

SURVEY OF WATSON LIBRARY FOR COMPLIANCE WITH "AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES" ACT

Jl 26th 1990

Needs

*See 504 of the
Rehabilitation
Act of 1973
ADA Compliance Officer*

Requirements

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ole Sites and Exterior
ilities

- 1) We need an access ramp leading to the library from the traffic discharge area immediately in front of the library
- 2) The access ramp leading to the library from the East parking lot needs to have the lot-side entrance replaced with concrete (presently it is asphalt, and it has cracked in some places, presenting a hazard for anyone not in a motorized wheelchair. This should be repaired immediately.
- 3) The East parking lot contains vehicular spaces for 202. At that rate the formula calls for seven parking spaces to be reserved for the handicapped. At least one should be for a van equipped with hydraulic lowering and lifting platforms and that particular space should be eight feet wide.
- 4) There are several things wrong with the toilet provided for the handicapped in the men's room. First, the doorway isn't wide enough and that is because of the exterior stall flange. If the flange was reduced, and a wider door installed, entrance via wheelchair would be much easier. The stall itself is wide enough (48") to accommodate a small lavatory, which is recommended.

CURB AND ACCESS RAMPS
and PARKING

TOILETS

There needs to be a 36" grab-bar installed behind the commode, which should be wall-mounted. Finally, the stall door should be self-closing, which it is not now.

I assume all this applies to the stall in the women's room but we have not examined that room.

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5) All urinals are 23 3/4" high. They should not be any higher than 17" high and should have an elongated rim. A clear floor space in front of the urinal should measure 30 x 48". Ours measure 26" wide. Our flush bars are 50" above the floor but should be no more than 44".

TOILETS

6) Lavatories should be raised 2", and the faucet handles should be modified to either lever operated, push type, or electronically controlled. Ours are the old-fashioned twist type, and that is not recommended.

7) The bottom edge of mirrors should not be any higher than 40 inches above the floor; ours are 48 1/2".

8) Building signage is an area in which we are completely** deficient, both externally and internally.

le Buildings:New Construction

1) Elevator call buttons should be no more than 42" above floor level. Ours are 53 3/4" above floor level. We need Hall Lanterns, located some 72" above floor level, that will illuminate and show which car is responding. We need raised and Braille floor designations on the sides of each hoistway entrance.

ELEVATORS

All car control buttons should have raised and Braille letters or numbers (Arabic, in the case of the latter). Additional specifications are very precise, such as a button with a star (raised) designating the main floor entry. All floor buttons shall be no higher than 54" above floor level. Ours are 58 1/2". Emergency control buttons should be grouped together at the bottom of the control panel and should be no higher than 35" above floor level.

Car position indicators should be provided over the car control panel, or over the door. We have no emergency communication system.

** Specifications for signs are very precise
(4.30.1-7)

DOORS

- 5) The problem with our doors is getting into the library. All our external doors open to the outside, and it is obviously very difficult for someone in a wheelchair to try and hold a door open with one arm and propel a wheelchair into the interior. Wheelchairs equipped with battery-powered motors have an advantage over non-powered wheelchairs. The same situation applies to the doorways providing access to the general stacks on the second and third floors. Getting out of the library is less difficult, especially if one has a powered wheelchair. Individuals sort of bull their way through by using their wheelchair to butt the doors open.

It is my personal opinion that, out of a sense of simple consideration if nothing else, we ought to have electric door openers for the handicapped at selected doors. I have seen these, and I have tried to make an illustration below.

By pulling the trigger an electric motor pulls the door away from the handicapped person. The door closer can be set to allow 10-15 seconds clear time before starting to close (we need to have these adjusted anyway, since presently they do not appear to hold any door open).

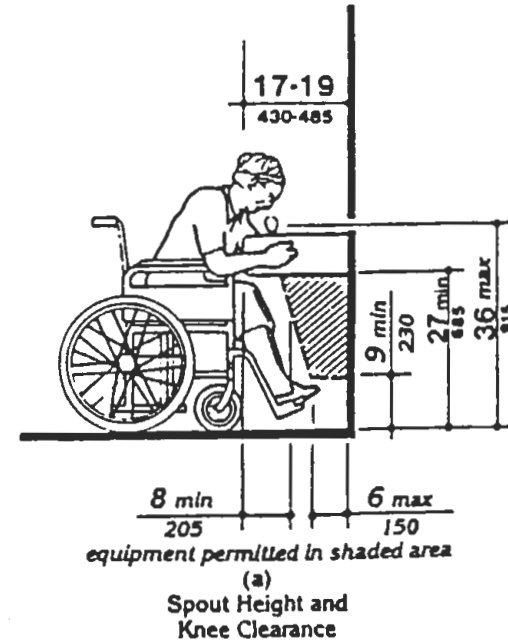


Sticks out about 15" from the door facing.

Technically, however, I think we are in compliance with doors. They should be 32" wide, and ours are 35".

DRINKING FOUNTAINS

- 6) The spouts of water coolers shall be no higher than 36" from the floor. Ours measure 41", and the water releasing mechanism is very stiff. The simple truth is that built-in water coolers are extremely difficult for individuals in a wheelchair to use. The best type of water fountain is shown below:



TELEPHONES

- 7) One telephone per floor for the handicapped is specified. In addition, the highest operable part should be no more than 48" above floor level. The coin slot on the foyer telephone is 62" above floor level. Apart from that consideration, all telephones are required to be hearing

aid compatible and equipped with a volume control. Numbers on the dialing mechanism must be raised and in Braille. All pay telephones must be equipped with a text telephone, including cords of an appropriate length, table and a chair. International pictographs must be prominently displayed announcing the availability of these telephones. Telephone books must be kept in some kind of rack no more than 48" above floor level.

TABLE SEATING

- 8) Table seating requires knee clearance of at least 27 inches. Our tables provide only 26" clearance due to the decorative skirt that extends from leg to leg just below the bottom of the table surface. There is no problem with carrels. Five percent of all table seating in a common or public area (but not less than one table) is supposed to meet these standards and an area for these table specifically designated. I cannot see a major problem with raising the height of a few tables.

It would be a major problem, however, if all the periodical index tables were raised.

FORWARD AND SIDE REACH 4.2.5 & 4.2.6

- 9) The maximum high reach is 48 inches for a forward approach to an object. The maximum high reach for a parallel approach is 54 inches, and the low side reach shall be no less than 9 inches above the floor.

Taking 8 and 9 together, along with the sense of access accommodation for the handicapped, virtually everything in the library is too high. For example: the card catalog is 63" to the uppermost drawer handle. The microfilm cabinets are 58 1/2" inches high. The computer-managed periodical indexes are on tables 40" high, and the photocopiers are 39" high. Most dictionaries are in swivel rests on top of tables some 40" high.

ACCESSIBLE ROUTE (WIDTH)

- 10) The minimum clear width of an accessible route shall be 36", except at doors. This means that no one confined to a wheelchair can peruse the general stacks or periodical "current issues". The reference room stacks allow for 35" of clear aisle, and I expect a wheelchair can negotiate that amount of aisle space.

The one area, however, where we are in full compliance is the Government Documents Room on the first floor. Shelving ranges in that room were installed on 5' centers and each aisle is a full 36" wide.