



Beyond the Ramp: Comprehensive Accessibility Training

Presented by:

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About Disability Rights Texas

- Part of the national Protection and Advocacy (P&A) System established in 1977 through federal law.
- Nonprofit legal firm with the mission to protect and advocate for the rights of Texans with disabilities to ensure their equal participation in society.
- Free legal advocacy services provided to Texans of all ages with a wide variety of disabilities.
- Watch our explainer video to learn more: www.DRTx.org/WhatWeDo

Ways to support our mission

- Subscribe to our newsletter: www.DRTx.org/Subscribe
- Follow us on Facebook, Twitter/X, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube
- Buy cool merch from our online store: www.DRTx.org/Store
- Donate:
 - ✓ One time or monthly gift: www.DRTx.org/Donate
 - ✓ Text DRTxGive to 512-229-9109
 - ✓ Venmo: click on Search, then Make a donation, type in Disability Rights Texas.

Voting Services Offered:

- It's all FREE!!
- Polling site surveys-ADA compliance
- Train poll workers
- Statewide voter hotline (open year round)
- Answer questions
- Respond to legislative inquiries
- Train community members on voting rights

What's in it for me?!?

- Gain a general understanding of why accessibility of polling places is important.
- How to achieve accessibility.
- Different approaches to accessibility.
- Where to find appropriate resources.

Types of accessibility

- Physical
- Atmosphere/environmental.
 - Creating an environment and space that accommodates people with various intangible needs //// allows for people with different types of need to feel safe enough to ask for assistance.

Polling Site Accessibility (Physical)

- Addresses accessibility features both on inside and outside of polling place.
- Parts of polling site with most accessibility barriers (in ranking order)
 - Parking lots, sidewalks, building entrances, voting areas.
- Common exterior problem/problem areas
- Common interior problem/problem areas

Environment of accessibility

- Make available: information about moving to front of line; chairs to sit in, areas that offer air conditioning and have access to water; signature guides for those who want to sign their name but may need assistance; do not isolate the accessible voting machine from other (non-accessible) machines
- Provide patience
- Notepads, pens and other forms of communication for voters.
- **Ask every voter** how/if you can assist and be willing to do what is reasonably possible to help.

How to achieve accessibility?

- Ask DRTx to inspect the polling site.
- Look for locations that will/should already be accessible
 - Centers for Independent Living
 - Senior Centers
 - Community Centers
 - City buildings
- Hire people from the disability community to serve as poll workers.
- Ask disability advocacy groups to serve as polling site.
- Invite people with disabilities to train poll workers on how to best assist voters and their needs.

Low cost solutions (1)

- Mark boundary lines with spray paint, regular paint. Parking signs can be erected with a cone, stick and poster board. These products can be bought at almost every major hardware store, dollar store, craft and supply store, etc.
- To create new or expand the width of parking spaces: Permanent Solution-repaint boundary lines to accurately reflect new widths. Temporary solutions-using (colored) duct tape or cones. Duct tape and cones can be purchased at Wal-Mart, hardware stores, Harbor Freight

Low cost solutions (2)

- To increase sign height: Permanent Solution-Use post extensions add additional height. Depending on size, extensions can cost from \$2-\$30.
- To prove an accessible ramp: If an existing ramp is too steep, look to see if there is an alternative, accessible route inside building. Blow up existing ramp and build new one, or find a new accessible polling site. See if there is space to add extension to existing ramp (to meet compliance measurements), block use of existing ramp and use an accessible, temporary ramp.

Resources- Federal laws

- Help America Vote Act (HAVA), 2002
- National Voting Registration Act of 1993 (Motor Voter)
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), 1991 & 2010
 - Title II
- Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act of 1984
- Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Voting Rights Act of 1965
 - Section 208

Resources- State laws

Texas Election Code:

- Accessibility of polling place (Sec. 43.034)
- Accepting voters with disabilities (Sec. 63.0015)
- Curbside voting (Sec. 64.009)
- Assisting voter (Chapter 64, Subchapter B)
- Voting by mail (Chapter 86)
- Late voting by disabled voter (Chapter 102)

Resources

- Disability Rights Texas
 - vote@drtx.org
 - 1-888-796-VOTE
- ADA Update: A Primer for State and Local Government
 - https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/titleII_2010/title_ii_primer.html
- Local community service groups:
 - Scouting America
 - Community service restitution
 - Knights of Columbus
 - Texas Ramp Project
 - local hardware stores, construction groups
- Harbor Freight www.harborfreight.com
- Walmart (online) www.Walmart.com
- Election Source www.electionsource.com/collection/supplies