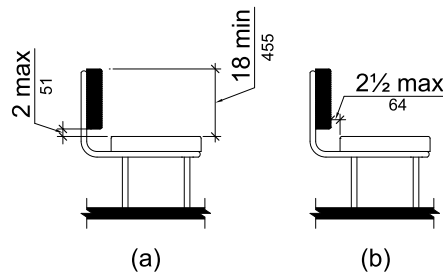


ADA COMPLIANCE FOR BENCHES

There has been confusion and several misleading recommendations made regarding outdoor benches and compliance with ADA guidelines, specifically compliance with Section 903 of the document ADA and ABA Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities, published in the Federal Register July 23rd, 2004 and amended August 5th, 2005 (<http://www.access-board.gov/ada-aba>). The following diagram from Section 903 is often depicted in planning documents as a universal guideline for ADA bench compliance:



Source: <http://www.access-board.gov/>

After careful research and confirmation from the US Access Board, we have found that **there are no ADA requirements as specified in section 903 for outdoor benches**, according to the document **ADA and ABA Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities**. Benches should comply with Section 903 and the image at left (‘Chapter 9: Built-In Elements - Section 903 Benches’) **ONLY** when they are to be placed in the following facilities, spaces, elements and rooms:

Chapter 6: Plumbing Elements and Facilities - 612 Saunas and Steam Rooms

Chapter 8: Special Rooms, Spaces and Elements - 803 Dressing, Fitting, and Locker Rooms

Chapter 8: Special Rooms, Spaces and Elements - 807 Holding Cells and Housing Cells, 808 Courtrooms*

In other words, unless the bench is intended for a sauna, steam room, dressing room, locker room, holding cell or courtroom, **it does not need to comply with section 903.**

The only outdoor bench-related ADA guideline can be found in “**The Revised Draft Guidelines for Accessible Public Rights-of-Way**” (<http://www.access-board.gov/>) under the section “**Text of the Draft Guidelines, Chapter R3: Technical Provisions, R307.6.3.2:**

“Where benches without tables are provided at a single location, at least 50 percent, but no fewer than one, shall have a seat height at the front edge of 43 cm (17 in) minimum and 49 cm (19 in) maximum above the ground or floor space.”
- (<http://www.access-board.gov/prowac/>)**



Based on the information above, most, if not all, Victor Stanley benches meet the simple height requirements under section R307.6.3.2

For further clarification, please contact US Access Board at info@access-board.gov

*Courtroom benches such as the Judge’s bench, gallery benches and jury box benches are not subject to ADA requirements under section 903.

**Recommendations found in the Text of the Draft Guidelines are not currently enforceable standards under the ADA.