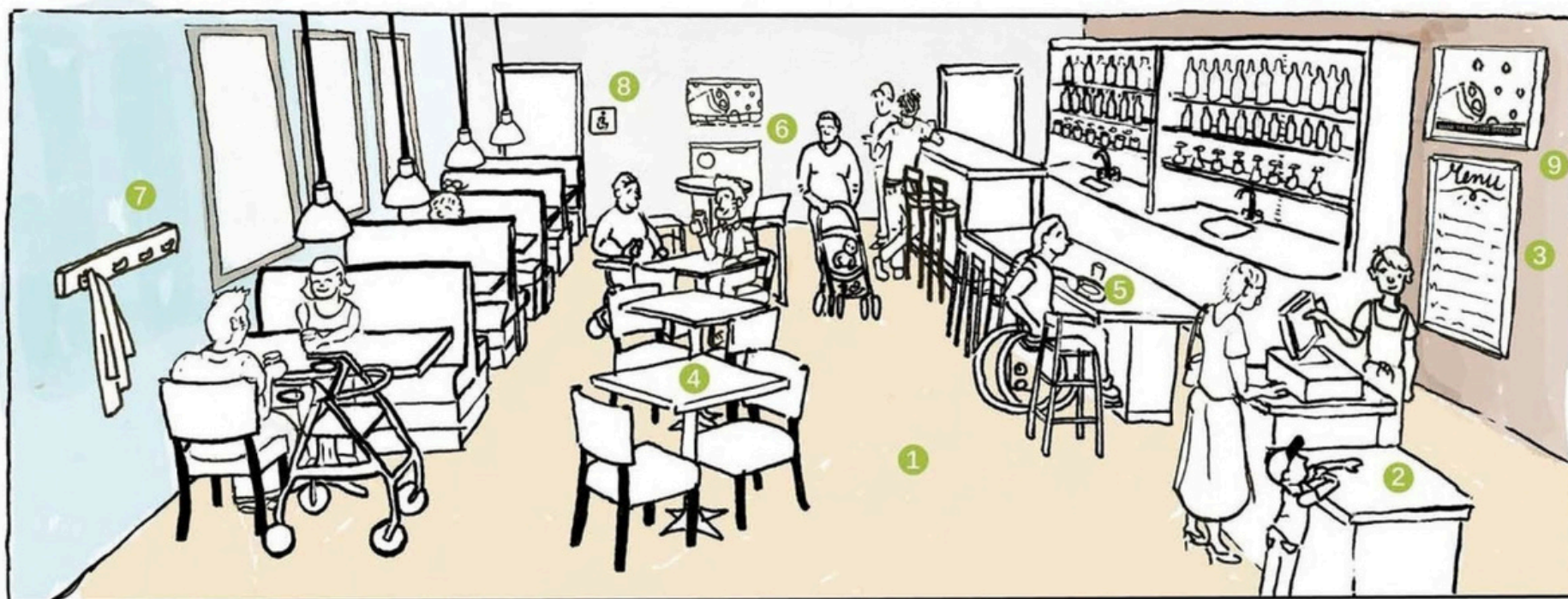


Restaurants: Making the Built Environment Accessible



1. An Accessible Route shall be provided from an entrance to all dining areas (including raised/sunken/outdoor; exceptions may apply for existing facilities) [206.2.5]. *Provide space around self-serve stations, ordering counters, and seating areas when chairs are occupied for people using mobility devices, or service animals.*

2. Service Counters shall have at least one of each type with a height of 36 inches maximum [227.3/904.4].

3. Menus and food labels should be large print, high contrast, and non-glare for customers with low vision.

4. Seating shall have at least 5% of the dining surfaces comply and be dispersed where provided for the consumption of food or drink [226].

5. Accessible Dining Surfaces at tables, counters, and bars shall be 28-34 inches above the floor with clear space underneath [902]. *Chairs can be removed to accommodate people who remain in their own wheelchairs or scooters.*

6. Dispensers and Self-service Areas shall have items between 15-48 inches above the floor but may need to be lower if they are limited in other ways [904.5.1].

7. Headroom clearance is 80 inches minimum, and objects more than 27 inches above the floor may protrude a maximum 4 inches from a wall [307]. *Protruding coat hooks, signs, decorations, etc., can be hazardous to customers.*

8. Accessible Restrooms where provided for the general public shall comply with accessible features [213].

9. Closed Captioning should be on televisions or screens for customers with hearing disabilities.

[#References 2010 ADA Standards section]
Italic is additional commentary.

Restaurants: Areas to Assess for Accessibility

Expand your customer base and deliver access-to-all

Existing Facilities

A business has a continuing obligation to remove architectural barriers in existing facilities when it is “readily achievable” (“easily accomplishable without much difficulty or expense”). This requirement is based on the size and resources of a business, it will vary from business to business, and sometimes from one year to the next.

If an existing restaurant with several steps at its entrance may determine that it cannot afford to install a ramp or a lift, the restaurant must provide its services in another way that is readily achievable, such as providing takeout service.

Serving Customers with Disabilities

Many of these practices will improve your services for all customers.

Train staff in disability etiquette, awareness of accessible features, policies, and practices, and publicize them so customers with disabilities will know of their availability.

Be patient. Treat everyone like a valued customer. People with disabilities and seniors might require more time to express themselves or to move about.

Mobility devices: Think about seating options and convenient storage space for mobility devices. Always ask the customer's permission before moving a mobility device (crutches, walker, wheelchair or scooter) to an area that is safely out of the way of other patrons and servers.

Welcome service animals into your establishment. They are working animals to assist people with all types of disabilities. Do not pet, feed or distract service animals.

Offer assistance: Post signs offering assistance in self-serve areas. People with a variety of disabilities, as well as older customers, may need assistance.

People who are blind or have vision loss may need assistance with menus, self-serve items, or provide directions to restrooms. Have a pad of paper handy in case a customer is deaf or unable to speak.

Resources

ADA National Network

provides free technical assistance, training and information.

- 1-800-949-4232 V/TTY
- adata.org

Access Design/Alpha One

Maine Affiliate of the New England ADA Center.

- 1-800-649-7200 V/TTY
- accessdesignme.org

Reaching Out to Customers with Disabilities

online training developed by the U.S. Department of Justice.

- ada.gov/reachingout/intro1.htm

Checklist for Readily Achievable Barrier Removal

by the New England ADA Center, Institute for Human Centered Design (2011).

- adachecklist.org

Tax Incentives ADA Quick Tips

by the Mid-Atlantic ADA Center.

- adainfo.org/sites/adainfo.org/files/ADA-Quick-Tips-Tax-Incentives.pdf

Sign Language Interpreters ADA Quick Tips

by the Mid-Atlantic ADA Center.

- adainfo.org/sites/adainfo.org/files/Quick-Tips-Sign-Language-Interpreters.pdf

Content is based on professional consensus of ADA experts and the ADA National Network. However, the contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.