

Victor O. Schinnerer & Company, Inc.



Guidelines for Improving Practice

for Improving Practice

A Resource from CNA/Schinnerer

New ADA Design Guidelines Issued

Guidelines for Improving Practice

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The design guidelines issued under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) have been revised. The new guidelines update the ADA Accessibility Guidelines. It is the first full-scale update since 1991. The guidelines apply to accessibility in new construction and alterations and contain scoping provisions, which indicate what has to comply, and technical specifications, which spell out how compliance is to be achieved.

Also revised were the guidelines for federal buildings under the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) of 1968. The ABA requires access to facilities designed, built, altered, or leased with federal funds. The new design guidelines provide a more consistent level of access under both the ADA and ABA.

To facilitate compliance, the guidelines attempt to be more consistent with model building codes, such as the International Building Code, and industry standards, such as the 1998 ICC/ANSI 117.1 standard, "Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities."

The guidelines serve as a legal baseline for regulations used to enforce the ADA and ABA. These regulations, which are maintained by other federal agencies, such as the U.S. Department of Justice, will be updated based on the new ADA guidelines. The guidelines become regulations when they are published in the *Federal Register*. It is only after the federal agencies charged with enforcing the ADA and ABA take action on the new guidelines do they become new regulations for construction-related professionals to follow.

More information can be obtained at www.access-board.gov. In addition, a non-governmental resource site is available. Evan Terry Associates, P.C., a design firm expert in accessibility issues, has developed a website that features additional analysis, technical assistance materials, and links to the ADA website for the updated guidelines. The Evan Terry Associates website is www.NewADAAG.com. ♦