

## **INTERNATIONAL ACCESS AND FACILITY STANDARDS FOR THE DISABLED**

### **Equality of Service**

In general it is undesirable, and in a growing number of countries unlawful, for those who provide goods, facilities and services (service providers) to discriminate against people with disabilities. Discrimination under can occur in two ways:

- By treating people with disabilities less favourably for a disability related reason than people who are not disabled;
- By failing to comply with the need to make reasonable adjustments.

Discrimination will not occur in either case if the reason for the treatment or failure to make a reasonable adjustment is justified. This means that a service provider should not refuse the service; nor provide a worse standard of service nor not offer their service on worse terms to a people with disabilities for a non justifiable disability related reason. All team members are to receive training regarding service delivery standards.

Service providers must make reasonable adjustments so as to provide equality of service. They can:

- Change practices, policies or procedures which make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to use a service;
- Provide auxiliary aids or services which would make it easier for, or enable, disabled people to use a service; and
- Overcome physical features (for example one arising from the design or construction of an existing building or the approach or access to premises) which make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for people with disabilities to use a service (physical features duty), by providing the service by a reasonable alternative method.

Service providers can expect to have additional duties in respect of physical features that make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for people with disabilities to use their service. They may have to overcome the difficulty caused by the feature by taking reasonable steps to:

- Remove it; or
- Alter it; or
- Provide a reasonable means of avoiding it; or
- Provide a reasonable alternative method of making the service available to disabled persons.

Some physical barriers may be structurally impossible or infeasible to alter; therefore an equal service standard may be acceptable as an alternative. Physical alternations to a space will be deemed infeasible when their cost exceeds 20% of the total cost of alterations on the primary function space. (A primary function space contains the major activity for which the building is intended whether public area or not.)

### **Summary**

Increasingly, governments are requiring the needs of people with disabilities to be taken into account in the construction of public buildings. These needs are concerned with access and facilities for people with disabilities and require reasonable provision be made to allow people with disabilities access to and use of public premises.

A service provider includes anyone providing a free or paid service directly to the general public, e.g. hotels, shops. For service and facility providers it is undesirable or unlawful:

- To refuse to serve persons with disabilities for a reason that relates to their disability.

- ❑ To offer a substandard service to people with disabilities.
- ❑ To provide a service on different terms.

There are reasonable adjustments which the service provider has to consider. These are as follows:

- ❑ Changes to practices, policies and procedures should ensure that they do not make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for people with disabilities to access the goods, service or facility.
- ❑ Provision of auxiliary aids and services so as to provide additional help or assistance to enable people with disabilities to make use of a services or facility.
- ❑ Making the service accessible by other means. This applies if the service is physically inaccessible to people with disabilities.
- ❑ If, by serving people with disabilities, the service provider is unable to serve others. This will only apply when serving people with disabilities would prevent the service from being provided at all.
- ❑ If, in order to serve people with disabilities or other members of the public, it is necessary to provide the service if different terms or of a different standard or manner.

#### **Universal Access Provision**

Provisions shall be made in the following areas:

- ❑ Of service such as electrical accessories at an accessible and reasonable height.
- ❑ Of raised or indented faceplates.
- ❑ Of visual alarms in addition to audible alarms.

Universal access rooms, public spaces and appropriate workspaces within a hotel shall comply at minimum with the requirements laid down in local access legislation such as the Americans with Disabilities Act in the USA; Disability Discrimination Act 2005 in the UK and Equal Treatment Framework Directive 2000/78/EC in the European Community.

Included by reference herewith is the AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA), part III Department of Justice. Office of the Attorney General, 28 CFR Part 36 (Order 1513-91), including Appendix "A" and "B". This document is a portion of the Federal Register dated July 26, 1991, Volume 56, Number 144, pages 35544 through 35691, and may be ordered for \$1.50 each from the Local Government Printing Office Warehouse (Dallas - 214/767-0076, or Washington 202/783-3238).

## **HOTEL ACCESSIBILITY GUIDELINES**

All hotels should be designed in compliance with local codes for disabled or universal access. The local code must be identified and provisions agreed in advance with the corporate office in the country of operation. Regardless of any applicable local code, the following Accessibility Guidelines shall also apply. Where there is a conflict between local requirements and these Guidelines, the more restrictive standard will apply.

This document does not attempt to 're-write' local or national legislation and/ or guidelines which in many countries, including the UK and USA, are already extensive and clear and with which most hotel development companies will be familiar. Rather the intention is to establish minimum requirements which ALL hotels' operators and owners must meet within their hotels.

This document is intended to provide guidance for some of the more common situations which may occur. However, there may be alternative ways of achieving compliance with the principles set out herein, and if in doubt, you should seek guidance from your corporate office.

These requirements are mandatory in all our hotels, whether new or existing. Where an existing hotel is already in use, there is no requirement to 'upgrade' the facilities unless hard refurbishment works are being undertaken in the relevant parts of the hotel. In that case, the relevant parts of this document and/or local standards must be complied with in full at the time of refurbishment. For change of ownerships or license renewals, these requirements must be met within 2 years maximum (1 year for budgeting, 1 year for execution).

The Owner of the Hotel project is responsible for compliance with and the provision of all local codes and/or these additional requirements. The owner is urged to seek appropriate council to ensure compliance. The management company does not and cannot warrant conformance with interpretation of any local codes or regulations relating to disabled or universal access within these Standards or any prototype drawings.

## **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

In general, reasonable provision shall be made for disabled people to gain access to and to enjoy full use of ALL areas within the hotels to which it is reasonable to have access.

The goal of these provisions is to achieve the following for disabled guests as well as team members:

- a) All people can utilize all main entrances to the Hotel,
- b) Elements of the building do not constitute a hazard for people with impaired sight,
- c) All people can utilize the Hotel's public facilities wholly or substantially,
- d) Appropriate sanitary accommodations are provided for everyone, and
- e) Suitable accommodations are provided for all disabled people within audience or spectator seating (e.g. Ballrooms).

## **PARKING PROVISIONS**

Provide a minimum of one disabled parking space per 100 car parking spaces typically in a convenient location for access into the Hotel main entrance. When any number of public parking spaces is provided, at least one disabled parking space with designated signage must be provided. A fully accessible path for wheelchair users must be provided into the Hotel from the disabled parking spaces. The spaces must be suitably marked in accordance with international standards. Spaces must typically be a minimum of 2.4m wide plus a wheelchair 'aisle' of 1.5m. Two disabled spaces may share a common 'aisle' between them.

## **CIRCULATION AROUND THE HOTEL**

### **Main Entrance**

Hotels must provide a suitable means of access for disabled people to the building from the entrance onto the property into the Hotel (e.g. vehicular entrance, car park or drop off point). Wheelchair users and ambulant disabled people have difficulty negotiating level changes so gradients should be gradual. Adequate maneuvering space should be provided at the entry, and any ramps with a minimum width of 1.2m and a gradient between 1:12 and 1:15 with handrails should be provided in addition to entrance stairs where they are unavoidable due to level changes. A mechanical hoist may be used as an alternative.

### **Entrance Doors**

When a revolving door is used at the hotel entrance a minimum of one side door with a clear open minimum width of 800mm shall be provided. The side door should be outward opening and fully glazed so as not to constitute a hazard in its own right. Where doors consist of sliding or hinged glazed installations, the same general principles will apply. If doors are lockable, suitable door bells for assistance from the front desk must be provided.

### **Elevators / Passenger Lifts**

A wheelchair user needs sufficient space and time to maneuver into an elevator and once in, should not be unduly restricted for space. He or she should also be able to reach the controls.

In order to satisfy the requirement, the following must be provided:

- a) One elevator serving all public areas must satisfy these requirements,
- b) Clear landing dimensions of 1500mm square in front of the elevator's entrance,
- c) Doors which provide a clear opening width of at least 800mm,
- d) A car interior width of at least 1100mm and length of at least 1400mm,
- e) Landing and car controls between 900mm and 1200mm above floor,
- f) Tactile (Braille) indications within the car alongside the floor controls,
- g) Automatic doors equipped with reopening activators either through invisible beam or gentle contact with the person, and
- h) Audible signals for identification of floors for the visually impaired.



### Bars and Restaurants

Suitable access must be available to the full range of services offered. Note that this does not preclude changes of level within a bar or restaurant for aesthetic or interior design affect as long as the disabled person is not unduly limited in his choice of seating area within the designated facility.

### Recreational Areas

All recreational areas (spas, pools, whirlpools, etc.) must provide at least one means of access for the disabled. Pool lifts, sloped entries, transfer walls, transfer systems, and pool stairs are all acceptable means at pools and whirlpools. For more information on these systems, visit the ADA-ABA Guidelines at <http://www.access-board.gov>.

## **RECEPTION DESIGN**

Provision for wheelchair users must be made at the reception desk and any other similar counter (e.g. guest relations, executive lounge desk and so forth). The approach may either be directly (perpendicular) or by way of a parallel side maneuver. Typically part of the counter will be at a lower level of 910mm high and a minimum of 910mm long but the depth shall be equal to that provided for all other guests. For a forward or perpendicular approach, knee clearances as stated below must be provided. The counter suitable for wheelchair use may be integrated into the main desk design or located nearby as a separate counter if necessary.

## **GUESTROOM DESIGN**

The more restrictive requirements are typically for disabled people who use wheelchairs. Accordingly, they need an accessible Guestroom which is purposely designed and sufficiently spacious to allow the manoeuvring of a wheelchair within it and the bathroom.

A minimum of one disabled room per 100 guestrooms shall be provided. At least one disabled room must be provided in all cases.

Typical accessible bedroom and bathroom layouts are available from the corporate office. These accessible guestrooms may require a larger "guestroom bay" than the standard room type and attention shall be drawn to this at the earliest design stage. The disabled room shall typically incorporate one 1.5x2.0m bed and the room shall be linked via a connecting door to an adjoining room for the carer(s).

A clear turning circle of 1.5m shall be provided both within the guestroom area and the bathroom. 910mm minimum clear floor space must be provided at the foot of all beds and to one side of the bed. Two beds (including sofa sleeper applications) may share this side clearance between them.

The Guestroom door must have a clear opening width of 800mm and should preferably be fitted with a door closer with a 90 degree 'hold open' facility if possible (subject to local fire authority approval).

The 'enlarged' bathroom should feature an 'open' shower with an adjustable showerhead, a shower curtain, and should be fully tiled with a large floor drain. The shower should be fitted with handrails in a finish to suit the interior design scheme. A secure 'fold down' or similar shower seat should be provided. Other support rails should be fitted in accordance with international guidelines (for example in and around the water closet) but care should be taken to ensure that the bathroom does not look too 'institutionalised'.

The bathroom vanity unit shall be fixed at 860mm high and shall have a clear space below to allow a wheelchair to approach directly and be pushed underneath it of a minimum of 675mm. Basin taps shall be easily turned on by people who have grasping difficulties.

Sufficient space shall be allowed around the water closet to enable easy use in line with international disabled standards (space in front and to one side of a minimum of 750mm).

The bottom of the reflective surface of the mirror at any accessible sinks must be not higher than 1015mm above the floor for ease of viewing by guests in a wheelchair.

Visual notification devices shall be provided to alert occupants of incoming phone calls or a door knock. This type of notification device cannot be connected to any visual alarm signal appliances. These devices may be permanently installed in all designated accessible guestrooms or may be provided at the time of a guest's request.

Visual alarm signal appliances for smoke and/or fire must be provided for hearing impaired guests when similar warning systems are provided for other guests. These appliances must be provided in all designated accessible guestrooms, i.e. flashing strobe alarms.

In general the Guestroom shall have, in so far as is practical, the appearance of a 'normal' Guestroom, not only to permit the room to be readily sold when not 'in use', but also to enable the disabled person(s) to feel that they are enjoying a typical guestroom in all respects. The Guestrooms shall be located in the Hotel in positions to be agreed with the corporate office but the positions of the rooms shall not discriminate against the disabled occupier (i.e. they should be placed in reasonable positions around the hotel, not all on the same floor, and typically nearby the lift/ escape staircases for practical purposes).

Guestroom switches, controls, shelves, closet rods, door viewer, and so forth must be designed for wheelchair and disabled users and typically should be no more than 1200mm above the floor.

### **SANITARY ACCOMMODATION**

At least one 'disabled' cubicle shall be provided within the entrance level of the Hotel. It may be a unisex cubicle and it should be a minimum size of 1500mm x 2000mm. The cubicle should be fully equipped with disabled equipment in accordance with the international/ US standards or equivalent national code and all requirements within this section.

### **MEANS OF ESCAPE**

Consideration of horizontal and vertical escape must be considered for all disabled guests. In all hotels which are not fully sprinklered, provisions must be made for disabled refuge points within all primary fire escape staircases where physically possible. Such refuges must not impede the escape path down the staircase in any way. Signage shall direct guests to these locations in case of fire. All horizontal means of escape shall provide a 760mm minimum wide clear path and maneuvering clearances (as shown in diagram that follows) at all doors along this route.

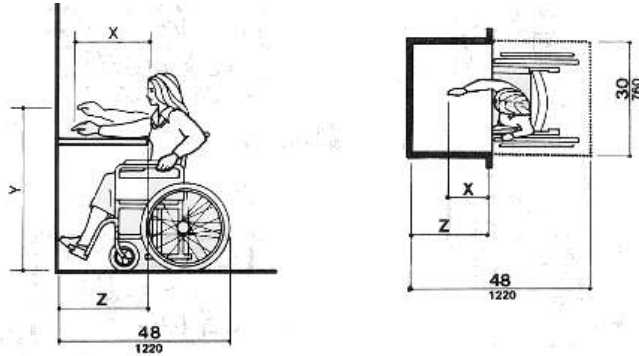
### **SIGNAGE**

All public signage necessary for room designation or way-finding shall be provided with visual and tactile characters. Characters and their background shall have a non-glare finish and shall contrast in color. All characters shall be sans serif, not highly decorative. Tactile characters shall be provided in Grade II domed Braille. These signs should be mounted approximately 1220mm – 1520mm above the floor.

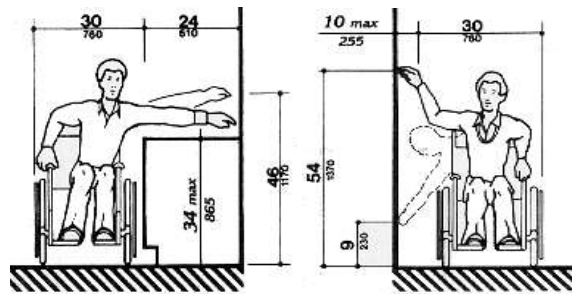
## ILLUSTRATIVE DIAGRAMS

Diagrams are indicative and should be used for guidance. Actual installations may vary from those shown but the key principles must be followed.

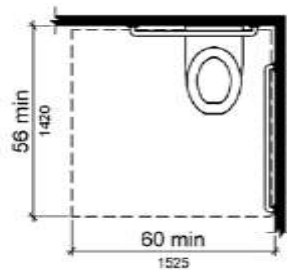
### Reach Ranges (typical)



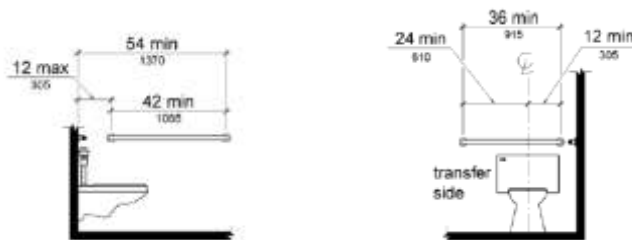
NOTE: x shall be  $\leq 25$  in (635 mm); z shall be  $\geq x$ . When  $x < 20$  in (510 mm), then y shall be 48 in (1220 mm) maximum. When x is 20 to 25 in (510 to 635 mm), then y shall be 44 in (1120 mm) maximum.



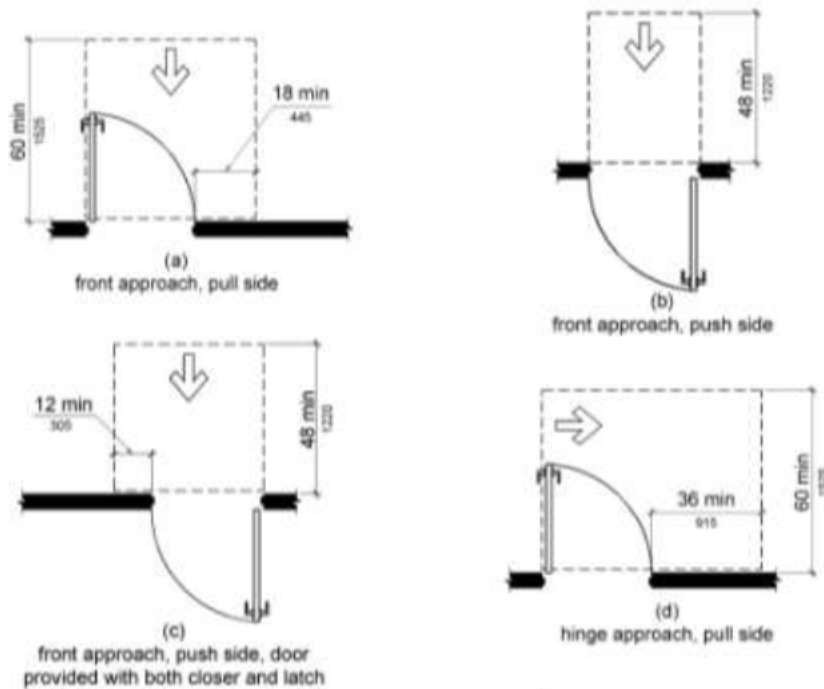
### Water Closet Clearance (typical)



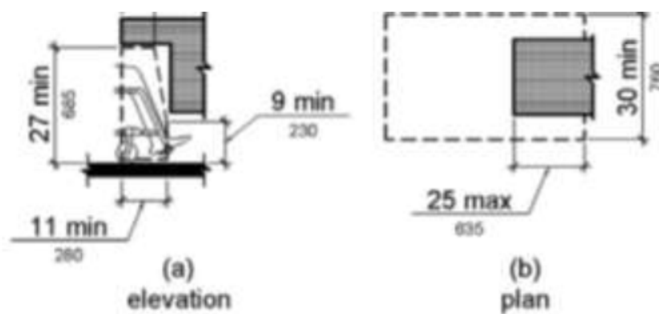
### Water Closet Grab Bars (typical)



Door Clearance for Wheelchair Access (typical)



Knee Clearance Diagrams (typical for restaurant tables and desks)



**KEY INTERNATIONAL REFERENCE DOCUMENTS**

- Americans with Disabilities Act (& associated Guidelines) 1990
- United Kingdom Building Regulations 1991 Approved Document Part M Disabled Facilities
- PAS 88 Disability Compliance in Large Hotels (British Standards Institute)