

United Ostomy Associations of America Guidelines for Ostomy Friendly Restrooms (in the United States)

What is an ostomy?

Ostomy surgery is a life-saving procedure that allows bodily waste to pass through a surgically created stoma on the abdomen into a prosthetic known as a 'pouch' or 'ostomy bag' on the outside of the body or an internal surgically created pouch for continent diversion surgeries.

In the United States approximately 100,000 ostomy surgeries are performed annually, and there are between 725,000 - 1 million people living with an ostomy or continent diversion.

Why make your restrooms ostomy friendly?

Not all disabilities are visible. Most handicapped restrooms have accessible accommodations for people with physical disabilities. However, they often lack accessibility for people with other qualifying medical conditions such as people living with an ostomy or continent diversion or those who utilize urologic supplies such as catheters.

It is important for those living with an invisible disability to have access to facilities that provide accommodations that will allow care of their vital needs including self-catheterization, and emptying/changing/disposing of their ostomy pouch and other medical supplies in a safe and clean environment.

Ostomy-Accessible Accommodations Include:

Accessible Signage

- Include a universally understood graphic of a figure with an ostomy (as recommended below) or indicate in writing "ostomy friendly facility"

Hooks

- To hang ostomy supply travel bags or personal belongings, preferably near the toilet area, while emptying or changing ostomy pouches

Shelf

- To provide a sanitary surface on which to lay out ostomy supplies which may include pouch, wafer, adhesive remover, or deodorizers, if an emergency pouch change is needed
- Preferably a permanent resting solid shelf that does not fold down and is positioned within reach of the toilet so that an ostomate can access their supplies

Mirror

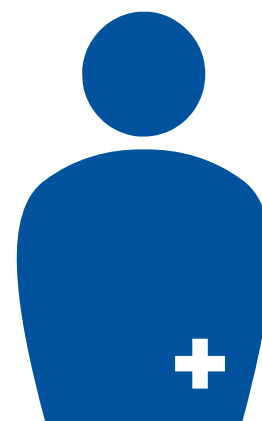
- Allows ostomates to see their stoma while catheterizing or changing their pouch

Sanitary Receptacle

- To enable clean safe disposal of any used ostomy supplies
- To ensure privacy discretion, this should ideally be located within the restroom stall for all genders

Sink and Soap Dispenser/Paper Towels

- To provide warm water to rinse the skin area, if needed
- To ensure clean-up and proper personal sanitary hand-washing hygiene



For more information, please visit
www.ostomy.org or call 1-800-826-0826