



City of Long Beach
Department of Development Services
Building and Safety Bureau
**Accessible Counter at
Food/Drink Serving Facility**

Information
Bulletin
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BACKGROUND

California Access civil laws and regulations promulgated in the California Building Code (CBC), Title 24, Part 2, ensure equal access for people with disabilities by prohibiting their exclusions from everyday activities, such as buying an item at the store, watching a movie in a theater, enjoying a meal at a local restaurant, exercising at the local health club, or having the car serviced at a local garage. In providing equal access, every effort must be exhausted to ensure that access is being provided on equal terms, without highlighting any special accommodations, and without any special assistance similar to the required unassisted entry usually provided to gain access. As such, people with disabilities are able to dine or work at a restaurant as well as an able-bodied individual and enjoy the same experience afforded to the general public.

ACCESSIBLE COUNTER IN DINING AND DRINKING ESTABLISHMENTS

CBC § 11B-226 requires that each dining, banquet, and bar area shall have one wheelchair seating for each 20 seats, with at least one minimum wheelchair seating space per functional area. Such seating shall be designed and arranged to permit use by wheelchair occupants, and shall comply with CBC § 11B-206.2.4 and 11B-902, Fixed or Built-in Seating, Tables and Counters. Access to such seating spaces shall be provided with main aisles not less than 36 inches clear width. In establishments where separate areas are designated for smoking and non-smoking patrons, the required number of accessible fixed tables (counters) shall be proportionally distributed between the smoking and non-smoking areas. Accessible seating spaces shall be integrated with general seating to allow a reasonable selection of seating area to avoid having one area specifically highlighted as the area for persons with disabilities. The ratio of accessible seating is based on the total number seats provided. Where food or drink is served at counters exceeding 34 inches in height for consumption by customers seated or standing at the counter, a portion of the main counter that is 60 inches in length minimum shall be provided in compliance with CBC § 11B-902.

The dedicated accessible counter surface must be located and integrated with the general seating so that to provide the same experience including viewing experience otherwise afforded to the general public without highlighting the space with different colors, shapes, or finishes. For example, the accessible lowered counter space at bar counters or food preparations viewing areas shall be designed without any obstruction such as lip or back splash so that the view behind the counter is unobstructed similar to the non-accessible counter surface.

Self-service restaurants with a food service line must provide adequate maneuvering space for a person using a wheelchair to approach and move through the line.

Please refer to Exhibit 1 for illustration and additional requirements.

Exhibit 1

