

The Americans with Disabilities Act

An Overview of City Accommodations for Citizens and Employees

Dolores Gonzalez
City of Austin ADA/504 Coordinator

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Introduction to the Law

The Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits discrimination of people with disabilities

- **On July 26, 1990:** Signed into law by President George HW Bush
- **First Civil Rights Law** protecting people with disabilities



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ADA - Titles I and II

□ Title I

- Prohibits discrimination in employment practices
 - The City's goal is for employees to be successful in their current or other City position and will make every effort to accommodate

□ Title II

- Prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in State and Local Government Services
- Prohibits a public entity from discriminating against people with disabilities in all facilities, services, programs, and activities provided or made available by the entity

ADA Title I

□ Examples of City Accommodations for employees

- **Teleworking** can help employees with cognitive and physical disabilities
- **Moving Furniture** can assist individuals with wheelchairs to get around
- **Assistive Equipment** such as screen reading software for computers to help employees who are blind or have low vision or volume control phones for persons who are hard of hearing
- **Interpreters** can help employees who are deaf in meetings, trainings or attendance at events
- **Flexible hours** can assist employees attend regular therapy sessions



Title I – Undue Hardship

- ❑ **Undue hardship** : An accommodation that would result in a significant difficulty or expense to the City
 - **Determination** for undue hardship must be made at a high administrative level taking into account all available financial city resources, as well as the impact to business operations, including the ability of other employees to do their job
 - **Alternative** The City will make every effort to work with an employee by providing an alternative, but effective accommodation

Title II - Compliance Component under Public Services

- ❑ **Provide Notice of Compliance** with the law and make accommodations to services, programs, or activities, upon request.
- ❑ **Provide Accommodations** allowing a qualified individual with a disability the opportunity to participate in or benefit from the aid or service offered by the City that is equal, but not different or separate, to those offered to other individuals.



Title II - Citizen Accommodations

- **Citizen accommodations are provided upon request**
 - **Requests** are generated by a variety of sources such as Austin 311, the City Notice of Compliance on Meeting Notices, and “Notice” posters displayed in all public lobbies, the internet, departments, and direct calls to the ADA Office
 - **Collaborative effort** The ADA Office works collaboratively with City departments to resolve citizen accommodation issues



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Title II - Providing Effective Communication

- ❑ **Effective Communication** The City will take appropriate steps to ensure that communication with individuals with disabilities are as effective as communication with others and that it is provided in a timely manner in accessible formats that protects the privacy of the individual
- ❑ **Auxiliary Aides and Services** The City will furnish appropriate auxiliary aids and services to allow individuals with disabilities an opportunity to participate in City programs and services
- ❑ **Primary Consideration** The City will give primary consideration to an individual's request when determining aids or services necessary for communication

ADA Title II

Accommodations for Citizens Include:

- **Aviation:** Added service animal relief areas and accessible directional signage for travelers with disabilities
- **Convention Center:** Provide mobility scooters for rent and installed touch operated bathroom doors for visitors with disabilities.
- **HHSD:** Added a special needs area to help citizens with mobility issues during annual flu clinics
- **Austin Resource Recovery:** Provides service to assist citizens with mobility and sight impairments in managing their trash carts
- **Parks and Recreation:** Formed the Inclusion Unit to oversee specialized programming for people with disabilities and created accessible ADA trailheads along Lady Bird Lake
- **Public Works:** The Sidewalk program oversees the repair and building of city sidewalks to be fully accessible to citizens with disabilities and works with the ADA Sidewalk Taskforce for community feedback

ADA Title II

The City of Austin leads the way in access!

- Providing captioning of City Council Meetings since 1998
- Providing accessible software throughout Library Department
- Providing Sign Language and captioning services as requested
- Created an aggressive ADA Curb and Sidewalk Program
- Developed an Audible Traffic Signal Program
- Provided disability awareness training to the entire Police force
- 2005 National Winner of Accessible America Campaign
- NHCD, through the SMART Housing program, has built 3,000+ visitable homes



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Questions?

Contact Information

Today's Speaker:

Dolores Gonzalez

City of Austin

ADA/504 Coordinator

dolores.gonzalez@austintexas.gov

512-974-3256

