



**B651-18**  
National Standard of  
Canada



# Accessible design for the built environment



REVISED MARCH 2020

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# Revision History

## B651, Accessible design for the built environment

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<a href="#">Preface</a> Clauses <a href="#">4.3.5.3.1</a> , <a href="#">4.5.3</a> , <a href="#">4.5.6.2</a> , <a href="#">4.5.6.3</a> , <a href="#">5.1.1</a> , <a href="#">6.2.4.4</a> , <a href="#">6.3.1.2</a> , <a href="#">7.4.4.6.1</a> , and <a href="#">7.4.4.6.2</a> Tables <a href="#">2</a> and <a href="#">5</a> Figures <a href="#">11</a> , <a href="#">19</a> , <a href="#">33</a> , <a href="#">40</a> , <a href="#">42</a> , <a href="#">44</a> , <a href="#">45</a> , <a href="#">47</a> , and <a href="#">A.11</a>	Δ

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# National Standard of Canada

## B651-18

# Accessible design for the built environment



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## Δ Preface

This is the fifth edition of CSA B651, Accessible design for the built environment. It supersedes the previous editions published in 2012 and 2004 under the same title, and the 1995 and 1990 editions published under the title, Barrier-free design. This edition of the Standard has been reformatted without the informative Commentary. The Commentary is now available in CSA B651HB-18, Accessible design for the built environment – Implementation Handbook.

The technical requirements in this Standard are minimum levels. They represent a consensus of the Technical Committee members, who represent a broad spectrum of interests. The members are helped and encouraged by the public comments received as a result of the wide distribution of a draft at the public review stage.

The Technical Committee on Accessibility has also produced two related Standards, CSA B651.1, Accessible design for automated banking machines, and CAN/CSA-B651.2, Accessible design for self-service interactive devices.

The Technical Committee has also developed other Standards, including

- a) CSA B480, Customer service standard for people with disabilities;
- b) CSA B659, Inclusive design for an aging population; and
- c) the adoption, CAN/CSA-ISO IWA 18, Framework for integrated community-based life-long health and care services in aged societies.

Significant changes to this edition include the following:

- a) expansion of requirements to accommodate the full range of wheeled mobility devices, including manual and powered wheelchairs, and scooters;
- b) updates to dimensions based on current data from anthropometric research;
- c) alignment of design requirements with the accessible design section of the National Building Code of Canada;

- d) updated requirements for exterior environments; and
- e) a new informative annex on trails and beach access routes.

This Standard was prepared by the Technical Committee on Accessibility, under the jurisdiction of the Strategic Steering Committee on Health and Well-Being, and has been approved by the Technical Committee.

This Standard has been developed in compliance with Standards Council of Canada requirements for National Standards of Canada. It has been published as a National Standard of Canada by CSA Group.

# B651-18

## Accessible design for the built environment

### 0 Introduction

This Standard contains requirements for making buildings and other facilities accessible to persons with a range of physical, sensory, or cognitive disabilities including but not limited to mobility impairments, reaching or manipulation disabilities, hearing impairments, visual impairments, etc. It was developed to fulfill an expressed need for a national technical standard that covers accessibility issues in many different types of buildings and environmental facilities, and can be referenced in whole or in part by a variety of adopting agencies or jurisdictions.

The technical requirements in this Standard cover design aspects of physical spaces and the elements within them to help ensure that they are accessible to people having different abilities and disabilities. The Standard does not specify the extent to which these requirements have to be applied, as this is the responsibility of the authorities having jurisdiction, whether federal, provincial/territorial, or municipal. The 2015 edition of the National Building Code of Canada (NBC) has referenced certain clauses of CSA B651 as providing an acceptable alternative to the accessible design requirements in the NBC. The Standard is also referenced in other regulations and guidelines. The user is advised to contact the local authority having jurisdiction in this field to determine to what extent this edition of the Standard is referenced.

The CSA Technical Committee that developed this Standard recognizes that it operates within a broader context of social and regulatory initiatives. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2006 and ratified by Canada on March 11, 2010. This ground-breaking, legally binding UN Convention promotes, protects, and ensures that persons with disabilities have the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights — a

major step towards equalizing their opportunities and participation in society.

This Standard also supports the principles of universal design (UD) as it applies to the built environment, i.e., designing environments so that they can be accessed, understood, and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability, or disability.

## **1 Scope**

### **1.1 Purpose**

This Standard specifies technical requirements on how to make buildings and the exterior built environment accessible and safely usable by persons with physical, sensory, or cognitive disabilities.

### **1.2 Application**

This Standard describes technical requirements that can be used in the design and construction of new facilities or exterior environments, or in modifications to existing facilities. This Standard does not address the application of the technical requirements. The extent to which these requirements have to be applied is the responsibility of other authorities having jurisdiction.

### **1.3 Dimensions**

This Standard contains minimum requirements based on adult dimensions. Dimensions are given in SI (metric) units (typically in millimetres) and, where converted from foot/pound (imperial) units, have been rounded off with respect to critical dimensions. All dimensions in figures are given in millimetres and are measured to the centreline, unless otherwise specified.

### **1.4 Commentary and figures**

Commentary and figures are included for explanatory or illustrative purposes only and are not a mandatory part of the Standard. Figures are not to scale. If there is any difference between the text and figure (where provided), the text shall take precedence.