

2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design

Jennifer planned to have dinner at a restaurant with her family. She called ahead to ensure the restaurant was accessible for people who use wheelchairs. A restaurant employee assured her that the building was fully accessible. However, when attempting to use the restaurant's restroom, she discovered that the door on the wheelchair accessible stall was too narrow for her 27-inch-wide chair to enter, and that the stall was not big enough to accommodate her chair.

Please see page 3 to learn how Jennifer used knowledge of the 2010 ADA standards to resolve her community participation issue.

What are the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design?

The 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design (the 2010 Standards) are a set of specific *minimum* requirements, issued by the Department of Justice, for making buildings and facilities accessible for people with disabilities in the United States.

The 2010 Standards provide guidance in meeting the accessibility requirements of public and private facilities covered under Titles II and III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). These standards build upon the older 1991 ADA Standards for Accessible Design. The 1991 ADA Standards were in effect until March 14, 2011. The 2010 Standards are the current enforceable accessibility standards.

The 2010 Standards apply to newly constructed or altered buildings, including:

- Local and state government facilities
- Places of public accommodation, like restaurants or retail stores
- Commercial facilities, like office buildings

Standards for accessible outdoor recreational equipment were also added in the 2010 Standards. These design standards ensure that these spaces are readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.

Please note: The ADA specifies *standard* accessibility requirements that meet the needs of most people, not *individual* accessibility requirements.

Why are the 2010 Standards important to me?

People with disabilities have been discriminated against in many areas. They are often not able to access public spaces and buildings and therefore miss out on opportunities to participate in activities and receive services.



The ADA requires public and private buildings to be accessible to people with disabilities, and the 2010 Standards help enforce this law by providing requirements on how to do so. In order for you to advocate for your rights to participate in the community, you must know the current requirements for businesses and government programs.

How can I use the 2010 Standards?

There are many ways that you can use the 2010 Standards. Below are some examples of putting the 2010 Standards to use in your community.

- **Educate** – Learn about the current requirements for making buildings and facilities accessible by learning about the 2010 Standards and the ADA. See the resources section to get started. Educate your community members and others by discussing local business or outdoor recreational accessibility.
- **Advocate** – Promote understanding of the 2010 Standards by working with your local advocacy group, Center for Independent Living, or other people with disabilities. Empower others to advocate for their right to be active members of the community through improved accessibility and equal participation opportunities.
- **Act for Change** – Assess the businesses in your community for accessibility. If a building or facility in your area does not follow the 2010 Standards, talk with the business owner and connect with your local ADA coordinator. Explore ways to improve the accessibility of your community.

Please note: Features in an existing building that comply with the 1991 Standards do not have to be modified even if the new 2010 Standards have different requirements for them. However, this does not apply to features that were NOT addressed in the 1991 Standards but ARE addressed in the 2010 ADA Standards (such as swimming pools and exercise machines in recreation facilities).

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Resolution to Jennifer's story

Jennifer informed the restaurant manager of the issue she encountered when she tried to use the restroom. She used her knowledge of the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design and her advocacy skills to educate the manager about the requirement for public facilities to provide accessible restrooms. The manager apologized to Jennifer for the confusion and misinformation she received when she called ahead.

Jennifer worked with the restaurant manager and her local Center for Independent Living staff to identify the changes needed to make the restroom accessible, considering the cost of the modifications and the restaurant's resources. After education and negotiation with the disability advocates, the restaurant owners made the restroom accessible by combining two stalls and widening the doorway to 32 inches.

Encouraged by this success, Jennifer joined an advocacy group with other people with disabilities that focuses on informing local small business owners about their responsibility to provide accessible stores and restaurants.

If a building or facility in your area does not follow the 2010 Standards, talk with the business owner and connect with your local ADA coordinator.

Resources to learn more about the 2010 Standards for Accessible Design and how to use them:

ADA.gov: This website is a great place to find information and technical assistance on the ADA as highlighted in the following specific sub-entries.
www.ada.gov

2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design: Provides the formal 2010 Standards requirements.
<https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/2010ADAStandards/2010ADAstandards.htm>

Guidance on the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design: Organizes the 2010 Standards into sections for local and state government facilities, places of public accommodation and commercial facilities. Provides the guidelines for each area covered under Titles II and III of the ADA.
<https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/2010ADAStandards/Guidance2010ADAstandards.htm>

ADA Update: A Primer for Small Business: Provides information you can use to educate small business owners on the requirements of the 2010 Standards.
<https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/smallbusiness/smallbusprimer2010.htm>

How to File an ADA Complaint with the U.S. Department of Justice: How to file an ADA complaint either online or through the mail.
https://www.ada.gov/filing_complaint.htm

ADA National Network: Offers technical assistance for issues concerning the ADA and the 2010 Standards. Browse this website to learn more about the ADA, find training opportunities, and get questions answered.
<http://adata.org/>

Disability Rights Advocates: A non-profit organization that provides legal support and advocates for the needs of people with disabilities.
<http://dralegal.org/>

United States Access Board, Guidelines and Standards: Provides specific locations in public spaces that need to be accessible and how they should be accessible to people with disabilities.
<https://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards>

ILRU Directory of Centers for Independent Living and Associations – 2017 (Vol. 39): A national directory of Centers for Independent Living in the United States and its territories.
<http://www.ilru.org/projects/cil-net/cil-center-and-association-directory>

National Disability Rights Network: Select your state to find the Protection and Advocacy (P&A) System and Client Assistance Program (CAP) in your state or U.S. territory. These congressionally mandated, legally based disability rights agencies have the authority under federal laws to provide legal representation and other advocacy services for specific issues to all people with disabilities.
<http://www.ndrn.org/ndrn-member-agencies.html>

NOTE: While the ADA 2010 standards apply to people with all types of disabilities, the RTC/PICL focuses mainly on the community participation and barriers of people who have mobility-related disabilities.

This fact sheet offers general information, not legal advice. The application of the law to individual circumstances can vary. For legal advice, you should consult an attorney.

The RTC/PICL is a partnership of The University of Kansas Research and Training Center on Independent Living and The University of Montana Research and Training Center on Disability in Rural Communities.



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