

***I have a building built before 1990 when the ADA laws were passed. Is there a “grandfather” clause in the ADA law?***

Every place of public accommodation (open to the public), new or old, must comply with the ADA laws to some degree. For buildings built prior to this law, barrier removal is required. Removing “architectural barriers” in existing facilities when it is “readily achievable,” or without much difficulty or expense, can range from removing a floor mat that bunches up when a wheelchair rolls over it to a complete renovation of a restroom facility or other feature. The extent to which the business must comply is dependent on the financial resources of the business involved. If a “mom and pop” business has accessibility issues and a corporation has the same issues, the corporation will typically be required to do more to meet full accessibility or will have to achieve it much sooner than a business with a tighter budget.

A survey of all issues at the site, listed and organized into a list of the least expensive to most expensive is a start to achieving barrier removal. The next step is assigning estimates to the cost of each of these and creating a realistic timeline for removal of all barriers. Simple, inexpensive barriers should be removed immediately and a record of that action should be kept. The courts will view this process and see a proactive business owner.

Many business owners hire a Certified Access Specialist (CASP) to perform the site survey and provide a list of site issues, both inside and outside the building.

***What are some of the most common areas that present ADA compliance issues?***

Although many lawsuits target just the exterior of buildings, both the exterior and interior must be in compliance with the ADA law. ADA Compliance Contractors has experts who will address both areas in their analysis, as well as staff with experience correcting the violations. The most common areas of violations include:

- Parking lots including spaces, aisles and loading zones
- Exterior ramps
- Paths of travel including routes from parking lots to building entrance areas, including door thresholds
- Signage, both inside and out
- Restrooms
- Lobbies and reception areas including counters and tables
- Accessibility to goods and services

See the following websites for more information:

[www.dsa.gov](http://www.dsa.gov) – California disabled accessibility. Look for Certified Access Specialist (CASP)

[www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov) – Federal disabled accessibility