



# An Introduction to the U.S. Access Board

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National Employment Team Fall Summit  
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# Overview

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1. Mission and Structure
2. Overview of rulemaking process
3. Opportunities to contribute



# Structure

An independent, federal micro agency comprised of:

- Up to 30 Federal Staff
- 25 Board Members
  - 13 public members appointed by the President
  - 12 federal members from cabinet-level agencies, the U.S. Postal Service (USPS), and the General Services Administration (GSA)

# 1968: Architectural Barriers Act (ABA)



- First federal law to address access for people with disabilities
- Covers facilities:
  - constructed or altered by or on behalf of the United States
  - leased, in whole or in part by the United States
  - financed in whole or in part by a grant or loan made by the United States

# 1973: Rehabilitation Act, Section 502

## Established the U.S. Access Board

### Mission/Functions

1. Develop accessibility guidelines & standards.
2. Provide technical assistance & training on these guidelines and standards.
3. Enforce the ABA Standards.



# 1978: Rehabilitation Act, Amended

Expanded scope of Board's responsibility by authorizing the Board to:

- establish standards for accessibility of federal buildings and to
- assist agencies in the removal of architectural and communications barriers, etc.

# Additional Laws Defining Access Board's Responsibilities

**1990: Expanded responsibility to include establishing guidelines:**

- For the accessibility of state and local government facilities; facilities owned, leased, or operated by places of public accommodation; and certain transportation vehicles

**1996: Authority to issue standards under Section 255 of the Telecommunications Act**

# Laws Defining Access Board's Responsibilities (Continued)

## **1998: Tasked with issuing standards under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act**

- Requiring all information and communication technology procured, maintained, or used by the federal government be readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities

## **2010: Section 510 of the Rehabilitation Act (part of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act)**

- Directs Board to issue technical standards for the accessibility of medical diagnostic equipment (MDE)



# Process for Issuing Accessibility Standards and Guidelines

- Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM)
- Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) - opportunity for public comment (typically 60 days)
- Preliminary and Final Regulatory Impact Analyses - required for most rulemakings
- Board reviews public comments, revises the rule text, and issues a Final Rule
- Board vote and review
- Interagency coordination through the Office of Management and Budget is required before publication of ANPRM, NPRM, and Final rule

# Public Comments: Your Call to Action!

1. Review and post your comments.
2. Share with others.

The screenshot shows the Federal Register website for a proposed rule. The title is "Standards for Accessible Medical Diagnostic Equipment" by the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board, dated 08/01/2023. The page includes a "PUBLISHED DOCUMENT" section with the following details:

AGENCY:	DOCUMENT DETAILS
Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board.	Printed version: PDF
<b>ACTION:</b> Notice of proposed rulemaking; extension of comment period.	Publication Date: 08/01/2023
<b>SUMMARY:</b> The Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (hereafter, "Access Board" or "Board"), is extending the comment period for the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on Standards for Accessible Medical Diagnostic Equipment published in the <i>Federal Register</i> on May 23, 2023. In that	Agency: Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board
	Dates: The comment period for the notice of proposed rulemaking published on May 23, 2023, at 68 FR 33056, is extended. Comments should be received on or before August 31, 2023.

The screenshot shows the Access Board website for the same proposed rule. It provides the following information:

**ADDRESSES:**  
You may submit comments by any one of the following methods:

- **Federal eRulemaking Portal:** <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- **Email:** [docket@access-board.gov](mailto:docket@access-board.gov). Include docket number ATBCB-2023-0001 in the subject line of the message.
- **Mail:** Office of General Counsel, U.S. Access Board, 1321 F Street NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20004-1111.

**Instructions:** All submissions must include the docket number (ATBCB-2023-0001) for this regulatory action. All comments received will be posted without change to <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information provided.

**Docket:** For access to the docket to read background documents or comments received, go to <https://www.regulations.gov/docket/ATBCB-2023-0001>.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**  
Accessibility Specialist Bobby Stannette, (202) 272-0021, [bstannette@access-board.gov](mailto:bstannette@access-board.gov); or Attorney Advisor Wendy Marshall, (202) 272-0043, [wmarshall@access-board.gov](mailto:wmarshall@access-board.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

Additional details on the right side of the page include: 50096-50097 (2 pages), CFR: 36 CFR 1195, Agency/Docket Number: (Docket No. ATBCB-2023-0001), RN: 2014-AA45, Document Number: 2023-16218, Page views: 392, and Date: 08/16/2023 at 8:15 am EDT.

# Accessibility Guidelines and Standards

The Board has developed technical accessibility specifications in the following areas:

- Buildings and facilities
- Outdoor developed areas
- Transit systems
- Public transit facilities
- Buses and vans
- Rail vehicles
- Information and communication technology
- Prescription drug labels
- Medical diagnostic equipment

# Access Board Guidelines

*(Published August 2023)*

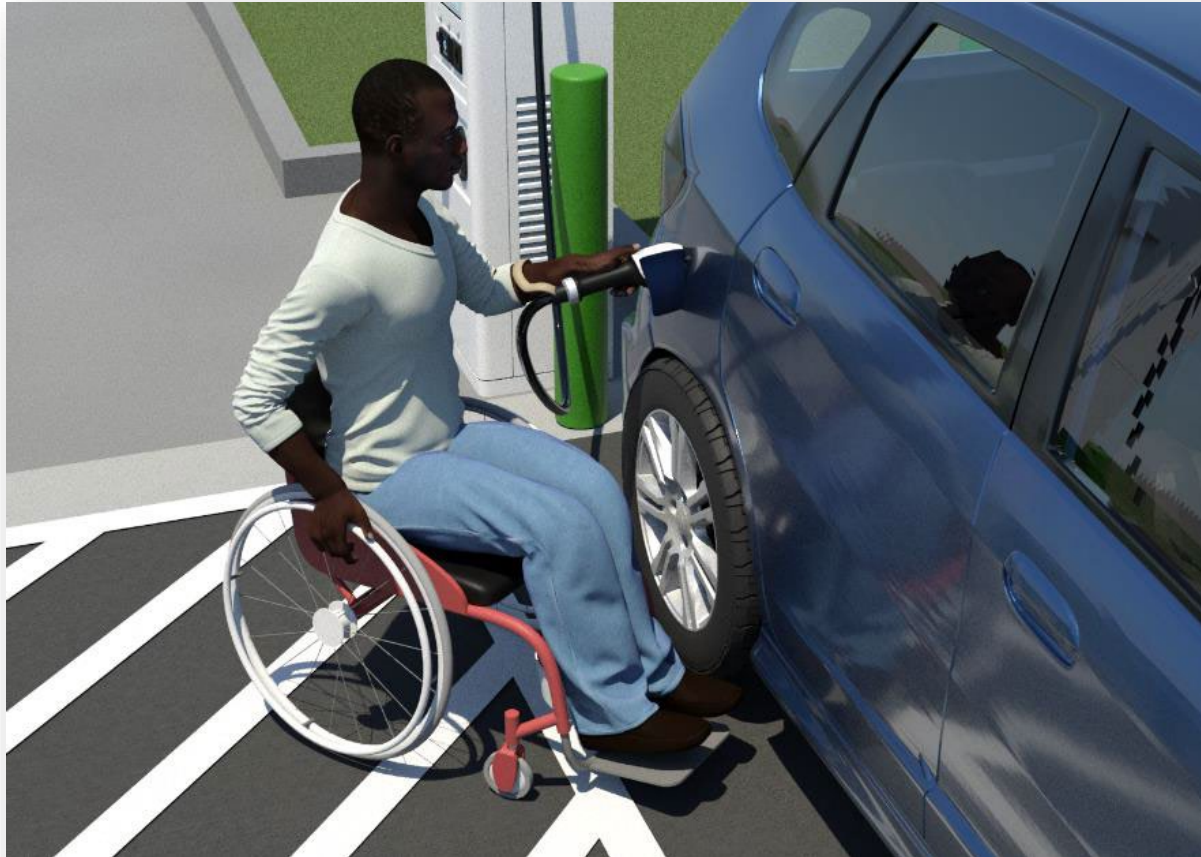
## Pedestrian Facilities in the Public Right-of-Way (PROWAG)

- Provides standards for accessibility of sidewalks, intersections, transit stops in the public right-of-way, on-street parking, shared use paths, and other facilities and elements that pedestrians use
- Guidelines will apply to State and local government entities and to public-rights-of-way subject to the ABA



# Access Board Guidelines

## *In Development*



## Accessibility of Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations

- August 2022: Access Board issued a TA document with technical recommendations
- September 2023: NPRM planned
- Will amend both the ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) and the ABA Accessibility Guidelines (ABAAG)

# Access Board Guidelines

## *In Development, continued*



## Self-Service Transaction Machines

- September 2022: Published an ANPRM published
- December 2023: Projected publication date for the NPRM



# Standard for Medical Diagnostic Equipment *In Development, cont.*

- January 2017: Published
- Outstanding issue at that time: low transfer height for examination tables and chairs
- May 2023: Access Board issued an NPRM (comment period ended July 24, 2023), setting 17 inches as the low transfer height; currently, under provisions set to expire in February 2025, transfer height from 17 to 19 inches is permitted



# Access Board Standards & Guidelines

## *In Development, continued*



## Guidelines for Passenger Rail Vehicles

- 2020: ANPRM issued
- May 2024: NPRM anticipated



# Services: Technical Assistance, Guides and Training

## Accessibility Assistance:

Phone: (202) 272-0080, Ext 3

Email: [ta@access-board.gov](mailto:ta@access-board.gov)

## Webinar Series

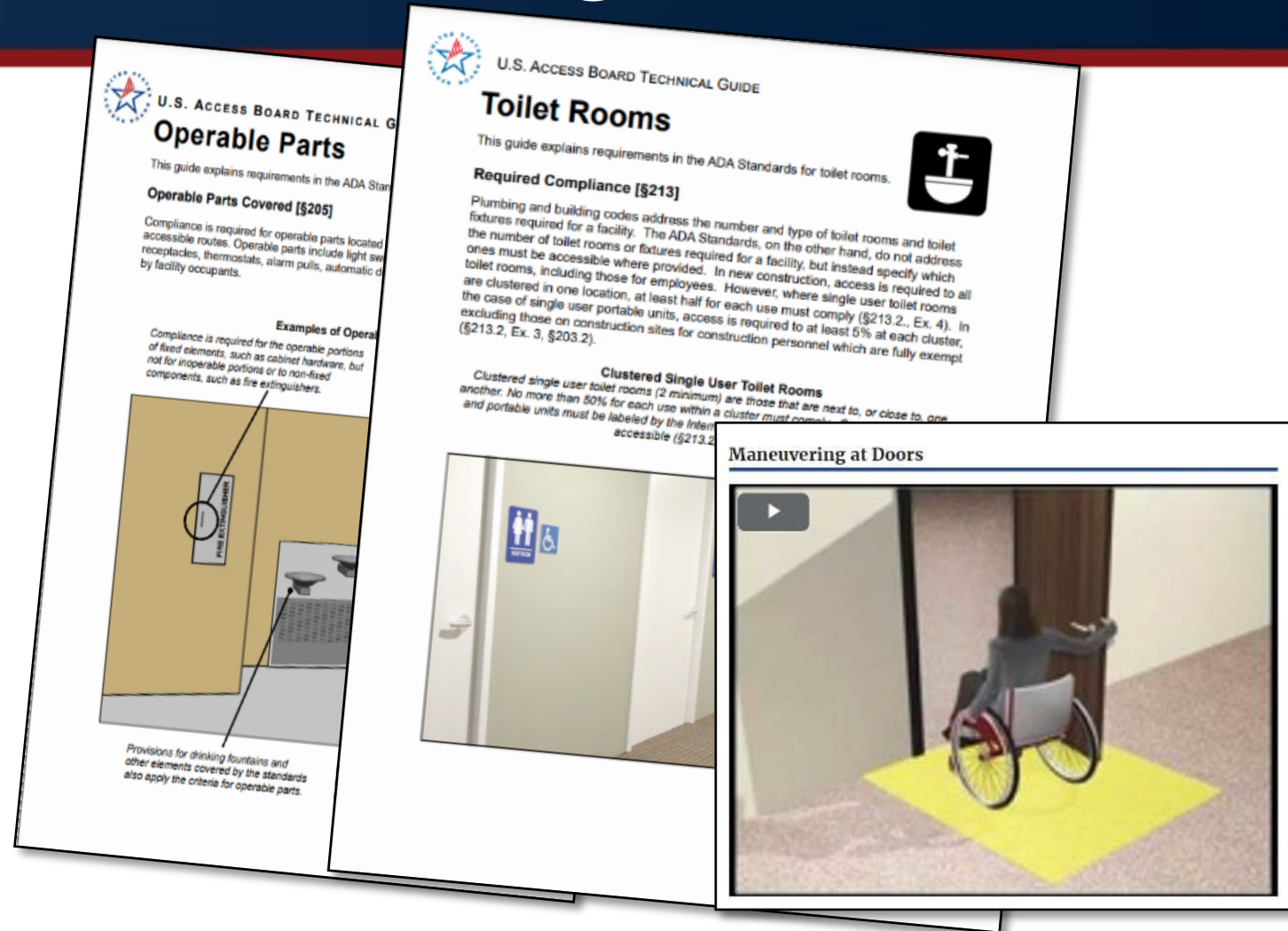
Monthly Built Environment

Bi-Monthly 508/Technology

## Training

## Guides and Animations

Website: [www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov)





# What Can YOU Do?

1. **Subscribe** to news updates: [info@access-board.gov](mailto:info@access-board.gov)
2. **Provide your input** via public comments when NPRMs are posted.
3. **See something say something:** ABA enforcement.
4. **Be accessible. Every day!**

# U.S. Access Board Contact Information

(202) 272-0080, Ext. 3

E-mail: [ta@access-board.gov](mailto:ta@access-board.gov)

[www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov)



*“Advancing Full Access and Inclusion for All”*