U.S. Department of Justice

Civil Rights Division

Disability Rights Section

Accessible Stadiums

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires new stadiums to be accessible to

people with disabilities so they, their families, and friends can enjoy equal access to

entertainment, recreation, and leisure.

This document highlights key accessibility requirements of the ADA that apply to new

stadiums. Other accessibility requirements, such as those for parking lots, entrances,

and rest rooms, also apply but these are the same as for other buildings. Compliance

with all the accessibility requirements is essential to provide a basic level of access

for people with disabilities.

To obtain a copy of the requirements for new stadiums and other facilities, contact the

Department of Justice ADA Information Line at (800) 514-0301 voice or (800)

514-0383 TDD.

Key Features of Accessible Stadiums

Seating

 Wheelchair accessible seating is required. At least one percent of the seating must

 be wheelchair seating locations. Each wheelchair seating location is an open, level

 space that accommodates one person using a wheelchair and has a smooth, stable, and

 slip-resistant surface.

 Accessible seating must be an integral part of the seating plan so that people using

 wheelchairs are not isolated from other spectators or their friends or family.

 A companion seat must be provided next to each wheelchair seating location. The

 companion seat is a conventional seat that accommodates a friend or companion.

 Wheelchair seating locations must be provided in all areas including sky boxes and

 specialty areas.

 Removable or folding seats can be provided in wheelchair seating locations for use

 by persons who do not use wheelchairs so the facility does not lose revenue when not

 all wheelchair seating locations are ticketed to persons who use wheelchairs.

 Whenever more than 300 seats are provided, wheelchair seating locations must be

 provided in more than one location. This is known as dispersed seating. Wheelchair

 seating locations must be dispersed throughout all seating areas and provide a choice of

 admission prices and views comparable to those for the general public.

 Wheelchair seating locations must be on an accessible route that provides access

 from parking and transportation areas and that connects to all public areas, including

 concessions, restaurants, rest rooms, public telephones, and exits.

 Wheelchair seating locations must provide lines of sight comparable to those

 provided to other spectators. In stadiums where spectators can be expected to stand

 during the show or event (for example, football, baseball, basketball games, or rock

 concerts), all or substantially all of the wheelchair seating locations must provide a line

 of sight over standing spectators. A comparable line of sight, as illustrated in the figure

 below, allows a person using a wheelchair to see the playing surface between the heads

 and over the shoulders of the persons standing in the row immediately in front and over

 the heads of the persons standing two rows in front.

Line drawing showing a side view of people seated in assembly-type seating

and a person using a wheelchair seated in a wheelchair seating location behind

the spectators. A dashed line illustrates that line of sight for the spectator

using the wheelchair and other lines show the line of sight for seated and

standing spectators. All spectators can see between the heads of the person in

the row directly in front of them and over the heads of the people two rows in

front.

Figure Showing Comparable Line of Sight for Wheelchair Seating Location

 In addition to wheelchair seating locations, at least one percent of all fixed seats in

 all seating areas must be aisle seats with no armrest, or with a removable or folding

 armrest, on the aisle side. These seats accommodate people who have a mobility

 disability but who wish to use a seat that is not a wheelchair seating location.

 An accessible route must connect the wheelchair seating locations with the

 stage(s), performing areas, arena or stadium floor, dressing or locker rooms, and

 other spaces used by performers.

Concessions

 All concessions, including food service areas, restaurants, and souvenir stands, must

 be accessible. For example, lowered counters must be provided where goods are

 provided and where cash registers are located. Condiments and self-serve food items

 must be provided within reach of a person using a wheelchair.

Access to playing fields, lockers, and spaces used by players and performers

 An accessible route must provide access to all public and common use areas

 including the playing field, locker rooms, dugouts, stages, swimming pools, and

 warm-up areas. The accessible route provides access for the public, employees, and

 athletes using the facility.

Assistive Listening Systems

When audible communications are integral to the use of a stadium, assistive listening

systems are required for people who are hard of hearing. These systems amplify

sound and deliver it to a special receiver that is worn by the spectator, or to the

spectators hearing aid, depending on the type of system that is used.

 The stadium must provide receivers for the assistive listening system. The

 number of available receivers must equal four percent of the total number of seats.

 Signs must be provided to notify spectators of the availability of receivers for the

 assistive listening system.

Other Accessible Features

Accessible Parking Spaces

 When parking spaces are provided, accessible parking spaces for cars and

 accessible parking spaces for vans are required. Accessible parking spaces must be

 the closest parking spaces to the accessible entrances and must be on an accessible route

 to the entrances.

Accessible Drop-Off and Pick-Up Areas

 If passenger drop-off areas are provided, they must be accessible and an accessible

 route must connect each accessible drop-off area with the accessible entrance(s). Curb

 ramps must be provided if the drop-off area is next to a curb.

Accessible Entrances

 At least fifty percent of the entrances must be accessible. Those that are not

 accessible must have signs that direct the public to the nearest accessible entrance.

 Accessible entrances that have turnstiles must provide an accessible gate or door.

Rest Rooms

 Each public and common use (including employee) rest room must be accessible.

 This includes rest rooms in work areas and rest rooms located in sky boxes and suites.

Public Telephones

 Each bank of public telephones must have one or more wheelchair accessible

 telephones and these and other public telephones must have the ability to amplify

 the volume at the handset. A sign must identify telephones equipped with

 amplification.

 At least one public TDD (telecommunications device for persons who are deaf or

 who have speech impairments) must be provided. Signs must identify the location of

 the TDD and provide direction from other telephone banks.

 For each bank of public telephones with three or more units, at least one telephone

 must be equipped with a shelf and electrical outlet to permit a person to use a

 portable TDD.

Water Coolers or Drinking Fountains

 Drinking fountains must accommodate people who use wheelchairs and people

 who stand but have difficulty bending or stooping. Half of the units must be

 wheelchair accessible and the others must accommodate standing users.

Visual Alarms

 Where audible fire alarms or emergency notification is provided, flashing lights are

 required in public and common use areas, including toilet and bath rooms, locker

 rooms, and along public corridors.

Signs

 Signs that identify permanent rooms and spaces, such as those identifying rest rooms,

 exits or room numbers, must have Braille and raised letters or numbers so that they may

 be read visually or tactually (by feeling the characters with oneþs fingers). They must

 also meet specific requirements for mounting location, color contrast, and non-glare

 surface. Signs that provide direction to, or information, about functional spaces must

 only comply with requirements for character proportion, character height, and finish and

 contrast between the characters and background.

ADA Information Line

For more information about the ADAþs design and construction requirements, contact

the Department of Justiceþs toll-free ADA Information Line at 800-514-0301 (Voice)

and 800- 514-0383 (TDD). Detailed requirements can be found in the ADA

Standards for Accessible Design. The ADA Standards and other useful technical

assistance documents are available from the ADA Information Li