



**Everyone deserves a day at the beach.**

***“No qualified individual with a disability can be excluded from participation in or denied benefit from services, programs, or activities of a public entity”  
—28 CFR § 35.130***

The 2010 Standards for Accessible Design do not directly address public beach access. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), if no standards exist, the general non-discrimination and program accessibility requirements for state and local governments still apply. As a result, for public entities wanting to provide ADA program accessibility to a beach, it is best practice to use the ABA Standards.

## Beach Access Routes

*Beach access routes* are continuous, unobstructed paths that cross the beach surface and allow people to play, swim, and enjoy the shoreline. We have summarized the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) Standards for beach access routes below. For more about these standards, visit: [www.access-board.gov/aba/#aba-1018](http://www.access-board.gov/aba/#aba-1018)

### How Many & How Far?

- ABA Standards require at least one beach access route per each ½ mile of shoreline managed by the beach owner. These routes should coincide with beach access routes for the general public.
- A beach access route must connect an accessible entry to a tidal beach at high tide level; a river beach at mean high water level; and a lake, pond, or reservoir beach at normal recreation water level.



*A ramp over a dune provides access to a tidal beach.*

### Permanent or Removable?

- A beach access route may be permanent or removable.
- Technical requirements govern details such as the width, slope, surface, size of openings (such as between boards on a boardwalk), and resting areas.
- Removable routes have exceptions for things such as the slope and rest intervals.



*A removable beach access mat provides access over sand.*

### More to Know

- Add-ons like parking, toilet and bathing rooms, and drinking fountains and concessions must comply with the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design.
- Beach wheelchairs are not required, but they are a great benefit to many individuals with mobility disabilities.



*A beach wheelchair.*

**Learn more about the ADA: [www.NortheastADA.org](http://www.NortheastADA.org) | 1.800.949.4232 | [NortheastADA@Cornell.edu](mailto:NortheastADA@Cornell.edu)**

The contents of this document were developed under a grant from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR grant number 90DP0088). NIDILRR is a Center within the Administration for Community Living (ACL), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The contents of this document do not necessarily represent the policy of NIDILRR, ACL, or HHS, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.