

Accessible showers and toilets



You need to consider access for people with disabilities when designing or altering commercial buildings, including the need for showers and the location of hand basins in toilets.

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Of interest to Building owners, Designers

When are accessible showers needed?

MBIE is often asked when accessible showers should be installed in commercial buildings, such as office buildings for people with disabilities. Often a shower is provided in an office building for people who cycle to work or exercise during their lunch break.

The relevant Acceptable Solution is G1/AS1 in the G1 Compliance Document which also cites NZS 4121:2001, the Standard for access and facilities for people with disabilities.

Table 2 in G1/AS1 does not require showers in commercial buildings or most communal non-residential buildings, such as clubrooms and halls. However, Table 2 does require showers in 'places of active recreation' such as swimming pools and gymnasiums.

Regardless of whether showers are required, Table 2 states "where showers are provided include at least one accessible shower compartment". MBIE interprets the reference to "showers" in this statement to mean that if more than one shower is provided, then one of the showers must be accessible. This interpretation is supported by NZS 4121:2001, which states in Clause 10.5.11 that "where showers are required for staff or public use, a wet-area shower shall be provided for people with disabilities".

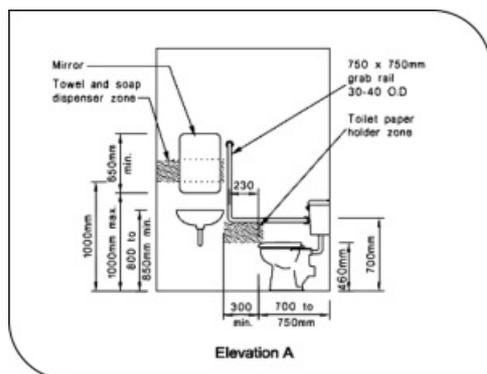
Soon after the publication of NZS 4121:2001, the committee for this Standard was asked to clarify the meaning of Clause 10.5.11. The committee's view was that if only one shower is to be provided, it need not be an accessible shower, but if two or more showers are provided then at least one must be accessible.

Distance between the hand basin and pan

Acceptable Solution G1/AS1 and NZS 4121:2001 both state that a hand basin in an accessible toilet provided for people with disabilities must be '300 mm minimum' from the pan. No maximum is specified. The hand basin may be further away, but it should not be so close to the end wall that a wheelchair user cannot use it.

Neither Acceptable Solution G1/AS1 nor NZS 4121:2001 require that a hand basin be within easy reach of a person seated on the pan.

Where the toilet compartment is bigger than the standard 1600 x 1900 mm size, the minimum distances still apply, and the hand basin should be located so that access to the pan is not restricted and a 1500 mm diameter manoeuvring space is maintained.



Download a free* copy of [NZS 4121: 2001 Design for access and mobility - buildings and associated facilities](http://www.standards.co.nz/assets/Publication-files/NZS4121-2001.pdf?utm_source=MBIE-) (http://www.standards.co.nz/assets/Publication-files/NZS4121-2001.pdf?utm_source=MBIE-)

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All guidance related to G1 Personal hygiene (<https://www.building.govt.nz/building-code-compliance/g-services-and-facilities/g1-personal-hygiene/>)

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