



Office for Disability

Access Audits

An inaccessible built environment can present a barrier for people with a disability in everyday life, such as entering public buildings, using stairs, opening doors, hearing public announcements and reading signs. Accessible buildings and facilities enable equal use of the built environment for all people. In particular, accessibility allows dignified and non-discriminatory entry and use of buildings, facilities and services by people with a disability.

What is an access audit?

An access audit is an assessment that rates a building for useability and accessibility for a wide range of users, including people with a disability. Access audits identify barriers or potential barriers to people with a disability accessing a building and using services inside and around the building.

It involves an inspection of a building or facility by a building professional to assess the access features of a facility and its relevant policies and practices. The audit identifies adjustments that need to be made to ensure the building and its services are accessible.

Following the inspection, the auditor generally prepares a detailed report highlighting obstacles that have been identified and how they can be removed. This could include scheduling of immediate work, intermediate work or planning future modifications.

A comprehensive access audit will be guided by the **Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992** (the Act) and its associated Disability Standards, the Building Code of Australia and relevant Australian Standards. The Act makes it unlawful for public places to be inaccessible to people with a disability.

Why undertake an access audit?

An access audit is undertaken to improve the access to, use of and exit from buildings and facilities for people with a disability, thus increasing useability and accessibility.

What features does an access audit consider?

Common features taken into account include:

- entrances and doorways — door widths for wheelchairs and scooters, weight of doors and ease of opening
- lighting
- signage — external and internal, such as Braille in lifts
- height of reception desks and tellers
- circulation space
- accessible toilets
- accessible car parking
- assistive listening technology, such as hearing loops.

Many other features can be considered. As a preliminary step to using the specialist advice from an access audit, organisations can conduct a self-assessment by completing an accessibility checklist (see Further information).

Who can conduct an access audit?

It is recommended that accredited access consultants are engaged to conduct an access audit. The Association of Consultants in Access, Australia Inc. provides information on their website: www.access.asn.au.

Further information

See also: Office for Disability fact sheet 'Access to Buildings' and 'Improving Access to Buildings' www.officefordisability.vic.gov.au .

If you would like to receive this document in an accessible format, contact the Office for Disability:

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