

*BUREAU OF OVERSEAS BUILDINGS OPERATIONS
POLICY DIRECTIVE (PD)*

**DESIGN PD 04: BARRIER-FREE ACCESSIBILITY
ADDENDUM: STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP)**

Issued: 09/11/98

Revision: Interim

1.0 SUMMARY. This document provides specific information regarding the procedures necessary to comply with OBO's barrier-free accessibility policy, Design PD 04, current revision: 05/22/2017. PD 04 specifies that three (3) Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) memos will be issued for General Procedures, Non-Residential Procedures, and Residential Procedures. These Standard Operating Procedures shall be followed in the interim, until OBO formerly issues the final SOP's.

2.0 POLICY. It is the policy of the U.S. Department of State to provide barrier-free accessible diplomatic facilities in accordance with federal law. See Design PD 04: Barrier-Free Accessibility.

3.0 BACKGROUND. Reference to "the *Guidelines*" herein refers to the ABA Standards contained within the ADA and ABA Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities. See Design PD 04: Barrier-Free Accessibility.

4.0 PROCEDURES.

4.1 GENERAL. Barrier-free accessibility means necessary modifications exist in buildings and facilities for persons with mobility, hearing, and visual disabilities.

4.1.1 The requirement is to ensure that all new and altered buildings and facilities are made accessible to the extent required by law.

4.1.2 An additional goal of the Department of State is to remove barriers in existing facilities to the extent possible.

4.1.3 Accessibility is required in all portions of buildings, either U.S. owned or leased, that are used as office space. The *Guidelines* apply to any office portions of mixed-use buildings and facilities. The *Guidelines* apply in all areas frequented by the public or where disabled persons may be employed. The *Guidelines* apply to all office space at any post, located on or off the main compound.

4.1.4 Accessibility is required in some residential buildings, either U.S. owned or leased, any portions of which are used as residential dwelling units. The

Guidelines also apply to any residential portions of mixed-use buildings and facilities. The *Guidelines* apply to representational housing, a defined percentage of all other dwelling units, and a defined portion of a Marine Security Guard Residence (MSGR) at any post, without regard to the location of each residence, dwelling unit, or MSGR. (See 4.7)

4.1.5 The *Guidelines* apply to permanent buildings and facilities. (See section F201 of the *Guidelines* as well as 4.4.1.1.)

4.1.6 The application of barrier-free accessibility will vary depending on the building or facility's use and whether it is newly built, altered, or leased, because provisions differ for each circumstance. To that end, barrier-free accessibility requirements must be analyzed and assessed on an individual basis. For guidance on newly leased and purchased buildings, see 4.4.

4.1.7 Barrier-free accessibility requirements must be formally cited in all statements of work (SOW) prepared by OBO staff for compliance by contracted architectural, engineering, and construction personnel. (OBO code requirements trigger compliance with the *Guidelines*; see 4.0 Authorities, of the Policy.) When local standards contain any individual measures that differ from OBO requirements, the architect of record must make a comparison and choose the more stringent measure.

4.2 NEW BUILDINGS.

4.2.1 All areas of newly designed and newly constructed buildings and facilities must comply with the *Guidelines*. (OBO code requirements are cited in 4.0 Authorities, of the Policy.)

4.2.2 Newly constructed additions to existing buildings or facilities, including leased buildings or facilities, must comply with the requirements for new construction. (Also see the *Guidelines*, section F202.2.)

4.3 EXISTING BUILDINGS. The Department of State routinely executes a wide variety of projects to alter its buildings in order to accommodate changing functional and security needs. To the extent possible, accessibility improvements must be included as a portion of these projects, as required by the *Guidelines*. (OBO code requirements are cited in Section 4.0 Authorities, of the Policy.)

4.3.1 Alterations to existing buildings or facilities, including leased buildings or facilities, shall comply with the *Guidelines* to the extent possible. (See section F202.3.)

4.3.1.1 When strict application of the *Guidelines* is technically infeasible (as defined in the *Guidelines* in section F106.5), then alternative methods may be employed to provide equivalent facilitation.

4.3.1.2 If an alteration project affects a primary function area, then an accessible route must be provided from the appropriate entrance to the primary function area. (See the *Guidelines*, section F202.4.)

4.3.1.3 Alterations to qualified historic buildings and facilities must comply with the *Guidelines*. (See section F202.5.) Such alterations and modifications must be referred to the Office of Design and Engineering (OBO/PDCS/DE) and the Office of Residential Design and Cultural Heritage (OBO/OPS/CH) for review. OBO/PDCS/DE and OBO/OPS/CH will determine a course of action that mitigates destruction or degradation of historic or cultural value. The proposed modifications will consider host-nation preservation requirements, terms and conditions of any lease, and functional needs. Where OBO/PDCS/DE and OBO/OPS/CH determine that strict compliance would threaten or destroy the historical significance of a building, the exceptions for alterations to qualified historic buildings must be permitted, which allow alternative means.

4.3.1.4 The *Guidelines* contain allowable exceptions. (See section F203 of the *Guidelines* as well as Attachment 1 under F203.) In addition, portions of facilities for the exclusive use of unaccompanied military or contracted guard personnel are exempt.

4.3.1.5 When an officer is assigned to post and requires an accessible dwelling unit for either self or a family member under orders, then post shall work with HR/ER/DRAD to ensure that appropriate accessible elements are provided, which may require alteration of an existing dwelling unit. OBO will work with HR/ER/DRAD and post to determine what shall constitute Reasonable Accommodation. (See Section 4.9)

4.3.1.6 Post retains the option to lease an accessible dwelling unit, or a unit requiring limited work to make it accessible, when post determines that this is the best option after consultation with HR/ER/DRAD. OBO will assist with necessary alterations.

4.3.2 U.S.-funded events in non-representational housing. When invitations are issued, guests may be invited to apprise their hosts of any accessibility issues. This would give the post the ability either to provide a means of dealing with the issue prior to the event, or to relocate the event to an alternate location if that option is necessary.

4.3.3 Removal of Barriers. Not all Department of State facilities are scheduled for replacement or significant renovation projects. However, to provide barrier-free accessible improvements in such cases, barrier-free accessibility projects may be executed as follows:

4.3.3.1 OBO Barrier-Free Accessibility Program. Projects implemented through this program are appropriate when no alterations or projects

are planned at post that would allow the incorporation of fundamental accessibility improvements. (See Section 4.10)

4.3.3.2 Reasonable accommodation. When the Department of State grants an employee with a disability a reasonable accommodation involving a building alteration, then OBO may implement such alterations. (See Section 4.9)

4.4 NEWLY LEASED OR PURCHASED BUILDINGS. The Department of State leases and purchases existing buildings overseas that may not be constructed in accordance with laws and codes equivalent to U.S. law and the building codes prevalent in the United States. Moreover, the Department's inventory of buildings is constantly changing. Many of these buildings do not meet minimum accessibility requirements. Although the lack of existing accessible features in such buildings is not in itself reason to reject them for lease or purchase consideration, barrier-free accessibility improvements may be required in such buildings.

4.4.1 Buildings or facilities for which new leases are negotiated by the Department of State must comply with the *Guidelines* to the extent possible. (See section F202.6.)

4.4.1.1 Office or residential buildings or facilities leased for 12 months or less shall not be required to comply with the *Guidelines* provided that the lease may not be extended or renewed.

4.4.2 The Office of Acquisitions and Disposals (OBO/PRE/OAD) shall take into account these improvement expenses in its acquisition analysis in coordination with the Program Development, Coordination, and Support Directorate (OBO/PDCS) and other offices of the Planning and Real Estate Directorate (OBO/PRE).

4.4.3 Residential accessibility requirements vary depending on the Housing Category. Not all residential leases require accessibility improvements at the time of lease. OBO/PRE must contact the Architectural Division (OBO/PDCS/DE/AD) for guidance on this issue.

4.5 SCOPING REQUIREMENTS. In order to determine the minimum accessibility compliance requirements for any project, consult Chapter 2 of the *Guidelines: Scoping Requirements*. The scoping requirements indicate which technical chapters to consult. The following OBO clarifications on certain sub-sections of chapter 2 also apply:

Application, F201

-Temporary buildings and facilities must be accessible. Examples include stages, platforms, and exhibits.

-Structures and equipment directly associated with the actual process of construction are exempt.

Existing Buildings and Facilities, F202

-If a primary function area of a building is renovated, an accessible route must be extended to the altered area, for example, to a Consular Section, if none exists. Primary function areas are directly related to the reason for having the facility. All of the offices and visitor areas in a Chancery or other office building are primary function areas.

-When alterations are implemented to other areas of the building, these alterations must be accessible regardless of whether or not an accessible route serves that area. For example, toilet rooms renovated on a floor above or below the accessible entry floor in a non-elevator building must still be made accessible.

General Exceptions, F203

-Exceptions are limited to those listed in the *Guidelines* and those listed below when conditions are met.

-Buildings containing only shops and no office space are not required to be accessible.

-Buildings containing only mechanical space such as utility buildings are not required to be accessible.

-Buildings containing only warehouse space and no office space are not required to be accessible.

-When elements such as shops, utilities and storage areas are merged with other facilities containing office and common use areas, than those office and common use areas shall be accessible.

-Residential buildings for the exclusive use of unaccompanied military personnel are exempt.

Operable parts, F205

-Devices required to comply shall be mounted with their top edge of the operable part no higher than 1220 mm above finish floor. Intercom units, security devices such as key pads, wall phones, switches, etc., are all operable parts required to be accessible. Other operable parts required to be accessible, such as outlets, must be mounted with their lower edge no more than 380 mm above finish floor.

Accessible routes, F206

-Each door along any required accessible route is required to be accessible. When any such door is a Forced Entry/Ballistic Resistant (FE/BR) door, each shall be provided with an OBO approved door-opening device and, if necessary, a new door. OBO/PDCS/DE/AD, in conjunction with the Office of Security Management (OBO/CFSM/SM), shall be responsible for

identifying each such door in addition to analysis of other architectural issues including clear open width and accessible threshold. The planning, funding, and execution of projects to achieve the accessibility will take place as described in section 4.0 of this policy and procedures directive.

OBO/CFSM/SM/SCD/TSB shall be responsible for coordinating the technical security aspects of each such door. OBO/CFSM/SM/SCD/SEB shall also be responsible for determination of Department of State door rating, swing direction, and security hardware requirements.

-When FE/BR doors are replaced in existing facilities, each such door must have a clear opening width of 32" (815 mm). When existing structural conditions prohibit this minimum width, the door width may be reduced but shall not be less than 31.25" (795 mm). In such alterations, all other elements such as complying clear floor space and complying hardware shall also be provided.

-Door opening devices are not required in residential buildings or the MSGR.

-Accessible routes within an office building must extend to all portions of the building containing offices and common use areas regardless of building zone (GWA or CAA) and occupant (US or FSN).

-Elevator may be excepted from 2 story buildings only when the conditions of the exception shown in F206.2.3 (exception 1) are met.

-Entry screening facilities are considered site entrances. Each such facility must be accessible when they serve staff and visitors. An exception is allowed when a screening facility serves as a dedicated service entrance only.

-The interior accessible route must serve any mezzanine, basement or penthouse of a building when it contains office space, meeting space or a designated accessible residential unit.

-On a facility site that includes an MSGR, an accessible route for visitors to the MSGR must extend from the entrance pavilion directly to the MSGR.

-On a facility site that includes other buildings housing office, living or recreational space, an accessible route must extend from the entrance pavilion directly to each such space, and connecting each other space.

-Where possible, the practical accessible route on any site connecting spaces and elements required to be accessible should also connect other elements such as shops and service buildings.

-Where site routes exist for purposes of accessing compound sanctuaries, area of refuge, or area of rescue assistance, then each such route shall also be an accessible route or an alternate accessible route shall be provided.

-To the greatest extent possible, the accessible path of travel shall coincide with the path most people use at both internal and external locations.

In the alternative, the path shall not exceed the distance taken by able bodied personnel.

-Although a ramp is generally preferred, a vertical platform wheelchair lift may be employed for vertical distances less than one story if that is the only available option.

-Inclined wheelchair lifts and chair lifts of any kind are prohibited except when individually granted exception by OBO/PDCS/DE/AD. These may be allowed in extraordinary circumstances, residential only, when no other means of accessibility can be achieved.

Accessible means of egress, F207

-An accessible means of egress from a floor on the accessible level must lead to a safe area of refuge where persons may congregate in safety within the perimeter of the property. The route must have a surface that will allow for wheelchair mobility.

-Each building containing office space, common use space (such as recreational space) or dwelling units required to be accessible shall have an area of rescue assistance, located within each required exit stair enclosure on each floor above and below the accessible level. Each area of rescue assistance shall provide a floor area for not less than one wheelchair space per required exit stair per non-accessible floor.

-At the discretion of OBO the minimum number of wheelchair spaces required on a given floor alternatively may be clustered in one location on that floor within an enclosed exit stair.

-In renovation projects with existing stair enclosures where it is not feasible to provide one area of rescue assistance per stair per non-accessible floor, the minimum number of wheelchair spaces required on a given floor may be provided in separate protected enclosure(s) attached or adjacent to the existing stair.

-At exit stairs that are not enclosed per exceptions allowed by the IBC code, provide an enclosed protected area of rescue assistance adjacent to and/or within sight of the access point to such stair(s) at each level above or below the accessible level.

-Each area of rescue assistance must be served by an intercom directly to Post 1. This may be voice only or voice/video. Identifying signage on the protected side of the stair doors shall also be provided at each location of an area of rescue assistance.

Parking spaces, F208

-The number of accessible parking spaces shall be commensurate with table F208.2. This requirement applies to staff and visitor parking. This requirement does not apply to official (fleet) vehicles, serviced solely by employed drivers, or delivery and maintenance vehicles.

-Accessible parking spaces in visitor parking areas shall have signs that not only include the universal symbol of accessibility, but shall also contain

text in both English and the host country language to indicate parking restriction. The text shall be modeled on the format used by the host country.

-The assignment of accessible staff parking spaces to persons at a given post with the greatest need for them shall be the administrative responsibility of post management. The spaces should not go un-used; if there is no staff requiring accessible parking spaces, then the spaces can be assigned to others. If the need arises to provide parking to a qualified individual(s), the space(s) shall revert to their use as accessible spaces. This does not apply to visitor parking.

-The number of van accessible spaces in the staff parking area only for any given facility shall be dictated by the *Guidelines*, but shall never be less than one. Appropriate signage dedicating such spaces as van accessible spaces shall also be provided. Passenger loading zones, F209 (This section provides guidance for passenger loading zones. Both the main compound entrance and the consular entrance (if separate from the main entrance) shall each have access from a passenger loading zone.)

Toilet and bathing facilities, F213

-Accessible toilet and bathing facilities may be excepted when they serve a strictly dedicated use for the following:

- Char force, or the workers that clean the facility.
- Drivers who serve as professional drivers.
- Maintenance workers who operate within the shops, maintain the equipment, make repairs, etc.
- Guard force.

-Accessible toilet rooms serving multi-purpose rooms and other facilities that primarily serve a population of users from the host nation may be designed to meet local accessibility standards.

-Toilet facilities that may be provided in addition to the minimum facilities required by code in the building core, such as in executive sections and communications sections, must be accessible. It is customary to provide a toilet room as part of the ambassador's office suite as well as a single user toilet room in communications areas. These toilet rooms may be designed to be "adaptable" accessible, meaning that all clear floor space, fixture clear space, door clear space, wall blocking for grab bars, etc., is provided. Grab bars may be provided at such time as needed by an occupant.

Signs, F216

-Ensure that appropriate signs are provided for accessible passenger loading zones in addition to accessible car and van parking spaces at all locations where these elements are provided.

Assistive listening systems, F219

- Applies to GWA areas only.

Dressing, fitting and locker rooms, F222

-Dressing and locker rooms may be excepted when they serve strictly dedicated uses as listed in F213 above.

Sales and service, F227

-Consular teller interview windows, cashier windows, and pass back windows shall have a counter height of 940 mm maximum. Any counter on the applicant side must have a depth limited to 305 mm maximum.

-Consular privacy booth windows shall have a counter height of 760 mm maximum.

-Other teller windows such as banks or B and F cashiers shall have a counter height of 940 mm maximum. Any counter on the applicant side must have a depth limited to 305 mm maximum.

-At least a portion of a counter that is required for package inspection in any screening facility shall be at a height not greater than 760 mm.

-At least a portion of a counter that is required in any common use mail preparation area or other similar common use element shall have at least a portion of a counter at a height not greater than 760 mm.

Residential facilities, F233

-See Section 4.7.

Exercise machines and equipment, F236

-Common use gymnasiums for staff use must be accessible as well as any ancillary facility such as shower and changing rooms.

Saunas and steam rooms, F241

-Common use recreational and health facilities must be accessible as well as any ancillary facility such as shower and changing rooms.

Swimming pools and spas, F242

-Common use swimming pools must be accessible including access to swimming area as well as any ancillary facility such as a cabana.

4.6 TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS. The *Guidelines* provide specific technical requirements in the following areas:

- Building blocks (fundamental elements and reach ranges), chapter 3.
- Accessible routes, chapter 4
- Site and building elements, chapter 5.
- Plumbing elements and facilities, chapter 6.
- Communication elements and features, chapter 7.
- Special rooms, spaces and elements, chapter 8.
- Built in elements, chapter 9.
- Recreational facilities, chapter 10.

4.7 RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS. New and substantially altered Department of State residential facilities must comply with the *Guidelines*.

4.7.1 Representational Housing. This category includes dwelling units that are used on a frequent basis for representational entertainment. It includes the Chief of Mission Residence (CMR), the Deputy Chief of Mission Residence (DCMR), and the Consulate General Residence (CGR). In certain posts, there may be other dwelling units that are included in this category since this category includes any residence where Official Representational Expenses (ORE) money is routinely authorized.

4.7.1.1 Representational areas must comply with the *Guidelines* connected by an accessible route beginning at the site arrival point. Ideally provide one accessible toilet room, per sex. At minimum, provide one accessible toilet room with appropriate signage.

4.7.1.2 The family living quarters must comply with the *Guidelines*. Sleeping quarters in these buildings are divided into areas for the Principal Officer and spouse, family members, and guests. Consideration shall be given to providing at least one accessible bathroom in each of these three zones. These may be adaptable accessible.

4.7.2 Non-Representational Housing. This category includes dwelling units for all other officers and U.S. staff. At least 5% of the total number of dwelling units in the inventory, or a minimum of one dwelling unit, must be accessible in compliance with the *Guidelines*. These units may be adaptable accessible.

4.7.2.1 When OBO constructs multiunit residential facilities, these new facilities must meet the minimum 5% of accessible dwelling units. To the extent possible provide accessible units of different sizes, to allow for dispersion to the greatest extent possible. These units may be adaptable accessible.

4.7.2.2 The assignment of a post held accessible or adaptable dwelling unit to staff that requires an accessible dwelling unit shall be an operational responsibility of post.

4.7.2.5 Residential accommodations vary by rank. If post holdings include only one accessible dwelling unit, the unit should be large enough to accommodate a senior officer. If post holdings include additional accessible dwelling units, they may vary in size.

4.7.3 Military Housing. This category includes only the Marine Security Guard Residence (MSGR), the dwelling for the Marine Security Guard (MSG). All of the spaces in the MSGR for the exclusive use of the Marines are exempt from the *Guidelines*. Only the following accessibility scoping requirements apply.

4.7.3.1 Accessible Zone. The requirements for accessibility extend throughout the living area to include the areas used for living, bar, dining and meeting, and the toilet room associated with these spaces.

4.7.3.2 Exterior accessible route. For an MSGR not on compound, an accessible route must be provided from the exterior of the property to the entrance leading to the living area and bar. On compound, at least one accessible route must connect the MSGR entrance, leading to the living area and bar, with each principal office building and with at least one entrance to the facility. Portions of this accessible route may need to consist of a ramp or lift.

4.7.3.3 Entrance. The entrance door must allow accessibility to the living area.

4.7.3.4 Interior Accessible Route. There must be an accessible route from the entrance door to the living area, bar, and public restroom.

4.7.3.5 Toilet Facility. There must be at least one accessible public toilet room accessed from the interior accessible route.

4.7.3.6 Warning Systems. If provided, these shall be both audible and visual in the accessible zone. This shall be coordinated with the Office of Fire Protection (OBO/OPS/FIR).

4.7.3.7 Signs. If signs are provided in the accessible zone, they shall be accessible.

4.8 DETERMINATION OF REQUIREMENTS. For all Department of State projects, whether conceived for functional or security alterations, or alterations generated to add accessible features where they did not exist before, OBO/PDCS/DE/AD will determine the individual requirements for barrier-free accessibility as required by the *Guidelines*.

4.9 REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION. It is the policy of the Department of State to comply with the reasonable accommodation requirements of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (See section 1.0 of the Policy). Any employees with disabilities may request a reasonable accommodation for the purpose of removing any barriers that prohibit them from performing their essential job functions or from enjoying the full benefits and privileges of their employment. Under the Rehabilitation Act, federal agencies must provide reasonable accommodation to qualified disabled employees, when those requests are approved. Such requests are processed by the rules established by the Department of State. When the Department of State grants a reasonable accommodation involving alteration to Department of State buildings and facilities, OBO will fund and execute those alterations (see References 6.2, 6.3, of the Policy).

4.10 OBO BARRIER-FREE ACCESSIBILITY PROGRAM. The Department of State will continue to create accessible facilities in newly constructed buildings and facilities, and those altered for functional and security reasons to the extent possible. Where no replacement facility or substantial alterations are planned at post, certain fundamental accessibility improvements may be implemented through the OBO Barrier-Free Accessibility Program in compliance with the *Guidelines*. OBO/PDCS/DE/AD manages the OBO Barrier-Free Accessibility Program.

4.10.1 Non-compliance Data. OBO/PDCS/DE/AD maintains data on non-compliance issues at each post.

4.10.2 Barrier-Free Accessibility Improvement Projects. Accessibility improvement projects will be managed as follows:

4.10.2.1 Nominations for project selection. Any OBO office or overseas post may nominate a proposed project for implementation based on the *Guidelines*. OBO/PDCS/DE/AD must determine the eligibility of each nominated project. Eligible projects must be included in the Building Management Integrated System (BMIS) for execution. Annually, a review of outstanding projects will be conducted for accuracy of scope, schedule, and budget.

4.10.2.2 Selection of projects. For each project nominated, OBO/PDCS/DE/AD must determine the viability of implementing the project. Issues to consider include specific critical needs of post, the severity of the barriers to be removed, the overall cost of the improvement, post concurrence, availability of personnel at post for coordination, and availability of local design and construction consultants.

4.10.2.3 Project implementation. Once a project is selected and funded OBO/PDCS/DE/AD must coordinate with other offices or divisions within OBO and post to determine contractual and project delivery methods and other project delivery issues.

4.10.3 Reporting. OBO/PDCS/DE/AD will provide a progress report during Program Performance Reviews.

4.10.4 SharePoint web platform. OBO/PDCS/DE/AD maintains the data collected in the worldwide survey of facilities. The data is available as needed and is updated by each post after significant barrier removal is completed.

4.11 FUNDING. Establishing priorities for project funding for barrier-free accessibility is as follows:

4.11.1 OBO will fund new construction through the capital program.

4.11.2 OBO will fund functional and security improvement projects through the applicable functional program.

4.11.2.1 The Office of Project Development and Coordination (OBO/PDCS/PDC) will account for barrier-free accessibility requirements to the extent possible in all facility rehabilitation projects.

4.11.2.2 The Facility Manager (FM), when implementing a facilities renovation, must coordinate with OBO/PDCS/DE to ensure the inclusion of appropriate barrier-free accessibility requirements. Also, the FM should include all outstanding barrier-free requirements in the Annual Inspection Survey.

4.11.3 For stand-alone barrier-free accessibility requirements that are not included as part of new construction or major rehabilitation projects, the requirement will be prioritized as part of OBO's Minor Construction and Improvements (MCI) program. Approved projects will be funded through the OBO Barrier-Free Accessibility Program (function code 7687), when those projects meet the eligibility requirements of the program.

4.12 WAIVERS. The General Services Administration (GSA), the Federal Agency responsible for enforcing the ABA for the Department of State under rules established by The Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (ATBCB or Access Board), may grant waivers of the policy herein in exceptional circumstances.

4.12.1 Requests for waivers must be submitted to the Design and Engineering Division (OBO/PDCS/DE) and contain full justifications in support of any waiver, including identification of alternatives evaluated and the potential impacts of not granting the waiver. The waiver process is narrowly construed, and exists for exceptional circumstances only.

4.12.2 OBO/PDCS/DE must review waiver requests, and forward any requests that it recommends for approval to the Director of OBO for approval.

4.12.3 OBO recognizes the official waiver process as established by the Access Board, and will forward copies of OBO approved waiver requests to the GSA, in compliance with these requirements. In those cases where GSA does not agree with the waiver, OBO will consult with GSA and determine a resolution under the waiver provision of the ABA.

4.12.4 OBO recognizes that the Department may establish facilities in areas that are considered war zones. When these facilities are temporary (less than one year of use) or are staffed only by military personnel, then they are exempt. When office and/or residential facilities are established in such zones for DOS and other diplomatic agency staff, then the following procedure will be observed:

4.12.4.1 Barrier-Free Accessibility provisions are not exempt in these cases; however, the Department may use greater leeway in the application of the *Guidelines*. Consideration shall be given to creating designs that help reduce the number of barriers, as well as allowance for the addition of other accessibility provisions at a later date.

4.12.4.2 The OBO/PDCS/PDC Project Manager shall consult with the OBO/PDCS/DE/AD Project Architect, and determine a suitable response on a case by case basis. The OBO/PDCS/PDC Project Manager shall prepare a Decision Memo summarizing this agreement and present this to the Director of OBO for approval.

5.0 EFFECTIVE DATE. See Design PD 04: Barrier-Free Accessibility.

6.0 REFERENCES. See Design PD 04: Barrier-Free Accessibility.