair backs are in line with each other. There shall be 28 inches between the table and a wall when there is nothing else between the table and the wall.



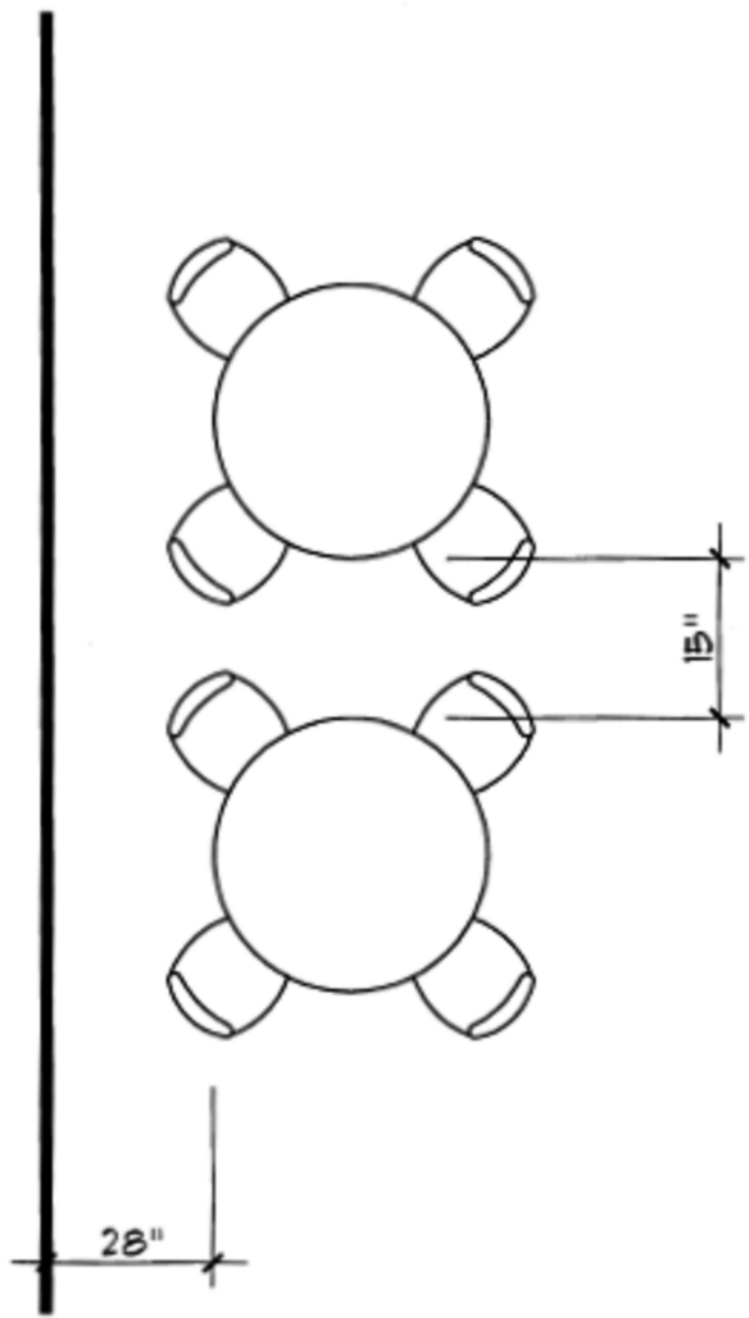
When tables are arranged side by side, with no chairs arranged between the tables, there shall be no less than 15 inches between the tables. There shall be no less than 28 inches between the tables and a wall or other obstruction.



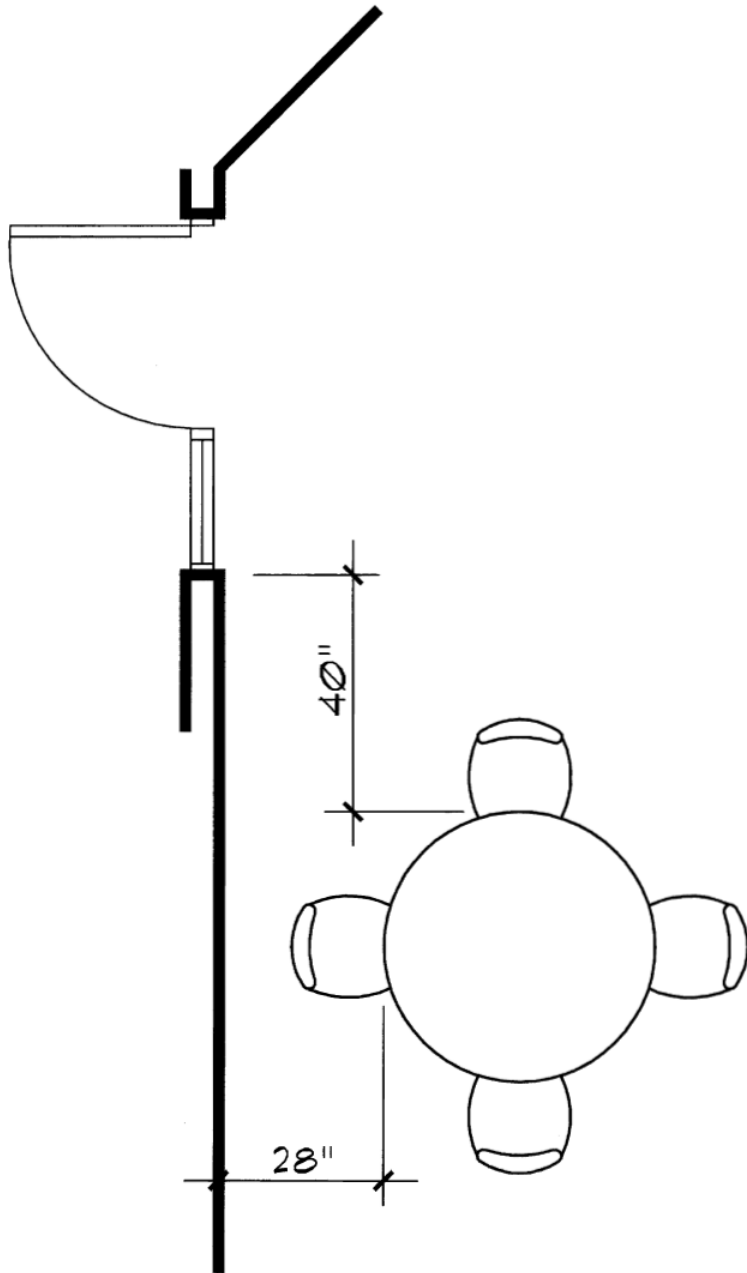
When tables are arranged in a single row side by side with chairs only in between, there shall be at least 55 inches between the tables. There is no minimum distance between the tables and the wall. The tables may be against the wall.



Where square or rectangular tables are arranged parallel to each other and perpendicular to the wall, there shall be at least 55 inches between tables. There is no minimum distance between the tables and the wall. The tables may be against the wall.



If the chair locations are rotated as shown, the distance between tables may be reduced to 15 inches. The distance between table to wall shall remain 28 inches.



Any table located adjacent to an exit must be placed so the edge of the table is no less than 40 inches from the exit discharge. The exit discharge will include the width of the door, and alcove or recess, or any other portion of the exit. Any table located adjacent to a fire department sprinkler connection (not shown). Must be placed so the edge of the table is 55 inches from the edge of the FDC.