

Five Steps for Businesses Accessibility

1. Get a Certified Access Specialist (CASp) Inspection

A Certified Access Specialist (CASp):

- Is a professional who has passed an examination and has been certified by the State of California to have specialized knowledge of state and federal construction-related accessibility standards.
- Can inspect a business site for compliance issues, provide inspection report, and issue Disability Access Inspection Certificate.
 - “Meets Applicable Standards” (No corrections)
 - OR**
 - “Inspected by a CASp” (corrections need to be made)

A CASp inspection provides legal benefits that may reduce a business’ financial liability in a lawsuit filed in State court.

Average cost for a small business CASp inspection is less than \$2,000. Expense is eligible for IRS credits/deductions and some loan types.

2. Include Accessibility in the Business Plan

Use the CASp inspection report to establish a reasonable compliance schedule – write schedule into the business plan.

Determine how much will be spent on compliance each year and incorporate that budget into the business plan; include savings plan for larger accessibility improvements.

Work on access improvements from the outside in. Top access violations relate to parking lots, pathways, and entryways.

Plan to use IRS credits/deductions for access improvements. It may be helpful to phase large projects into two-years so that the credits and deductions can be maximized.

3. Check Lease Agreements

Landlord is not required to have conducted a CASp inspection, however they must state on lease/rental agreement whether or not the property has been inspected by a CASp.

- If CASp has been performed, report must be provided to tenant prior to execution of agreement for the leased space and for the common areas.

Property owner may not prohibit a CASp inspection of the premises.

Lease agreement should state clearly the property owner's and tenant's responsibility for correcting accessibility violations and cost of making repairs.

Conduct a public records search to determine if the leased property is a subject of current or past access-related litigation.

4. Create an Accessibility Maintenance Program and File

Create a maintenance schedule for checking accessibility – examples include clear pathways, door pressure, and other quick fixes.

Train staff on disability etiquette, customer service, service animals, and accessibility.

Document all efforts with dates, photos, and receipts. This is the legal defense and IRS credits/deductions backup information.

5. Utilize Tax Benefits and Financial Resources

Track all accessibility costs for tax credits and deductions annually.

Use the Disabled Access Credit and Architectural Barrier Removal Tax Deduction.

CalCAP/ADA Financing Program available for accessibility improvement.

Critical Mind Shift:
***Accessibility is not an added expense,
it is a cost of doing business.***



To learn more visit
www.fresno.gov/AccessibleFresno

