



**BUILDING CODE MANUAL
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
BUILDING AND SAFETY DIVISION
Based on the 2014 LACBC**

**#160
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Article 1
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IMPLEMENTATION OF CERTIFIED ACCESSIBILITY SPECIALIST PROGRAM

BACKGROUND

In 2003, Senate Bill 262 authorized the Department of General Services-Division of State Architect to establish and publicize a program for voluntary certification by the State of any person who meets specified criteria as a Certified Access Specialist (CASp). The voluntary Certified Access Specialist Program was approved by the Office of Administrative Law and became effective July 30, 2008.

Senate Bill 1608 was introduced by Senator Corbett on February 22, 2008, signed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger on October 8, 2008, and became effective on January 1, 2009. This bill is a comprehensive reform measure intended to promote better compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as well as the State of California accessibility regulations contained in the California Code of Regulations-Title 24. While the primary intent is to protect business owners from increasing numbers of frivolous lawsuits, SB 1608's approach is to recognize the value of compliance with ADA and promote voluntary compliance.

To accomplish this task, business owners can voluntarily upgrade their buildings to current ADA standards through a voluntarily inspection program conducted and certified by a CASp. A property owner whose property met applicable standards or was inspected by a CASp prior to the date the claim was served is considered a Qualified Defendant. Furthermore, until January 1, 2018, the status of Qualified Defendant applies to owners of new construction sites or improvements that were approved pursuant to the local building permit and inspection process on or after January 1, 2008, and before January 1, 2016. A Qualified Defendant can request a short stay and early evaluation conference from the court in order to correct any violations within 60 days of the claim being filed.

PROCEDURE

The County of Los Angeles is committed to promoting access and a barrier free environment by enforcing applicable accessibility regulations of federal and state laws and standards for which it has authority. The following actions will be taken to implement SB 1608:

1. For projects consisting of Assembly Group A occupancy with an occupant load of 100 or more load, the owner shall employ a private CASp to be involved during design and inspection of public accommodation projects. Duties of the CASp shall include the following:
 - Review facility plans and specifications for compliance with state and federal accessibility laws, codes, and regulations.
 - Investigate facility for compliance with state and federal accessibility standards, codes and regulations.
 - Conduct accessibility research, inspections and prepare reports.

- Submit reports to the building inspector prior to permit final.

A list of CASp consultants is maintained and posted on the California's Division of State Architect's website:

<http://www.dgs.ca.gov/dsa/Programs/programCert/casp.aspx>


2. Effective January 1, 2014, CASp service may be requested by office managers for plan check and/or inspection oversight of public accommodation projects for compliance with the accessibility standards. This request for service shall be submitted to the Research Section.

New BCM

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