
A GUIDE TO

ADA SIGNAGE REQUIREMENTS

PRESENTED BY



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We at Burnham Nationwide and Cushing have experience in ADA compliance and assisting our clients to better understand the nuances of signage requirements on a local, state, and federal level.

The following document serves as an overview of the scoping and technical requirements (Sections 216 and 703) for a variety of required signs in new and existing facilities, from permanent and temporary, directional and informational, and means of egress signage.

All new construction and modifications to public accommodations and commercial facilities must be built in compliance with Title III of the American's with Disabilities Act. In addition, existing public accommodations are obligated to remove barriers bringing former non-accessible elements such as signage into compliance.

SIGNAGE COVERED UNDER THE ADA

WALL MOUNTED

- Directional Signs
- Informational Signs
- Permanent room signage

CEILING MOUNTED OR PROJECTED

- Directional Signs
- Informational Signs

REQUIRED ACCESSIBLE SIGNAGE

- Permanent Rooms or Spaces
- Directional and Informational Signs
- Means of Egress
 - Exit doors at exit stairways, exit passageways, and exit discharge
- Parking Spaces
- Entrances
- Elevators
- Toilet and Bathing Rooms
- TTYs and Assistive Listening Systems
- Check-out Aisles
- Amusement Rides

ACCESSIBLE SIGNAGE NOT REQUIRED

- Temporary Signs (7 days or less)
- Building Addresses and Directories
- Company Names and Logos
- Occupant Names
- Menus
- Seat and Row Designations in Assembly Areas
- Signs in Non-Public Areas of Detention and Correctional Facilities

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS



TACTILE TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

BRaille REQUIREMENTS:

703.3 – Braille

Contracted (Grade 2)

703.3 and 703.4

703.3.1 Dimensions and Capitalization

Braille dots – domed or rounded shape

Uppercase letter or letter indication only used before first word of sentences, proper nouns and names, individual letters of the alphabet, initials, and acronyms

703.3.2 – Position

Below corresponding text

If multi-line text, braille placed below entire text

Separated 3/8 inch min. from any other tactile characters

Separated 3/8 inch min. from raised borders and decorative elements

EXCEPT: Braille provided on elevator car controls

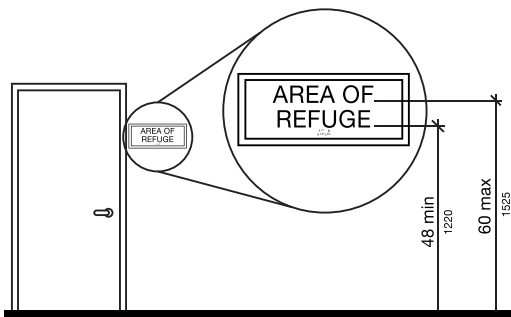
Separated 3/16 inch min.

Located either directly below or adjacent to corresponding raised characters or symbols

703.4.1 – Height above finish floor or ground

Tactile characters on signs – 48" min. AFF and 60" max. AFF measured from baseline of lowest tactile character

EXCEPT: Elevator car controls



VISUAL TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

VISUAL ACCESSIBILITY:

703.2.1 – Depth

Raised characters – 1/32 inch min. above background

703.2.2 – Case

All uppercase

703.2.3 – Style

Sans Serif Font

No italics, oblique, script, highly decorative, or unusual forms of text

703.5.1 – Finish and Contrast

Non-glare finish for characters and background

Characters – contrast w/ background: either light characters on dark background or dark on light

More visible for persons w/ low vision: characters contrast as much as possible w/ background

Additional factors affecting ease of distinguishing text

Shadows cast by lighting sources

Surface glare

Uniformity of text and its background colors and textures

703.5.2 – Case

Uppercase or lowercase or combination of both

703.5.3 – Style

Conventional in form

NOT italic, oblique, script, highly decorative, or other unusual forms

(CONT'D) TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

703.4.2 – Location

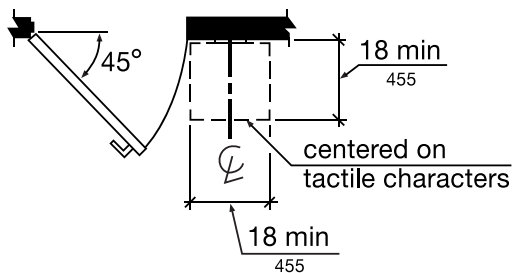
Where a tactile sign is provided at a door, shall be located alongside the door at the latch side.

Where tactile sign is provided at double doors with one active leaf, shall be located on inactive leaf.

Where the tactile sign is provided at double doors with two active leaves, shall be located on the nearest adjacent wall.

Signs w/ tactile characters located so that clear floor space of 18" min., centered on tactile characters, is provided beyond the arc of any door swing between closed position and 45 degree open position.

EXCEPT: Signs w/ tactile characters permitted on push side of doors w/ closers and w/o hold-open devices



703.5.4 – Character Proportions

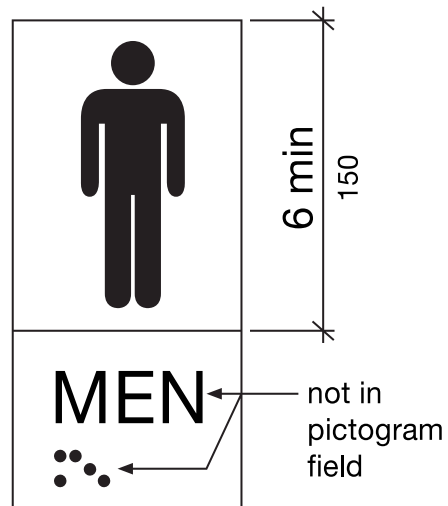
Select fonts where the width of uppercase letter "O" is 55 percent min. and 110 percent max. height of uppercase letter "I"

703.5.5 – Character Height

Min. character height comply w/ table 703.5.5

Viewing distance measured as horizontal distance between character and an obstruction preventing further approach towards sign

Character height based on uppercase letter "I"



SCOPING - WHEN IS TACTILE VS. VISUAL SIGNAGE NEEDED?

The 2010 Standards acknowledge the needs of both “touch” readers and visual readers, including those with multiple disabilities.



703.2: TACTILE

Permanent rooms: Interior and exterior signs designating permanent rooms and spaces

Exit Doors: must be identified by tactile signs

Elevators: Floor designations provided on both jambs of elevator hoistway entrances

Elevators: Destination-oriented elevators tactile car identification on both jambs of hoistway immediately below floor designation

Control Button	Tactile Symbol	Braille Message
Emergency Stop		“ST”OP Three Cells
Alarm		AL”AR”M Four Cells
Door Open		OP”EN” Three Cells
Door Close		CLOSE Five Cells
Main Entry Floor		MA”IN” Three Cells
Phone		PH”ON”E Four Cells



703.5: VISUAL

Permanent rooms: Interior and exterior signs designating permanent rooms and spaces

Directional and Informational Signs: Signs that provide direction/information about interior spaces

Exit Doors: must be identified by tactile signs

Areas of Refuge: must comply

Directional Signs to accessible means of egress

Directional signs indicating location of nearest accessible entrance shall be provided at non-accessible entrances.

Where existing toilet or bathing rooms are not accessible, directional signs to the location of the nearest toilet or bathing room in compliance with the facility shall be provided.

Public TTY’s:

Directional Signage: Must comply and provide International Symbol of TTY

Assisted Listening Systems:

Assembly Areas required to provide assistive listening systems must provide signs informing patrons of availability of assistive listening systems and include International Symbol of Access for Hearing Loss (703.7.2.4).

WE’RE HERE TO HELP

We hope this signage guide helps with your planning and answers questions.

For permit expediting and consultation, get in touch with **Burnham Nationwide**.

For ADA signage and installation, reach out to **Cushing**.