



Appendix 6.8

Physical Structures Project Best Practices and Timeline

This document includes best practices and a simplified sample timeline to help organizations plan structural accessibility projects.

Best Practices

Generally, for both new construction and remodels of existing facilities, accurately identifying accessibility barriers, monitoring progress towards compliance throughout the project, and ultimately confirming that the finished product meets intended accessibility standards is essential for success.

Whether you are constructing a new building or are remodeling an existing one, the following four tips will help keep the project on track:

1. **Hire an access consultant.** Surprisingly, licensed architects, conscientious contractors, and qualified building inspectors may not be enough to ensure compliance with the complex and detailed world of accessibility. Accessibility is a separate specialty within these various fields. An accessibility consultant reviews the architect's drawings, advises on any issues that arise, and checks the contractor's work for compliance.
2. **Design to exceed code minimums.** This will maximize accessibility for your patients and visitors and leave a margin of error for contractors during the construction phase. Designing to exceed standards will ensure that all features are accessible, even where contractors aren't exact.
3. **Prioritize features that often receive patient complaints.** Prioritizing barrier removal and feature installation based on the patient experience ensures you are addressing patients' most pressing needs. The force needed to open doors, for example, is an often-forgotten barrier for people with disabilities. In this example, install automatic doors opener in key locations.
4. **Inspect construction work at the 90% completion stage.** This will ensure any accessibility errors are identified and addressed before a grand opening date.

Sample Construction Timeline

