


DECEMBER 16, 2021 | DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT &amp; RETALIATION

# Update to New Maryland Law Requiring Bed Height Thresholds for Hotels

In October 2020, we published a [blog post](#) noting that with relatively low publicity at the time, the State of Maryland had enacted a law titled an "Act for Lodging Establishments – Accessible Rooms for Individuals with Disabilities – Bed Height," requiring hotels and other places of lodging with at least 4 guestrooms to provide beds of certain heights in accessible guestrooms for individuals with disabilities, even though providing beds of specified heights in accessible guestrooms is not a requirement of the Americans with Disabilities Act. 

Now, once again with little fanfare, the State of Maryland has made an important change to this law, postponing, by one year, when each requirement is phased in over the course of four years. In the original version of the law, at least 25% of the beds in accessible guestrooms would have been required to meet the new requirements (explained below) by December 31, 2021. Now, however, by December 31, 2022 (i.e., instead of 2021), at least 25% of the accessible rooms in a lodging establishment must be furnished with a bed that meets the bill's specifications; by December 31, 2023 (instead of 2022), at least 50%; by December 31, 2024 (instead of 2023), at least 75%; and by December 31, 2025 (instead of 2024), each accessible guest room must meet the bill's requirements.

As for the actual bed height requirements set forth in this law, those have remained the same: each accessible bed must measure at least 20 inches but not more than 23 inches from the floor to the top of the mattress, with at least a 7-inch vertical clearance under the bed for lift access.

As we mentioned in our initial blog post, average bed heights tend to be 25 inches or more, while the average seat height of many wheelchairs is 19 inches. So, these new bed height requirements will certainly require some changes in order to comply with the law. And, with so much time to prepare, you can bet that enforcement will begin immediately upon the new compliance dates. Thus, hotels should begin implementing plans for these new beds in the coming months in order to ensure that the applicable deadlines are met and that they are in full compliance by the end of next year.

As always, we will keep you updated on any further developments.