

A photograph of a modern hotel lobby with a wheelchair in the foreground. The wheelchair has a chrome frame and tan-colored upholstery. The background shows a blurred interior with orange armchairs and large windows. The text 'ACCESSIBILITY POLICY' is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font on the left side of the image, with a red vertical bar to its left.

# ACCESSIBILITY POLICY



## PURPOSE

BWH Hotels is dedicated to ensuring that all guests, including those with disabilities, have an equitable, comfortable, and dignified experience during their stay. This policy outlines the requirements and standards for accessibility and disabled rooms across all BWH properties, ensuring compliance with international regulations and best practices.

Please note that this policy includes requirements and standards that are only applicable to new build hotels or existing hotels that offer accessibility and disabled rooms & common areas.

## LEGISLATION

AS1428.1-2009 is the Australian standard for "Design for access and mobility" that specifies the minimum design requirements for general access in new building work to ensure accessibility for people with disabilities.

The building standards as outlined in the Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010 apply to new buildings and new additions/extensions to existing buildings where an application for approval for its construction is submitted, on or after 1 May 2011.

Buildings in Australia are legally required to comply with the National Construction Code (NCC) that was in effect at the time the building was approved and are generally not required to retrospectively meet new compliance requirements unless major renovations or changes of use occur.

Therefore, hotels built before the introduction of the Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010, which came into effect on 1 May 2011, are not automatically required to comply with AS1428.1-2009 unless:

- They undergo significant renovations or change of use that triggers building approval.
- They are subject to complaints or legal action under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA).

### ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

#### General Accessibility:

1. **Compliance with Local Standards:** All BWH Hotels must adhere to local regulations governing accessibility.
2. **Accessibility Audits:** Regular accessibility audits should be conducted to ensure that the hotel infrastructure, rooms, and services meet or exceed these standards.
3. **Public Areas:** All public areas (lobbies, restaurants, meeting rooms, etc.) must be accessible to guests with disabilities, providing ramps, elevators, and other necessary accommodations.

#### Accessibility in Design:

1. **Step-Free Access:** All hotels should provide step-free access to main areas such as entrances, reception, dining areas, and accessible rooms.
2. **Ramps and Elevators:** Ramps must have a maximum slope of 1:14. Elevators must be able to accommodate a wheelchair, with minimum internal dimensions of 1,400 mm (depth) x 1,100 mm (width). Doors must have a minimum clear opening width of 900 mm and should open and close slowly enough to allow access for people with disabilities.
3. **Accessible Parking:** Designated accessible parking spaces must be available near the entrance, wide enough for wheelchair users to enter and exit their vehicles comfortably.

#### Accessibility Features and Services:

1. **Assistive Devices:** Upon request, hotels must provide assistive devices such as wheelchairs, portable ramps, hearing aid-compatible phones, and visual alert systems.
2. **Communication Accessibility:** All communication materials, including hotel information, emergency instructions, and menus, must be available in accessible formats such as Braille, large print, and digital versions.
3. **Website and Booking:** The BWH Hotels website and booking platforms must be accessible, ensuring that guests with disabilities can easily reserve accessible rooms and review the hotel's accessibility features online.





### DISABLED ROOM POLICY

#### Room Availability and Variety:

1. **Room Availability:** Each BWH Hotel must provide a sufficient number of accessible rooms based on local regulations governing accessibility.
2. **Reservation Priority:** Accessible rooms should be reserved for guests with disabilities and should not be released to the general public unless necessary. Every effort must be made to ensure these rooms are available when requested.

#### Disabled Room Features:

1. **Room Layout:** Ensure that accessible rooms are designed with adequate turning space for wheelchair users (minimum 1500 mm turning radius) near the bed, bathroom, and entryway. Entrance and pathways minimum width of 1000 mm for hallways and around furniture.
2. **Doors and Entrances:** All doorways must have a clear width of 850 mm and be fitted with lever handles or automatic mechanisms requiring minimal force to open. Door thresholds should not exceed 10 mm or must be ramped or as per local regulation governing accessibility.
3. **Furniture:** Furniture such as desks, tables, and beds should be placed at accessible heights and provide clearance for wheelchair use. Beds should be between 450-520 mm high, with space underneath for hoists if required or as per local regulation governing accessibility.

#### Accessible Bathrooms:

1. **Roll-in Shower:** Bathrooms must feature a roll-in shower with non-slip flooring, a fold-down seat mounted at 450-460 mm, and accessible grab bars on at least two sides at heights of 800-810 mm above the floor.
2. **Toilet Height and Grab Bars:** Toilets should be positioned at 450-460 mm from the side wall for the centerline of the toilet and must be equipped with grab rails on both sides or on one open side. Toilet seat height should be between 460-480 mm.
3. **Accessible Sinks and Mirrors:** Install sinks at a height of 800-830 mm with clear space underneath for wheelchair access. Mirrors must be positioned at heights usable for both seated and standing guests or as per local regulation governing accessibility.

#### Visual and Hearing Accessibility:

1. **Visual Alerts:** Rooms must be equipped with tactile and Braille signage for room numbers, elevators, exits, and other key information. Raised tactile text and Braille should be installed at a height of 1,200-1,600 mm.
2. **Assistive Devices:** Rooms should be equipped with flashing alert systems such as visual alarms for fire emergencies and flashing doorbells for guests with hearing impairments should be integrated with room systems. All TVs in guest rooms and public areas must have closed captioning capabilities.

#### Emergency Features:

1. **Emergency Call Systems:** While Australian Standard AS1428.1-2009 does not mandate emergency call buttons in unisex accessible bathrooms, recent efforts to exceed minimal code requirements in some projects highlight a growing recognition of the importance of enhancing safety and accessibility. If installed, ensure buttons comply with AS1428.1-2009 clause 13.5.4.
2. **Fire and Evacuation Procedures:** Hotels must ensure that accessible rooms are integrated into the emergency evacuation plan, with clearly marked and accessible evacuation routes, including access to safe zones or emergency staircases for guests with disabilities or as per local regulation governing accessibility.

## STAFF TRAINING AND GUEST SERVICE

### STAFF TRAINING AND GUEST SERVICE

#### Staff Training:

1. **Disability Awareness:** All hotel staff should be trained to use inclusive communication techniques. Respond to accessibility needs, such as explaining visual information verbally or assisting with devices. Provide support without patronizing or overwhelming guests.
2. **Accessibility Equipment Operation:** Staff should be trained in the proper use of accessibility equipment such as wheelchairs, ramps, and assistive listening devices.
3. **Emergency Procedures:** Staff must be trained to handle emergency situations involving guests with disabilities, including understanding evacuation protocols and providing assistance when needed.

#### Guest Assistance:

1. **Personalised Services:** Upon request, hotels should provide personalised services such as luggage assistance, in-room dining adjustments, and accessible transportation options.
2. **Room Adjustments:** If necessary, adjustments to accessible rooms (e.g., removing furniture) should be made to meet the specific needs of individual guests.

## MONITORING AND FEEDBACK

### MONITORING AND FEEDBACK

#### Accessibility Inspections:

1. **Routine Inspections:** Regular inspections of accessible rooms, facilities, and equipment should be carried out to ensure they meet the required standards and are functioning properly.
2. **Maintenance of Accessibility Features:** Any malfunctioning accessibility features, such as emergency call buttons, visual alarms, or grab bars, must be addressed immediately to avoid inconveniences for guests.

---

**Guest Feedback:**

1. **Feedback Collection:** BWH Hotels must offer an easy and accessible way for guests with disabilities to provide feedback on their stay, including suggestions for improvements.
2. **Response and Action:** Feedback should be reviewed regularly, and any reasonable suggestions for improving accessibility should be considered and acted upon when feasible.

## PROMOTION OF ACCESSIBILITY

### PROMOTION OF ACCESSIBILITY

**Marketing Materials:**

BWH Hotels must ensure that all marketing materials, including websites, brochures, and booking platforms, promote the availability of accessible rooms and services.

**Room Descriptions:**

Accessible rooms should be clearly described on all booking platforms, outlining the specific features (e.g., roll-in shower, visual alerts) available to guests with disabilities.

