



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

# Building Regulations

## **Technical Guidance Document M**

### **2022**

### Changing Places

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#### 1.4.10 Changing Places Toilets

In addition to the general guidance in 1.4.4 where a changing places toilet is provided:

- (a) The minimum overall dimensions and arrangement of equipment, circulation spaces, grab rails and other fittings within a changing places toilet should be provided in accordance with Diagrams 26, 27(a), 27(b) and 27(c)<sup>18</sup>;
- (b) An 1800 mm x 2000 mm wheelchair turning space, that is free from obstruction, should be provided directly inside the door to the changing places toilet;
- (c) Unless the door is an accessible power-operated door or a fire door it should not be fitted with a self-closing device;
- (d) The privacy door bolt should incorporate a visual indicator to display when the changing places toilet is occupied or vacant;
- (e) A peninsular WC layout should be provided with a clear circulation space around the WC pan in accordance with Diagram 27(a).

Rationale: This allows for assistance to be provided from both sides of the WC.

- (i) A distance of 750 mm should be provided from the back wall to the front of the WC pan.

Rationale: This allows the wheelchair seat to be parallel with the toilet seat, so that the wheelchair can be reversed against the wall and the person using the toilet does not have to manoeuvre both sideways and also backwards to transfer to and from the WC pan;

- (ii) Wall mounted drop down support rails and vertical grab rails should be provided on both sides of the WC pan in accordance with Diagram 27(a).

At least one of the drop-down support rails should incorporate a toilet roll dispenser;

Vertical grab rails should be a minimum of 600 mm in length.

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<sup>18</sup> A changing places toilet is not suitable for Bariatric use where the turning space and load-bearing capabilities are required to be considerably more onerous. It is necessary to obtain specialist advice for such use.

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- (f) A power-operated, height adjustable wash hand basin<sup>19</sup> should be provided with a clear circulation space around the wash hand basin in accordance with Diagram 27(b).

Rationale: To cater for both seated and standing users.

- (i) The height-adjustment mechanism should include a pressure sensitive safety override that will prevent the washbasin from lowering if there is any obstruction underneath.
- (ii) The washbasin should be approximately 500 mm wide x 450 mm deep with a minimum range of height adjustment of 600 mm to 850 mm above floor level.

Rationale: The larger washbasin enables people to have a full body wash or to wash personal care equipment.

- (iii) The knee space under the basin should be free of obstructions.

Rationale: This allows a wheelchair user to pull up close to the basin.

- (iv) Vertical grab rails should be provided on both sides of the wash-hand basin. The top fixings for both handrails should be 1400 mm above floor level in accordance with Diagram 27(b).

- (g) A wall-mounted adult-sized, height adjustable, changing bench<sup>19</sup> should be provided, with a clear circulation space in front of the changing bench in accordance with Diagram 27(c).

- (i) The height adjustment mechanism for wall mounted benches should be mains powered and include a pressure sensitive safety override that will prevent the changing bench from lowering if there is any obstruction underneath.
- (ii) It should have a changing surface that is at least 1800 mm long by 800 mm wide that is easy to clean and dry with a minimum range of height adjustment from 450 mm to 900 mm above floor level.

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<sup>19</sup> The height adjustable basin and bench must be CE marked in compliance with relevant EU Directives and standards e.g. Directive 2006/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2006 on machinery, and amending Directive 95/16/EC (recast) and should be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and positioned to avoid entrapment or injury.

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- (iii) It should be certified to operate at a safe working load of not less than 200 kg.
  - (iv) It should have retractable side safety rails along the long edge(s) that can be folded up or down.
  - (v) Where a shower facility is being provided, a suitable changing bench should be provided with provision for waste water disposal;
  - (vi) A vertical grab rail should be provided 150 mm from the front edge of the changing bench at the available wall side in accordance with Diagram 27(c).
- (h) Where a hand dryer is provided it should be a low-noise hand dryer, with a maximum noise level of 70 Db. The hand dryer should be operated by either a movement sensor or an easily operated push button. Hand dryers that require the user to insert their hands into the top of the dryer should not be provided.
  - (i) A wall mounted wide paper roll dispenser should be provided adjacent to the head of the changing-bench in accordance with Diagram 27(c).
  - (j) Ceiling mounted mechanical and electrical fittings should not obstruct the moving rail of the overhead hoist.
  - (k) A continuous charging full room cover overhead tracked hoist system should be provided that conforms to I.S. EN ISO 10535 'Hoists for the transfer of disabled persons – Requirements and test methods'.
    - (i) The hoist spreader bar should be capable of extending from the hoist down to no more than 300 mm from the floor level to facilitate a person being lifted from ground level if required in an emergency.
    - (ii) There should be not less than 2100 mm headroom provided between the hoist track/rails and the finished floor level.
    - (iii) The room structure and the hoist system should be capable of supporting a safe working load of not less than 200 kg and not less than that of the changing bench and height adjustable basin.
  - (l) Controls for the operation of the hoist, height adjustable wash hand basin and height adjustable changing bench should be positioned in accordance with 1.5.7.
  - (m) A wall mounted foldable privacy screen should be provided.
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It should have an extended length of not less than 1750 mm and have a surface that is easy to clean and dry and located to provide privacy to the person using the WC, while not obstructing the space to the side of the WC when it's retracted;

- (n) Down lighters should not be installed within 600 mm of the ends of the changing bench within the areas where a person lying on the table will be looking directly towards the ceiling as indicated in Diagram 27(c).

Rationale: Bright lights in these locations that shine directly downwards may be a source of discomfort for the person on the changing bench.

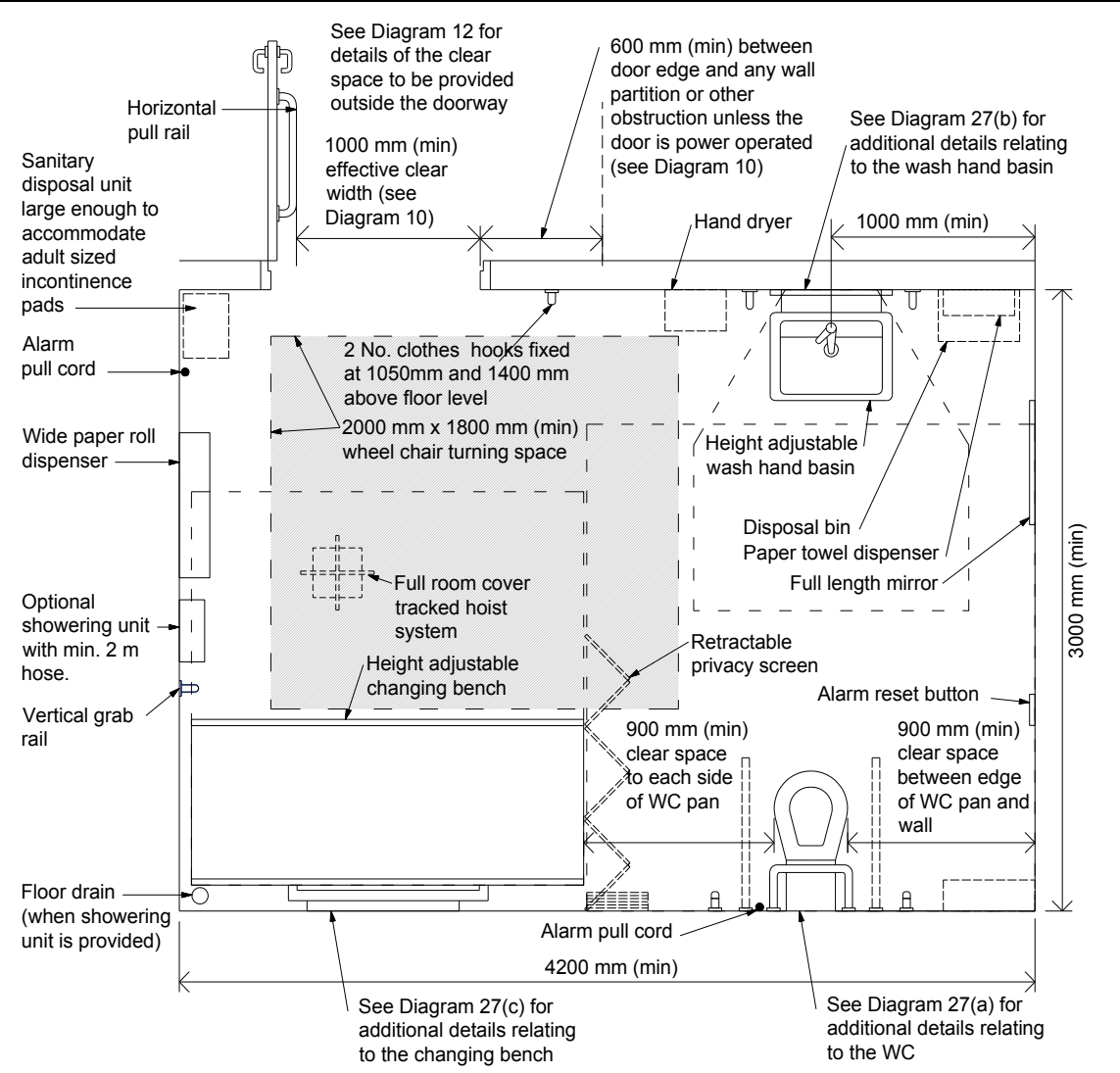
- (o) Timed lighting should not be used.

Rationale: If the lighting switches off, the assistant would have to leave the disabled person unattended to re-activate the lighting;

- (p) Signage that includes instructions on how to safely operate the changing bench, overhead hoist and height-adjustable washbasin should be provided in accordance with 1.6.3;
- (q) An emergency assistance alarm system with two pull cords should be provided in accordance with 1.4.4 (k). The pull cords should be positioned in accordance with Diagram 26 and should not obstruct the operation of the overhead hoist;
- (r) Heat emitters, casings and shelves should be located so that they do not project into or restrict the minimum clear wheelchair turning space or the circulation spaces beside the WC, Wash hand basin or changing bench, nor should they be located where they may cause injury to a person using the changing bench;
- (s) A shower unit should be provided within the changing places toilet in buildings where sanitary facilities combining showers and WCs for use by people other than staff is provided. The shower unit should be positioned in accordance with Diagram 27(c).
  - (i) The shower controls should be easy to use and capable of being operated with a closed fist e.g. with a lever handle operation.
  - (ii) The markings on the shower control should be logical and clear.
  - (iii) The showerhead should be detachable and mounted on a flexible hose.

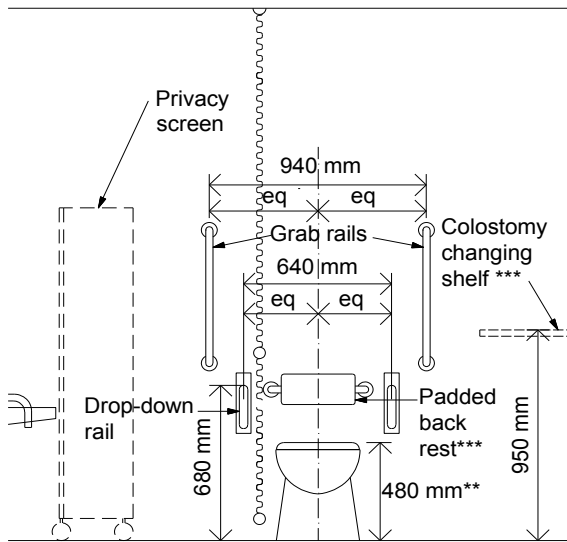
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- (iv) The hose should be at least 2 m long to allow for use on the changing bench.
  - (v) The floor should be self-draining.

**Diagram 26 Changing Places Toilet General Arrangement Layout**

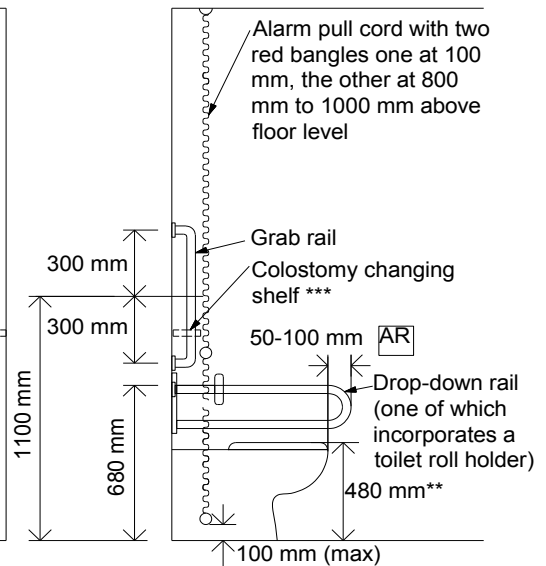


**NOTE:**  
 The overall dimensions should exclude such items as heat emitters, skirting boards, tiles and boxing in of pipework. Adjustments in room sizes will be needed to accommodate these items.  
 \* Where high or low level cisterns are used, a rail with a padded back rest and a separate colostomy changing shelf 125 mm to 150 mm deep x 400 mm (min) wide with its surface 950 mm above floor level should be provided. Where a flat topped close-coupled cistern is used, the cistern should be adequate to also act as a back rest. If the top of the cistern is flat it should be adequate to facilitate a colostomy changing surface for standing users without the extra requirement for a separate shelf.

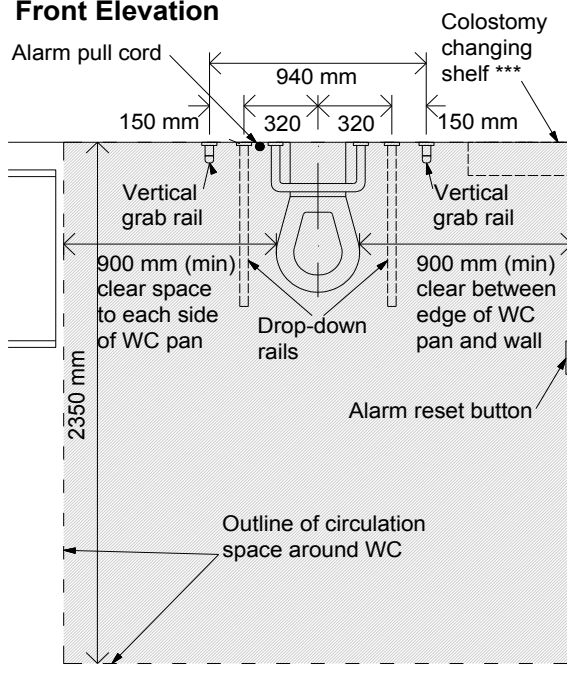
**Diagram 27(a) Layout, Circulation Areas, Fixtures and Fittings for the Peninsular WC**



**Front Elevation**



**Side Elevation**



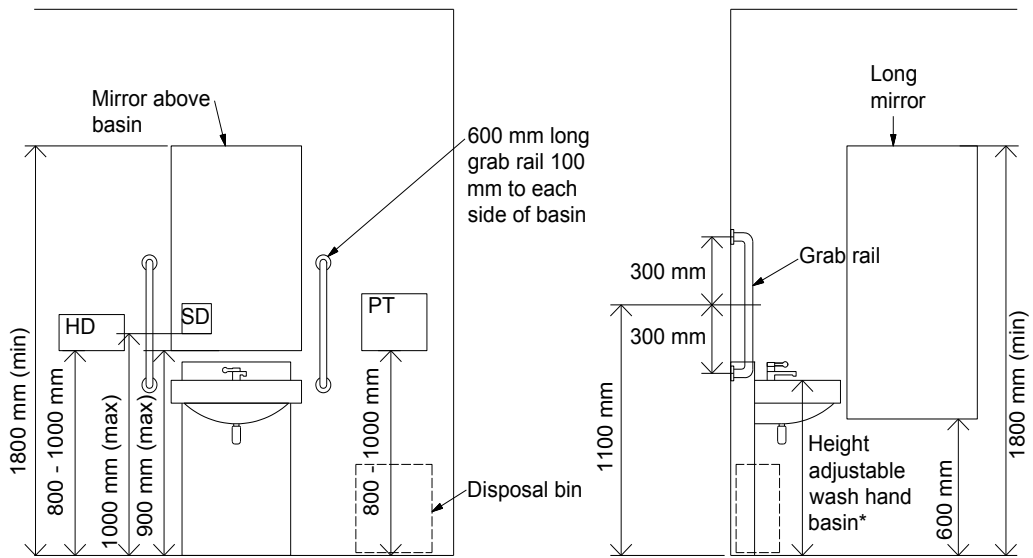
**Plan of WC including circulation space**

**KEY:**  
AR = Alarm reset button

**NOTE:**  
\*Height of drop-down rails to be the same as the other horizontal grab rails  
\*\*Height subject to manufacturing tolerance of WC pan  
\*\*\* Where high or low level cisterns are used, a rail with a padded back rest and a separate colostomy changing shelf 125 mm to 150 mm deep x 400 mm (min) wide with its surface 950 mm above floor level should be provided. Where a flat topped close-coupled cistern is used, the cistern should be adequate to also act as a back rest. If the top of the cistern is flat it should be adequate to facilitate a colostomy changing surface for standing users without the extra requirement for a separate shelf.

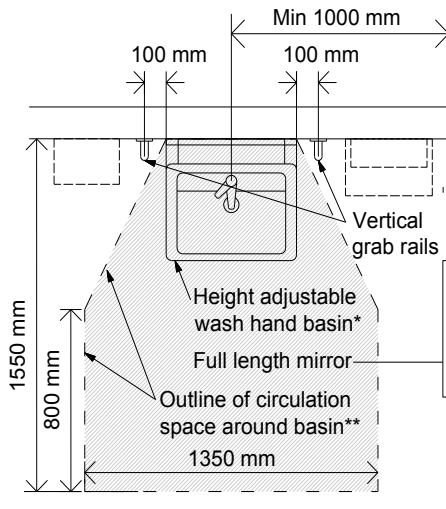


**Diagram 27(b) Layout, Circulation Areas, Fixtures and Fittings for the Height Adjustable Wash Hand Basin**



**Front Elevation**

**Side Elevation**



**Plan of basin including circulation space**

**KEY:**

HD = Possible position for automatic hand dryer

SD = Soap dispenser

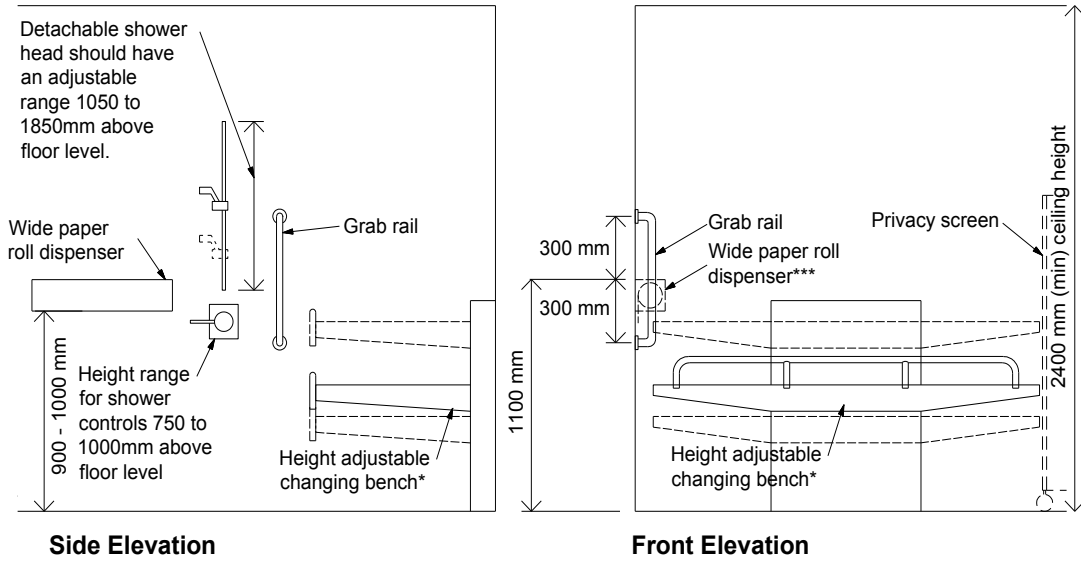
PT = Paper towel dispenser

**NOTE:**

\*The washbasin should have a minimum range of height adjustment of 600 mm to 850 mm above floor level.

\*\*The circulation space around the basin begins to each side of the basin where the basin abuts the wall

## Diagram 27(c) Layout, Circulation Areas, Fixtures and Fittings for the Height Adjustable Changing Bench



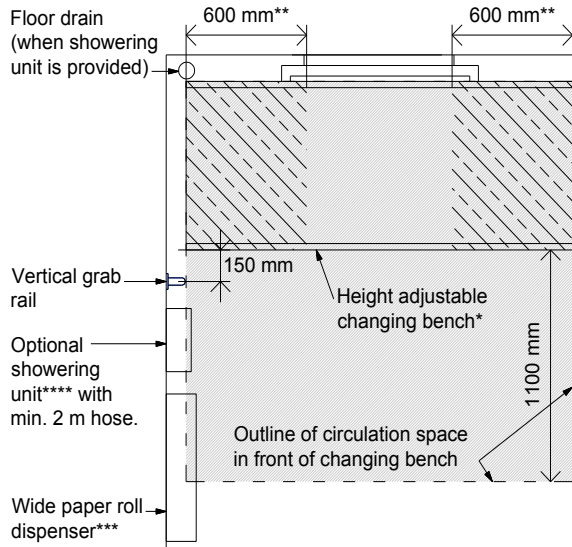
**NOTE:**

\*The changing bench should have a minimum range of height adjustment of 450 mm to 900 mm above floor level.

\*\*Downlighters not to be fitted directly above the last 600 mm of the head or foot of the bench.

\*\*\*A wall mounted wide paper roll dispenser should be provided between 900 mm and 1000 mm above floor level.

\*\*\*\* A shower unit should be provided within the changing places toilet in buildings where sanitary facilities combining showers and WC's for use by people other than staff is provided



**Plan of changing bench including circulation space**

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