

Altering Primary Function

Accessibility | Solutions

What is a primary function? The American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) at 36.403(b) defines the **primary function**: "A major activity for which the facility is intended... as well as offices and other work areas in which the activities of the public accommodation or other private entity using the facility are carried out. Mechanical rooms, boiler rooms, supply storage rooms, employee lounges or locker rooms, janitorial closets, entrances, corridors, and restrooms are not areas containing a primary function." (See also TAS 106.5.45). For example, altering a classroom or the principal's office in a school could affect the primary function.

When the primary function is altered, the additional requirements of Path of Travel may apply. 202.4 outlines five key elements that must be made accessible in addition to the altered area. They are:

- Parking and other site arrival points serving the altered area
- Accessible route to the altered area
- Toilet Rooms serving the altered area
- Drinking fountains serving the altered area
- Public telephones that serve the altered area



Laboratory Classroom

For some projects, the five types of elements required to be brought into compliance are outside of the designer's scope of work and are not a part of the construction drawings. In that case, your plan review will still reflect the obligation to comply with each of the sections for the required elements. Depending on the project, at the time of inspection the accessible route from the site arrival points to the altered area and the telephones, drinking fountains and toilet rooms will be inspected as well as the altered area. See also "Is the Owner or Tenant Responsible?" If you have any questions regarding this or other items, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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