

Accessible places and spaces

Refer to this resource:

- ▶ for information on building codes and standards for accessibility in construction, refurbishing buildings and venues, or renewing leases
- ▶ to find standards for accessible public transport and accessible places and spaces.

Everybody has a right to access and use public places, such as shops, restaurants, office blocks, educational institutions, sporting venues, libraries and cinemas.

Accessible to all

It is important that buildings and spaces are constructed and fitted out in a way that makes them accessible to all Queenslanders and Australian legislation requires buildings to be accessible for people with disability.

It is the Queensland disability sector's strongest demand that people with disability be engaged in the development and review of policies and practices — 'nothing about us without us'. As such, people with disability should be engaged during the planning of builds, renovations and refurbishments to increase the likelihood of a fit-for-purpose and accessible result.

A qualified access consultant can help to ensure plans meet accessibility requirements. For details on contacting an access consultant, visit the Association of Consultants in Access Australia Inc. website at www.access.asn.au

Building industry obligations

A building code and standard include accessibility requirements for people with disability and must be adhered to in designing, building or renovating properties or public areas. These are the:

- ▶ National Construction Code (including the *Building Code of Australia volumes 1 and 2*, and the *Plumbing Code of Australia volume 3*) —the *National Construction Code* sets the

design and structure standards for all buildings in Australia. Architects, town planners, engineers and councils use the *Building Code of Australia*, which is part of the *National Construction Code*, when designing buildings, streets, parks and all other public areas^{1,2}.

From 1 May 2019, the *National Construction Code* requires some public buildings to have accessible adult change facilities for people who cannot use standard accessible toilets. These public buildings include large shopping centres, sports stadiums, aquatic centres, museums, art galleries and airports.

Accessible adult change facilities provide people with disability with high-support needs, and their carers, with safe and comfortable access to a toilet and change area. These facilities allow people with disability, including people with an acquired brain injury, cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, spina bifida and motor neurone disease to enjoy the day-to-day activities many of us take for granted.

For more information on accessible change facilities, visit: www.disabilityaccessconsultants.com.au/what-is-an-accessible-adult-change-facility



- ▶ **Disability (Access to Premises – Building) Standards 2010**³ —these standards, also known as the Premises Standards, ensure dignified, equitable, cost-effective and reasonable access to buildings, and facilities and services within buildings, are provided to people with disability.

When new buildings are constructed, they must comply with the *National Construction Code* and the Premises Standards. Older buildings must comply with these standards when the owner, person or business using the building carries out major renovations or changes.

The Australian Building Codes Board administers both the National Construction Code and Premises Standards. For more information on the Australian Building Codes Board, call 1300 134 631 or email NCC@abcb.gov.au.

Information about other building-related topics is available on the Queensland Government’s homes and housing website.^{9,10} This website includes a link to the *Disability (Access to Premises – Building) Standards 2010*.

Other relevant standards

The Australian Human Rights Commission publishes standards, guidelines, advisory notes and frequently asked questions on accessibility to help developers construct new buildings and facilities that meet requirements under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*^{4,5}.

This information can be found on the Australian Human Rights Commission website at: www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/disability-rights

Public transport must also be accessible for people with disability and comply with the standards in the *Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002*¹¹.

Universal design

Universal design, also known as UDesign, is an approach to construction and housing design that caters to the needs of everyone in the community, including people with disability.

More information about universal design and best practice in building accessible places is available in the:

- ▶ *Queensland Government’s Smart and Sustainable Homes Design Objectives* — outlining good practice in designing, planning, building, maintaining and renovating homes for sustainability and accessibility⁶
- ▶ *Australian Government’s Livable Housing Design Guidelines* — providing voluntary targets for livable housing design for all new homes, including terraces, townhouses and apartments⁷
- ▶ *Australian Network for Universal Housing Design* — a national network supporting universal design for housing⁸.

State planning policy

The Queensland Government State Planning Policy includes guidelines for livable communities that are well designed and provide attractive, adaptable, accessible and inclusive built environments¹².

Getting out and about

The Queensland Government has a variety of information to assist people with disability to get out and about in their community.

To find out more about accessible places and spaces in the community, visit:

- ▶ www.qld.gov.au/disability/out-and-about
- ▶ www.allabilities.qld.gov.au
- ▶ www.tmr.qld.gov.au/Travel-and-transport/Disability-access-and-mobility

References

1. The Australian Building Codes Board:
www.abcb.gov.au
2. The National Construction Code:
<https://ncc.abcb.gov.au/ncc-online/ncc>
3. Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings Standards 2010):
www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2010L00668
4. Australian Human Rights Commission. Disability Standards. Standards & Guidelines:
www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/disability-rights/disability-standards#premises
5. Disability Discrimination Act 1992. No. 135, 1992:
www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2018C00125
6. Department of Housing and Public Works, Smart and Sustainable Homes Design Objectives:
www.hpw.qld.gov.au/construction/Sustainability/SmartSustainableHomes/SustainableHomeResources/Pages/Default.aspx
7. Department of Social Services. Disability and Carers. Livable Housing Design Guidelines:
www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/disability-and-carers/program-services/government-international/national-disability-strategy-initiatives/livable-housing-design/livable-housing-design-guidelines
8. Australian Network for Universal Housing Design:
<https://anuhd.org/>
9. Queensland Government. Building a home:
www.qld.gov.au/housing/building-home
10. Queensland Government. Homes and housing:
www.qld.gov.au/housing/building-home
11. Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002:
www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2005B01059
12. Queensland Government State Planning Policy:
<https://dilgpprd.blob.core.windows.net/general/spp-july-2017.pdf>

For further information

All Abilities Queensland: Opportunities for all, is the state disability plan for a welcoming and inclusive Queensland. A state where people with disability are respected for their abilities and have equal access to opportunities and to contribute and participate in all that Queensland has to offer.

For more information and resources, visit: www.allabilities.qld.gov.au

Resources in this series include:

1. Creating inclusive and accessible events
2. Accessible and inclusive communication
3. Employing people with disability
4. Increasing disability awareness
5. Disability action plans and legislation
6. Increasing participation of people with disability on boards and committees
7. Accessible places and spaces