

United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

January 5, 2005

CIVIL RIGHTS DIRECTIVE 2006-02

To: Heads of Bureaus and Offices

From: Sharon D. Eller - Director, Office of Civil Rights /signed/

Subject: Adoption of the Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards (ABAAS)

The Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) of 1968 requires that any building or facility designed, constructed, altered, or leased with federal funds be accessible to and usable by any individuals with disabilities. On November 8, 2005, the General Services Administration (GSA) adopted new accessibility standards which must be followed by all of the Bureaus in the Department of the Interior (DOI) in compliance with this law. (Copy attached.)

Since 1984, the accessibility standards that the Bureaus have followed have been the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) and, by policy, the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility guidelines (ADAAG). Over the past several years, the U.S. Access Board has led the effort to combine these two documents resulting in the Americans with Disabilities Act and Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAABAAG), which were published last year. As the standard setting agency for the DOI, the GSA adopted ABA Chapters 1-2 and 3-10 of the ADAABAAG as the Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standard (ABAAS) in its November 8th announcement.

In the announcement, GSA stated that “Facilities subject to the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) must meet the ABAAS if the construction or alteration commences, or the lease is entered into, after May 8, 2006. If the construction or alteration commences, or the lease is entered into before May 8, 2006, the facility must meet the UFAS. The construction or alteration of a facility for which plans and specifications were completed or substantially completed on or before May 8, 2006, is permitted to meet the UFAS if the construction or alteration is commenced by May 8, 2008.”

For reference, the ABAAS and the UFAS are available at <http://www.access-board.gov/>. For further technical assistance, we recommend you review the Access Board’s “ADA/ABA Accessibility Guidelines Summary of Revisions” found at <http://www.access-board.gov/ada-aba/>

[summary.htm](#). Please ensure that the responsible officials within your Bureau are advised of these new standards. Any inquiries regarding this matter may be directed to Sharon Eller, Director, Office of Civil Rights on 202-208-6120.

Attachment

cc: Bureau and Office EO Officers