

**Q. What does the term "readily achievable" mean?**

A. It means "easily accomplishable and able to be carried out without much difficulty or expense."

**Q. What are examples of the types of modifications that would be readily achievable in most cases?**

A. Examples include the simple ramping of a few steps, the installation of grab bars where only routine reinforcement of the wall is required, the lowering of telephones, and similar modest adjustments.

**Q. Will businesses need to rearrange furniture and display racks?**

A. Possibly. For example, restaurants may need to rearrange tables and department stores may need to adjust their layout of racks and shelves in order to permit wheelchair access.

**Q. Will businesses need to install elevators?**

A. Businesses are not required to retrofit their facilities to install elevators unless such installation is readily achievable, which is unlikely in most cases.

**Q. When barrier removal is not readily achievable, what kinds of alternative steps are required by the ADA?**

A. Alternatives may include such measures as in-store assistance for removing articles from high shelves, home delivery of groceries, or coming to the door to receive or return dry cleaning.

**Q. Must alternative steps be taken without regard to cost?**

A. No, only readily achievable alternative steps must be undertaken.

**Q. How is "readily achievable" determined in a multisite business?**

A. In determining whether an action to make a public accommodation accessible would be "readily achievable," the overall size of the parent corporation or entity is only one factor to be considered. The ADA also permits consideration of the financial resources of the particular facility or facilities involved and the administrative or fiscal relationship of the facility or facilities to the parent entity.

**Q. Who has responsibility for ADA compliance in leased places of public accommodation, the landlord or the tenant?**

A. The ADA places the legal obligation to remove barriers or provide auxiliary aids and services on both the landlord and the tenant. The landlord and the tenant may decide by lease who will actually make the changes and provide the aids and services, but both remain legally responsible.

**Q. What does the ADA require in new construction?**

A. The ADA requires that all new construction of places of public accommodation, as well as of "commercial facilities" such as office buildings, be accessible. Elevators are generally not required in facilities under three stories or with fewer than 3,000 square feet per floor, unless the building is a shopping center or mall; the professional office of a health care provider; a terminal, depot, or other public transit station; or an airport passenger terminal.

**Q. Is it expensive to make all newly constructed places of public accommodation and commercial facilities accessible?**

A. The cost of incorporating accessibility features in new construction is less than one percent of construction costs. This is a small price in relation to the economic benefits to be derived from full accessibility in the future, such as increased employment and consumer spending and decreased welfare dependency.

**Q. Must every feature of a new facility be accessible?**

A. No, only a specified number of elements such as parking spaces and drinking fountains must be made accessible in order for a facility to be "readily accessible." Certain nonoccupiable spaces such as elevator pits, elevator penthouses, and piping or equipment catwalks need not be accessible.

**Q. What are the ADA requirements for altering facilities?**

A. All alterations that could affect the usability of a facility must be made in an accessible manner to the maximum extent feasible. For example, if during renovations a doorway is being relocated, the new doorway must be wide enough to meet the new construction standard for accessibility. When alterations are made to a primary function area, such as the lobby of a bank or the dining area of a cafeteria, an accessible path of travel to the altered area must also be provided.

The bathrooms, telephones, and drinking fountains serving that area must also be made accessible. These additional accessibility alterations are only required to the extent that the added accessibility costs do not exceed 20% of the cost of the original alteration. Elevators are generally not required in facilities under three stories or with fewer than 3000 square feet per floor, unless the building is a shopping center or mall; the professional office of a health care provider; a terminal, depot, or other public transit station; or an airport passenger terminal.

*The ADA: Questions and Answers, Public Accommodations.* U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 1997, <<http://www.eeoc.gov/facts/adaqa2.html>> (21 May 2003).