



ADA Requirements & Considerations: Sales and Service Counters

Introduction

Each facility or part of a facility constructed by, or on behalf of, or for the use of a public entity shall be designed and constructed in such a manner that the facility or part of the facility is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. Physical construction or alterations commencing on or after March 15, 2012 shall comply with the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design (ADAS). The 2010 ADAS apply to fixed or built-in elements of buildings, including sales and service counters.

The purpose of this document is to review the ADAS requirements for sales and service counters and relevant elements and highlight the Office of Accessibility's recommendations for construction and alterations involving sales and service counters.

Construction Tolerances

The 2010 ADAS provides scoping and technical requirements for accessibility to sales and service counters elements by individuals with disabilities. These requirements are applied during the design, construction, additions to, and alteration of counter elements. Dimensions not stated as "maximum" or "minimum" are absolute. All dimensions are subject to conventional industry tolerances except where the requirement is stated as a range with specific minimum and maximum endpoints.

The Department of Justice (DOJ) offers advisory guidance on tolerances including:

- Conventional industry tolerances include those for field conditions.
- Recognized tolerances **do not** apply to design work.
- Avoid specifying a tolerance where dimensions are absolute.
- When a requirement states a specific range, that range provides for adequate tolerance and **no tolerance outside of the range at either end point is permitted.**
- Where a requirement is a minimum or maximum dimension without specific min/max end points, tolerances may apply. It is best practice to specify a dimension less than the required maximum (or more than the required minimum) by the amount of the appropriate construction tolerance.

The following guidance will help ensure City facilities and building elements accomplish the level of accessibility intended by the ADAS. These parameters for sales and service counters elements will also promote ADAS compliance and minimize enforcement issues. Please note - the Office of Accessibility will only accept design and construction meeting this guidance.

Sales & Service Counters

Element	2010 ADA Standard	Compliance Guidance
Number Needed (227.3)	Where provided, at least one of each type of sales counter and service counter shall comply with 904.4. Where counters are dispersed throughout the <i>building or facility</i> , counters complying with 904.4 also shall be dispersed.	Provide at least 1 accessible sales or service counter dispersed throughout the facility for each area of sales/services.
Approach (904.2)	All portions of counters required to comply with 904 shall be located adjacent to a walking surface complying with 403.	Provide an accessible route at least 36" wide leading to the counter, that is level (under 2% grade or less than ¼" vertical raise or ½" beveled) and is firm, stable, and slip resistant.
Counter Approach	<u>Parallel</u> = A clear floor or ground <i>space</i> complying with 305 shall be positioned for a parallel approach adjacent to the 36" minimum length of counter. <u>Forward</u> = A clear floor or ground <i>space</i> complying with 305 shall be positioned for a forward approach to the counter.	Provide a 48"x30" clear area that is level (under 2% grade), firm, stable, and slip resistant for each accessible sales or service counter.
Counter Depth (904.4)	The <i>accessible</i> portion of the counter top shall extend the same depth as the sales or service counter top.	Ideally this should be at least 11" deep.
Approach – Side Facing / Parallel (904.4.1)	A portion of the counter surface that is 36" long minimum and 36" high maximum above the finish floor shall be provided.	Provide an area at least 36" wide no higher than 36" tall. To account for coasters, errors or future modifications aim for a counter 35" high. Also refer to Counter Approach for clear floor area requirement.
Approach – Forward Facing (904.4.2)	A portion of the counter surface that is 30" long minimum and 36" high maximum shall be provided. Knee and toe <i>space</i> complying with 306 shall be provided under the counter.	Provide an area at least 30" wide no higher than 36" tall. To account for coasters, errors or future modifications aim for a counter 35" high. Further, knee under clearance of 27" minimum required. See - lavatory knee requirements. Also refer to Counter Approach for clear floor area requirement.

Check-Out Aisles

Element	2010 ADA Standard	Compliance Guidance
Number Needed (227.2)	Where check-out aisles are provided, check-out aisles complying with 904.3 shall be provided in accordance with Table 227.2. Where check-out aisles serve different functions, check-out aisles complying with 904.3 shall be provided in accordance with Table 227.2 for each function. Where check-out aisles are dispersed throughout the <i>building</i> or <i>facility</i> , check-out aisles complying with 904.3 shall be dispersed.	Provide at least 1 accessible check out aisle dispersed throughout the facility for each cluster of aisles. Total Aisles Accessible 1-4 1 5-8 2 9-15 3 If retail space is under 5000 square feet only 1 is needed.
Approach – Aisle Counter (904.3.1)	Aisles shall comply with 403.	Provide an accessible route leading to and parallel with the counter that is at least 36” wide, is level (under 2% grade or less than ¼” vertical raise or ½” beveled) and is firm, stable, and slip resistant.
Aisle Counter (904.3.2)	The counter surface height shall be 38 inches maximum above the finish floor. The top of the counter edge protection shall be 2 inches maximum above the top of the counter surface on the aisle side of the check-out-counter.	Make sure counter is no higher than 38” with a maximum 2” edge (40” total is max). Aim for under 36” to keep consistent with other counter maximums.
Check Writing Surface (904.3.3)	Where provided, check writing surfaces shall comply with 902.3.	At least 1 check writing surface between 28-34” in height. Aim for 29-33” to account for coasters, errors or future modifications.