

# ADA Accessibility Guide

**Notice:** This Guide is provided for the convenience of our clients and is intended as an aid for assessing their risk of being sued for violation of the State and Federal disability access laws. It addresses so called "public accommodations" or areas used by the public, and does not deal with "employee only" areas. Use of this Guide does not substitute for actual inspection of your premises by an expert in disabled access.

This Guide describes the current requirements for new construction. Existing structures are subject to these requirements to a varying degree, depending on when they were constructed and/or altered. However, regardless of the date of construction, deviation from these standards increases the chances of being sued for discrimination under the ADA and state civil rights laws. Your particular construction history, while it may be a defense, cannot prevent a lawsuit.

The standards referred to in this Guide are established by various agencies and set out in the ADAAG and the California Building Code. A determination as to whether any particular premises is in full compliance depends on numerous complex factors. Many of these factors are set out in this Guide, however, their application to any particular premises is unique. The Law Offices of Peter A. Singler does not represent, and makes no warranty that this Guide is either exhaustive or definitive, or that the local building department (or a judge) would not interpret or apply ADAAG or the Building Code differently. It should be used merely as a set of guidelines to identify "red flags" indicating potential liability due to disabled access. We strongly encourage individual consultation with qualified accessibility experts.

This Guide applies to "**public accommodations**," which are privately operated facilities which have two essential characteristics. First, their operation "affects commerce." Offering items or services for sale clearly affects commerce. Second, it must fall within one of 12 broad categories, which include: Most inns or hotels; restaurants and bars; exhibition or entertainment halls; sales or rental establishments; service establishments; museums or showrooms; exercise, recreational or educational facilities; and social service establishments.

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**1) General:** There must be an accessible route between public transport and accessible parking, and an accessible entrance to a public accommodation. There must be an accessible route from the entrance to the facilities (service counter, tables, restrooms, etc.).

Dimensions: The route must be at least 48 inches wide, and comply with the requirements set out below for ramps, curb cuts and protruding objects.

**2) Parking:** Any facility which offers customer parking is subject to these standards.

Accessible spaces required: Not less than 1;

- if you have 26 - 50 parking spaces, 2 must be accessible;
- if you have 51 - 75 parking spaces, 3 must be accessible;
- if you have 76 - 100 parking spaces, 4 must be accessible.

Van accessible spaces required: Not less than 1; and 1 per 8 of all accessible spaces.

Accessible spaces must be located along the shortest accessible route to an accessible entrance.

**Dimensions:**

- Accessible aisle next to space: At least 60 inches wide. Adjacent to accessible route.
- Van space: At least 96 inches wide, with a 96 inch aisle adjacent to the passenger side. Aisle must join accessible route.
- Overhead clearance for spaces and route: At least 98 inches.
- Permitted slope: Not more than 2% (1:50)

**Required signage:**

"Handicapped" parking sign and "tow away" sign, with "Van accessible" sign and at van space. Signs must be positioned so they will not be obstructed by parked vehicles. (If in path of travel, signs must also conform to overhead clearance).

**3) Ramps / Curb Cuts:** Curb cuts are required wherever the accessible route intersects a curb.<sup>1</sup>

- Permitted slope: 1:12 [8.33%].
- Minimum width: 48 inches.

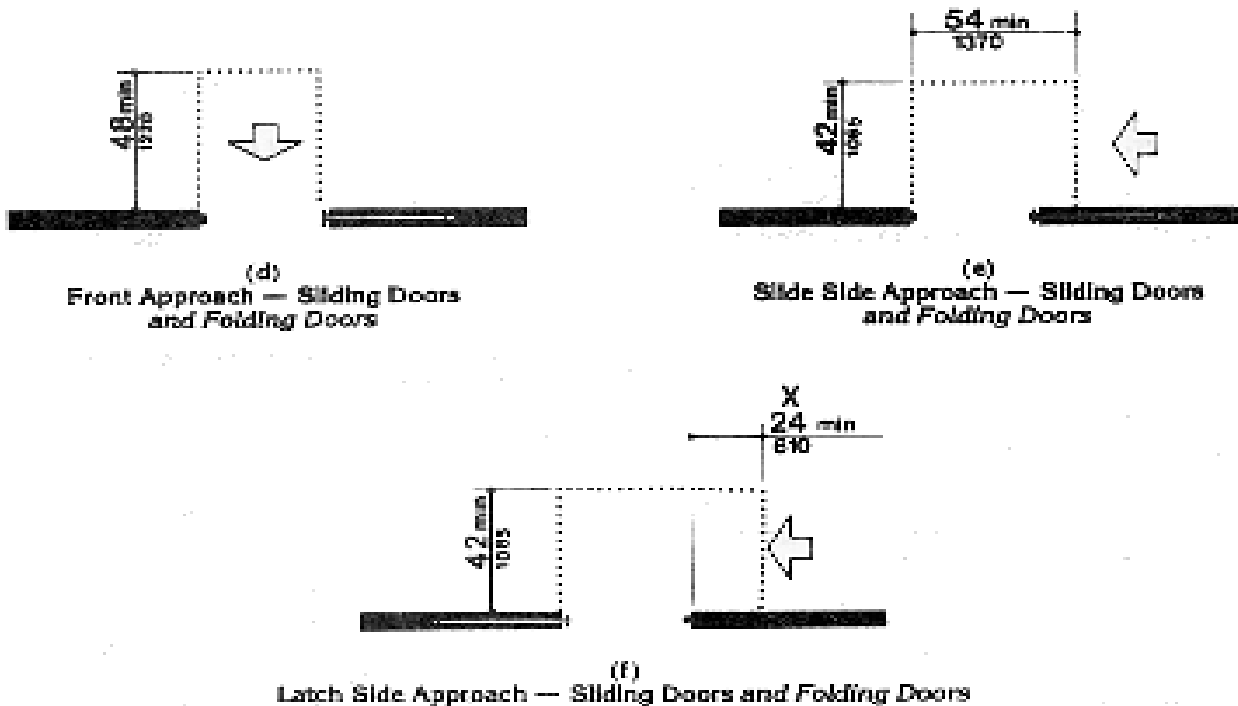
If the curb cut is surrounded by pedestrian areas, it must have flared sides, at not more than 1:10 slope. If the surrounding area is not for pedestrians, the sides of ramp

may be curbs.

Ramps are required wherever the slope is greater than 1:20.2

- Maximum permitted slope: 1:12 [8.33%].
- Minimum width: 36 inches.
- Maximum rise in single run: 30 inches.
- Maximum run without landing: 30 feet.
- Landings required at beginning and end of every run.
- Minimum landing lengths: Bottom landing - 72 inches, all others - 60 inches;
- Minimum landing width: same as adjoining ramp.
- If landing joins ramps going in different directions, landing must be at least 60 inches by 60 inches.
- Handrail: If ramp's slope is greater than 1/20 [5%], a handrail is required.

If a door opens onto a landing, the landing's required dimensions vary with type of door (Fig. 25 ).



**Figure 25**  
**Maneuvering Clearances at Doors**

**4) Doors:** All doors which are used by customers are subject to these requirements.

- Minimum width: 32 inches clear space (from open door to opposite frame).
- Threshold: Not over 1/2 inch high (3/4 inch if sliding door); must be beveled, not over 1:2 slope.
- Accessible hardware: Not more than 48 inches from ground.
- If there are two doors in a row they must be separated by not less than 48 inches plus the width of any door which swings into the space. Both doors must swing the same direction, or away from each other.
- Kickplate: Lowest 10 inches of door must be an uninterrupted, smooth surface.
- Maximum opening force:
  - Interior and sliding doors - 5 lbf.
  - Exterior doors - 5 lbf.

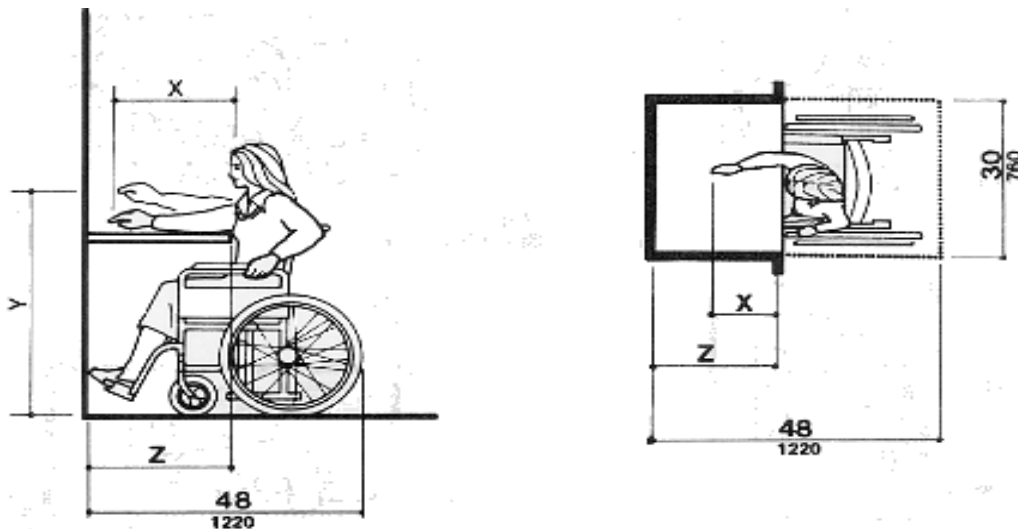
Strike side Clearance: Each door must have at least 18 inches clear space between the edge which swings (the "strike side") and any obstruction on that side of the door.

**5) Counters and Tables:**

Sales / Order Counters: If the counter is over 34 inches high, there must be a section at least 36 inches long, between 28 and 34 inches high.

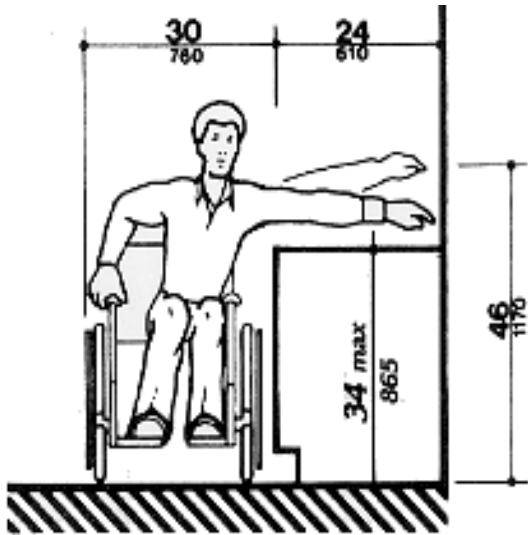
Service Counters: If a counter at which customers eat (either stools or standing) is over 34 inches high, a minimum 5 foot section must be between 28 and 34 inches high, or service at accessible tables must be available in the same area.

Self service: General rules: You cannot make the customer reach deeper than 20 inches, or higher than 44 inches (but see figures 5b and 6c).

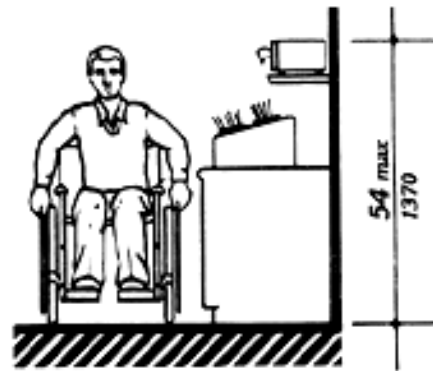


NOTE: x shall be  $\leq 25$  in (635 mm); z shall be  $\geq x$ . When x < 20 in (510 mm), then y shall be 48 in (1220 mm) maximum. When x is 20 to 25 in (510 to 635 mm), then y shall be 44 in (1120 mm) maximum.

**Figure 5b**  
**Maximum Forward Reach over an Obstruction**



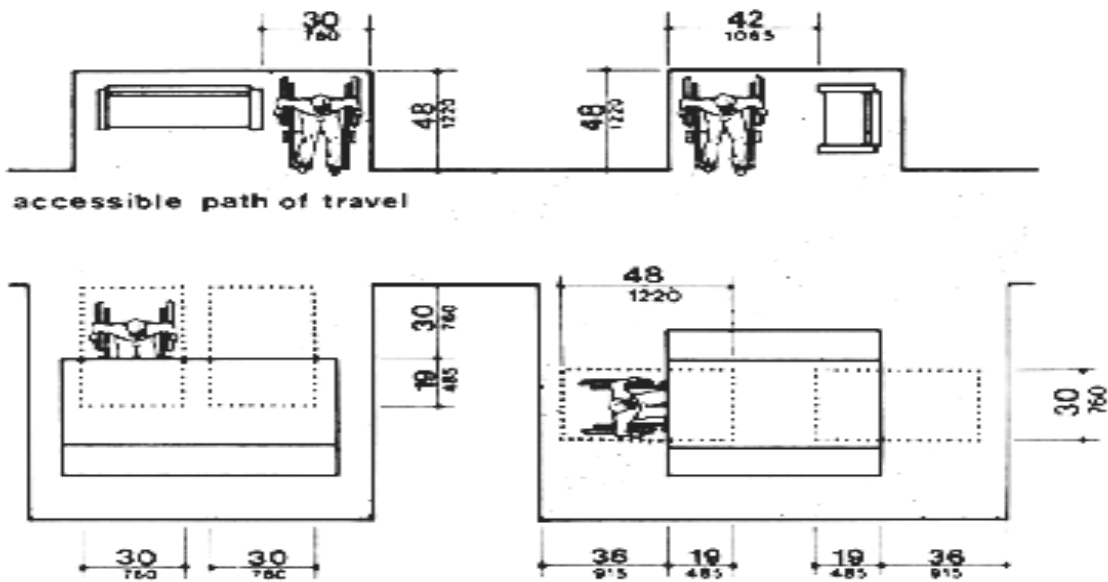
**Figure 6(c)**  
**Maximum Side Reach over Obstruction**



**Fig. 54**  
**Tableware Areas**

**Built in Tables: 5%, but not less than 1, must be accessible.**

- Tabletop Height: 34 inches from floor.
- Seating clear space: Must provide a clear space at least 48 inches deep and 30 inches wide for seating at table, up to 19 inches of depth may be under the table. (See Figure 45).



**Fig. 45**  
**Minimum Clearances for Seating and Tables**

**Figure 45**  
**Minimum Clearances for Seats and Tables**

(Free standing tables are "furniture," and not covered by these rules).

Although it is not required, face to face accessible seating is recommended, as suits have been brought over its absence.

## 6) Operable Equipment:

Highest operable part: not higher than 48 or lower than 15 inches. (If wheelchair users can approach machine from side maximum is 54 inches).

- Clear space: 48 by 30 inches.
- Pay telephone:
- Adjustable volume required.
- More than 4 payphones, 1 must have TTY.

**7) Restrooms:** If restrooms are made available to customers or the public, they are subject to the following standards.<sup>3</sup>

- **Toilets:**
  - Seat height - 17 to 19 inches. May not have spring loaded seat.
  - Flush control: Must be automatic or no more than 40 inches from floor; the control must be on the wide side of stall.
  - Toilet paper dispenser: Must be within reach, not less than 19 inches from floor, and may only use continuous roll.
- **Urinals:**
  - Rim: Not over 17 inches from floor or more than 12 inches from the back wall.
  - Clear space (approach): 48 by 30 inches.
  - Privacy shields: Minimum 29 inches between, may not extend beyond edge of urinal.
  - Flush control: No more than 44 inches from floor (or automatic).

If stalls are used, at least one must meet the following specifications:

- **Stall dimensions: Floor mounted toilet**
  - At least 59 inches deep.
  - At least 60 inches wide.
  - Center line of toilet **exactly** 18 inches from wall on near side.
  - Clear space: not less than 32 inches from side of toilet to wall on far side.
  - Distance from front wall (or door) to front of toilet:
    - door opposite toilet - at least 48 inches.
    - door in side of stall - at least 60 inches.
  - Stall walls/toe clearance: Not less than 9 inches from floor if stall not over 60 inches wide.

If there are 6 or more stalls, one must also meet the following specifications:

- Stall dimensions: exactly 36 inches wide.
- Grab bars: Parallel (both sides).
- Door: outward swinging, self closing.

If there are no stalls, at least one toilet must have grab bars, and be adjacent to sufficient clear space (the proper clear space depends on the angle of approach - see Figure 28).

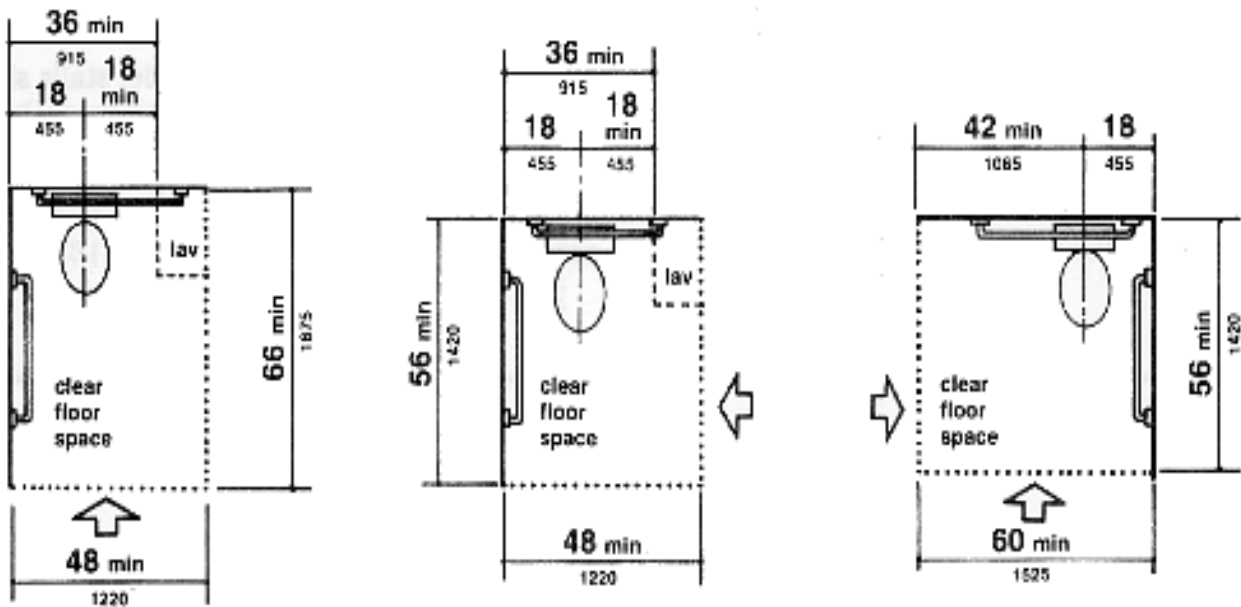


Figure 28  
Clear Floor Space at Water Closets

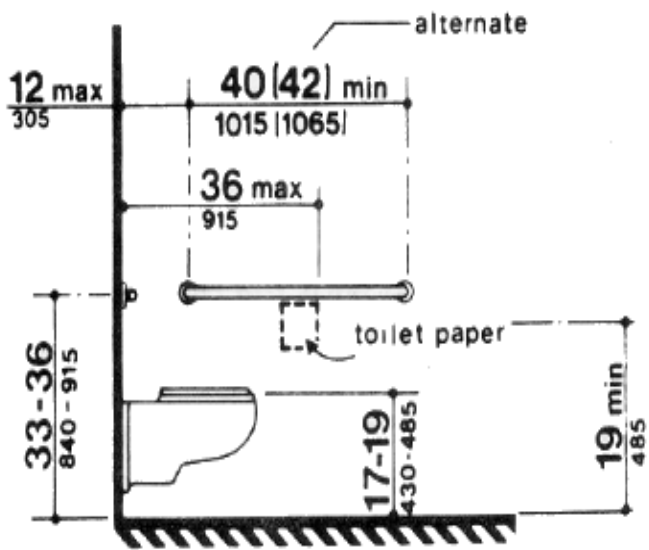


Figure 3d  
Toilet Stalls

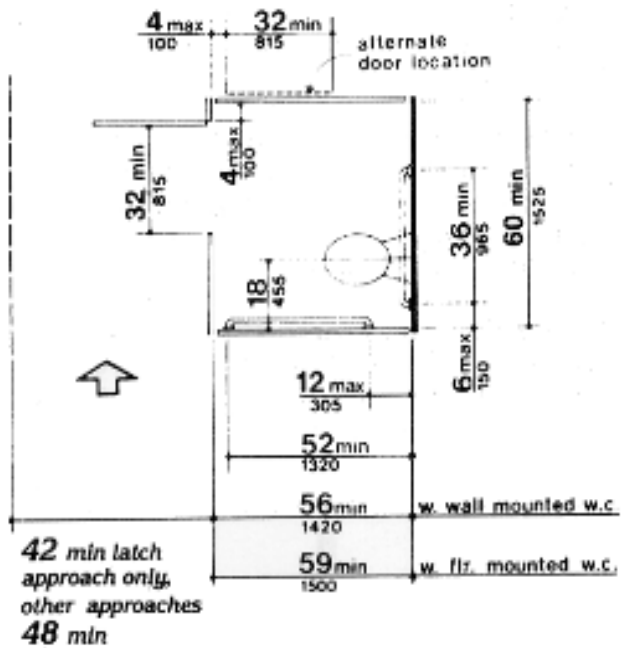
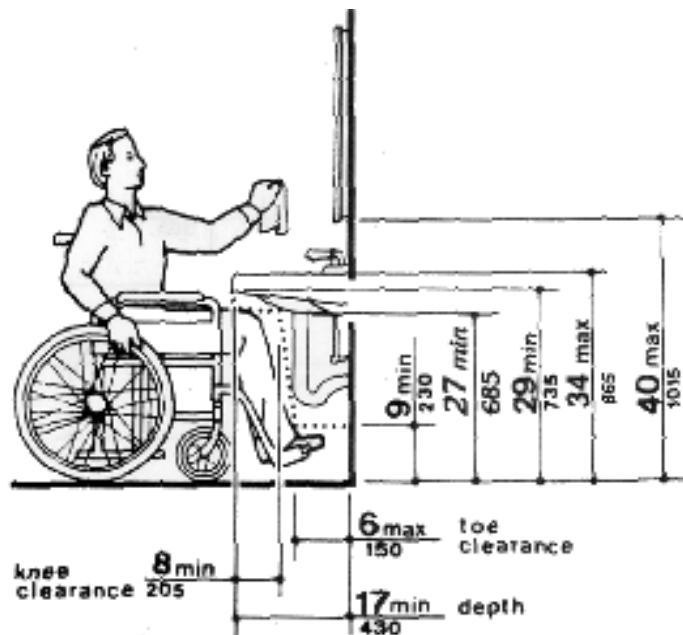


Figure 30a  
Toilet Stalls

- **Grab bars:**
  - Height: Exactly 33 inches from floor.
  - Side: At least 54 inches, beginning not more than 12 inches from back wall.
  - Back: At least 36 inches long.
  - Diameter: between 1 1/4 and 1 1/2 inches.
  - Mounting: 1 1/2 inches from wall.
- **Sinks:**
  - Clear space (approach): 30 by 48 inches.
  - Counter height: Not more than 34 inches.
  - Exposed pipes beneath: Insulated, no corners or sharp edges.
  - Knee clearance:
    - \* first 8 horizontal inches - not less than 29 inches;
    - \* beyond 8 horizontal inches - not less than 27 inches.
  - Faucets: Lever operated, push or auto (10 sec. minimum).



**Figure 31  
Lavatory Clearances**

### 8) Required Signage:

Signs displaying the International Symbol of Accessibility must identify the following accessible facilities:

- Parking spaces reserved for disabled use;
- Passenger loading zones;
- Entrances (when all entrances are not accessible);
- Toilet facilities (when all toilet facilities are not accessible).

Every restroom must have: Braille signs on door jamb, and pictograms (men/triangle & women/circle) on doors.

Specific signs are required at these accessible facilities:

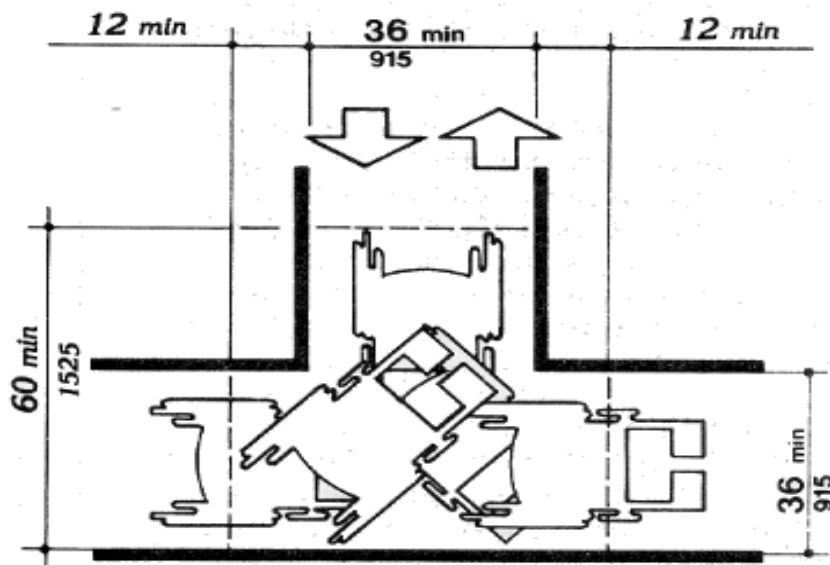
- Telephones with volume control.
- Text telephones (TTY). If there is a public TTY, signs pointing to it must be placed adjacent to non-TTY phone banks.

### Sign Specifications:

- Signs identifying rooms and spaces - Centerline of sign 60 inches from floor. Mounted on wall adjacent to latch side of door (or if not possible, on nearest adjacent wall). A person must be able to approach within 3 inches of sign without encountering a protruding object or coming within the swing of a door.

### 9) General Guidelines:

- Protruding objects: Nothing may extend more than 4 inches into path of travel, **unless:** Bottom is lower than 27 inches, or higher than 80 inches.
- Clear space: clear room to approach any item, at least 30 inches by 48 inches.
- Wheelchair turning room: 60 by 60 inches, or a qualifying T shaped space (see Figure 3b).



**Figure 3b**  
**Wheelchair Turning Space T-Shaped Space for 180 Degree Turns**

1. Curb cuts, not built up ramps, are required along the accessible route.
2. Any slope greater than 1:20 is considered a ramp, and must meet these criteria, if it is on the accessible route.
3. If restrooms are posted "Employees Only," the policy must be strictly enforced. If you make any exceptions, the restrooms should meet accessibility standards.