

Accessible Facilities Guide

The Ontario Federation
of Labour's guide
to planning meetings
and activities with
accessible facilities

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Ontario Federation of Labour

Accessible Facilities Guide

The purpose of the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) in preparing this brief guide to accessible facilities is to provide the labour movement with a useful tool for the planning of meetings and activities. The Guide outlines what to look at when examining the accessibility of a facility and what criteria or standards should be used in this examination. The Guide builds on the earlier work of many affiliates and other organizations and draws on such recent works as:

- **Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities (ADAAG)** prepared for *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*, as amended September 2002 (www.accessboard.gov/adaag/html/adaag.htm)
- **Hospitality Accessibility Checklist** prepared by the Greater Toronto Hotel Association, March 2003 (www.gtha.com/dsp_Checklist-pdf.cfm)
- **Planning for Accessible Meetings** prepared by Ministry of Citizenship, Accessibility Directorate of Ontario, April 2002 (www.gov.on.ca/citizenship/accessibility/english/accessiblemeetings.htm)

These works examine the issue of accessibility in much greater detail than this Guide.

This Guide supplements the best and most obvious source of information, which is our members with disabilities. Their active involvement is crucial as their accessibility needs differ from person to person.

On-site inspections of facilities involving members with disabilities are critically important. There is no substitute for this actual inspection of facilities. These inspections can play an important role in educating both the membership and the owners of the facilities. Through this process, the membership themselves become advocates for the idea that all union members must have the opportunity to be fully involved in all activities of their union. If there are issues of accessibility they must be identified and dealt with as quickly as possible.

There is no substitute for the on-site inspection of facilities by members with disabilities.

Background

This Guide should be used as part of a wider accessibility strategy which can begin with:

- Actively involve your Members with Disabilities Committee or activists who self-identify themselves as persons with disabilities. Their personal experience will prove to be invaluable. They should be involved in on-site visits to facilities.
- Consider facilities you have used in the past and determine if you will be able to continue to use them in the future.
- Talk and work with the unions in the hospitality sector to determine how best to pressure management to make the necessary changes.

Accessible Approach/Entrance

Accessibility begins with arrival at the facility.

Signage

There should be large, contrasting lettering to indicate such information as:

- The name and address of the building
- The directions to accessible entrance and parking
- The directions to Information

Ramps

For ramps, the slopes should be no greater than **1:12** (for every **12" [305 mm]** along the base of the ramp, the height increases **1" [25 mm]**).

Ramps longer than **6' (1828 mm)** need railings on both sides. Hand railings should be mounted **2'9" x 3'3" (838 mm x 990 mm)** above the ramp surface.

The minimum width of a ramp should be **36" (915 mm)**.

Minimum landing sizes (**5' x 5' [1525 mm x 1525 mm]**) at top, bottom and when ramps change direction.

Ramps should have a non-slip finish.

Parking/Loading/Unloading Zone

Accessible Parking spaces should be clearly marked with the International Sign of Accessibility (the wheelchair symbol) and be provided within **100' (30 m)** of an accessible entrance.

The number of Accessible Parking spaces and access aisles may vary depending on the size of the facility. The Hotel Association suggests at least two spaces **12' (3660 mm)** wide with headroom clearance of at least **9' (2475 mm)** to accommodate both cars and vans for every 200-car parking space. The ADA Guidelines provides a table for numbers of total parking spaces and the number of required accessible parking spaces (at 200 the required number is 6). The Guidelines also state that every eight accessible parking spaces shall be served by an access aisle **96" (2440 mm)** wide and be designated "van accessible". If the access aisle is placed between two accessible parking spaces then two "van accessible" spaces are created. There should be sufficient lighting (interior at least **3' candles** at grade level and exterior at least **5' candles** at grade level) in the parking areas. Candles are a measure of illumination.

There should be a safe, clearly marked accessible pedestrian route from designated parking area to accessible building entrance or elevator lobby.

Curbs or changes in level have clearly defined (colour, texture) accessibility curb cuts provided.

Accessible Loading/Unloading Zone for taxis, buses and other vehicles should be within **100' (30 m)** of an accessible entrance.

The Hotel Association suggests a loading/unloading zone at least **22'4" (6800 mm)** long by **8' (2440 mm)** wide, with a clear headroom of **9'6" (2895 mm)** for vehicles including special transit buses.

Entrance

A canopy or other protective structure should cover the main accessible entrance.

Any inaccessible entrances should have signage indicating the location of the nearest accessible entrance.

The main accessible entrances should accommodate persons in wheelchairs or scooters. The Hotel Association suggests a door opening (minimum **3'6" [1066 mm]** wide) on slow-moving revolving doors. The ADA suggests at least **32" [813 mm]** clear opening for regular doors.

Entrance doors can open/close automatically. If not automatic, doors should be able to be opened with one hand or "closed fist" (use one hand held in a fist).

Mats or carpeting should be securely installed to minimize tripping hazards.

Lobby

Accessible entrance should provide direct access to the main floor, lobby, reception and elevator.

According to the Hotel Association, service counters (registration, information) should have at least one section suitable for use by persons using wheelchairs (no higher than **2'10" [865 mm]** and no less than **2'6" [760mm]** wide).

Lighting of at least **10' candles**.



Elevators

According to the Hotel Association and the ADA elevator doorways should be at least **3'6" (1065 mm)** wide to allow easy access for persons using wheelchairs or other mobility aids.

Elevator doors should stay open a minimum of **5 seconds** and be equipped with door sensors to prevent accidents.

Accessible elevators should be large enough to accommodate at least one person using a wheelchair or scooter (**minimum 5'6" by 4' [1675 mm by 1220 mm]**).

Accessible elevators should have all controls, two-way emergency call system or telephone mounted no higher than **4' (1220 mm)** and no lower than **2' (610 mm)** from the floor.

Accessible elevators should be equipped with a self-leveling feature.

Accessible elevators should have Braille signage provided beside all buttons and controls.

Braille signage and raised numbers should be at eye level on all door-jams to identify the floor.

There should be audible signals to alert users when elevator is arriving at specific floor. In lobby, signals can also indicate up (one) or down (two) movement of elevator. Signals should be loud enough to be heard over ambient noise levels.

Public/Guest Rest Rooms

If there are rest rooms available to the public then there should be at least one rest room fully accessible (one for each sex or unisex).

If some washrooms are inaccessible, then signage should give directions to the closest accessible rest rooms.

Pictograms or symbols, raised characters and Braille should be used in signage to identify rest rooms.

Doorway should be at least **32" (813 mm)** clear.

Doors should be equipped with accessible handles (can be operated with a closed fist), **48" (1219 mm)** high or less.

Adequate maneuvering space for a person using a wheelchair (minimum of **36" [914 mm]** of clear width for forward movement and a **5" [127 mm]** diameter or T-shaped clear space to make turns).

Stall door should be operable both inside and out with a closed fist.

A wheelchair accessible stall (**60" x 60" [1524 mm x 1524 mm]**) is needed.

In an accessible stall, grab bars should be behind (**36" [915 mm]**) minimum length at height of **33" to 36" (840 to 915 mm)** and on the side wall (**54" [1370 mm]**) minimum length at height of **33" to 36" (840 to 915 mm)**. Accessible toilets should be mounted between **16½" and 17½" (420 mm and 445 mm)**.



Accessories (toilet paper holder, tissue dispenser) should be at a minimum height of **19" (485 mm)** and no higher than **4' (1220 mm)** from the floor to be accessible/usable by persons in wheelchairs.

Knee/thigh clearance of at least (**2'3½" [700 mm]**) below accessible washbasins, vanities or sinks.

Mirrors mounted with the bottom edge no higher than **3'4" (1015 mm)** from the floor.

Lever handled faucets (single action or automatic) in basins, sinks, bathtubs and showers.

Temperature controls on all hot water supply sources (basins, bathtubs and showers) to minimize accidental scalding.

Roll-in shower of at least **3' deep x 5' wide (915 mm x 1525 mm)** in accessible guest rooms for persons using wheelchairs in facilities of more than 50 rooms. Controls mounted no higher than **4' (1220 mm)** and easy to use with one hand. Showerhead should be on flexible hose of at least **5' (1525 mm)** in length. Horizontal and vertical grab bars within reach of seated person. Horizontal grab bars should be at least **3' (915 mm)** long and mounted **2'9" (840 mm)** from the floor along the long wall in the shower.

Guest Rooms

The Hotel Association suggests the following proportions of accessible guest rooms for persons using wheelchairs: 1 room for every 25 rooms up to 100 then 2% of all rooms above 100 rooms. In addition they suggest the following proportions of guest rooms for persons with hearing loss (telephone with volume control and flashing lights): 1 room for every 25 rooms up to 100 the 2% of all rooms above 100 rooms.

Accessible rooms should be on various floors and offered in various ranges. They should be near elevators or safe holding areas in the event of an emergency.

Door locks should be mounted between **3' (915 mm)** and **4' (1220 mm)** from the floor. Locking devices (security cards) should be easy to use by persons with limited manual dexterity or limited vision.

A peephole should be mounted in the door no higher than **3'10" (1170 mm)** from the floor.

There should be sufficient space around furniture to allow persons with mobility aids to move easily (minimum of **3'6" [1065 mm]**).

All interior spaces (bath room, sleeping area, balcony) must be contacted by an accessible route.

There should be at least **5' (1525 mm)** clear floor space in front of coat closets for easy access by persons using wheelchairs.

The top of the mattress on the bed should be located between **16" and 18" (405 mm and 460 mm)** from the floor to allow for easy transfer to/from a wheelchair.

Lamps should be touch-type for easier use by persons with limited reach or dexterity.

Tables or desks should have a knee clearance of at least **2'6" (760 mm)** by **2'3" (685 mm)** to allow their use by someone in a wheelchair.

All thermostats, electrical switches and controls should be mounted no lower than **18" (460 mm)** and no higher than **4' (1220 mm)** from the floor. Thermostat should have large or tactile numbers for persons with visual limitations.

Window drapes and blind controls should be easy to reach and to use by persons in wheelchairs.

Food Service Areas

Main entrances to restaurant or lounge should be accessible to persons using wheelchairs or scooters.

Serving aisles and queuing areas should be at least **3' (915 mm)** wide.

Tray rails, self-serve and condiment counters should be no higher than **2'10" (865 mm)** from the floor.

Allow sufficient space for wheelchair users at tables or eating counters (**2'6" wide x 4' deep (760 mm x 1220 mm)**).

There should be sufficient space under the table for the arms, the leg rests and front wheels of a wheelchair (**2'3" high x 1'3" deep [685 mm x 380 mm]**).

Accessible seating should be available throughout the area to allow for choice of seating.

The cashier should be accessible for persons using wheelchairs or scooters.

The washrooms should be easily accessible.