ADA Liaison News
Greetings from the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs

ADA Liaison Updates

August was a busy month with 5 ADA Accessibility complaints. Thankfully, with the assistance of our corresponding ADA Liaisons, we are working towards addressing each complaint and obtaining a successful resolution. THANK YOU!

A BIG WELCOME to our new ADA Liaisons: Nancy Fraire, Manuela Baker, Cindy Lopez, Geoff Kuhn, JoAnn Acosta, Debbie Woodmansee, and Colin King. OEOP appreciates your commitment in doing your part to resolve ADA complaints by facilitating each complaint to the appropriate department and/or reporting it to OEOP.

Congratulations Lt. Jamie Brady!!!

Lt. Brady will soon be retiring from the COT. Thank you for all your time serving as an ADA Liaison.

**SPECIAL NOTICE**

OEOP has updated the informational links on the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs intranet and internet webpages. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with these updated links with special consideration to those related to the ADA.

To better serve the public, it is important to keep yourselves informed of all of the relevant ADA updates posted on the City of Tucson’s webpages. In doing so, the City of Tucson can maintain its reputation of ADA awareness and commitment to serving

Reminders:

PLEASE make sure that all customer service personnel and anyone having contact with the public know they should immediately notify you or your replacement when someone asks for a disability accommodation or has an ADA concern.

ALWAYS begin by reviewing A.D. 2.05-10 when determining whether a call falls under that directive, and also review it when we forward a complaint to you. These are our guidelines to follow to ensure City departments are in compliance with the law.
News Flash!

Philly's sidewalks face a court battle — (8/29/2019)
https://aldianews.com/articles/local/philadelphia/phillys-sidewalks-face-court-battle/56322

This week, with the support of three advocacy groups, four individuals with disabilities filed a lawsuit against Philadelphia alleging its violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and a 1977 law that requires all streets be accessible. The lawsuit outlines multiple instances where the plaintiffs, both wheelchair-bound and visually impaired, were either injured attempting to traverse Philly’s sidewalks or required to take another route to their destinations because of unforeseen barriers.

It specifically cites dilapidated curb ramps and the lack of enforcement for cars parked on the sidewalk as some of the main obstacles facing the 186,000 disabled Philadelphia residents that the suit is said to represent. “Philadelphia’s failure to create and maintain accessible paths of travel has made it difficult — and at times impossible — for me to go to work, school, and church, and has prevented me from being able to fully experience life in Philadelphia with my family,” plaintiff Liam Dougherty said in a statement that first appeared in The Inquirer. The suit does not ask for any monetary compensation, just that Philadelphia comply with the federal law and fix its sidewalks.

Parking spaces and bathrooms, sure - but is your website compliant with the ADA?
Adam Bartrom (Jun 26, 2019)
https://www.fwbusiness.com/fwbusiness/article_91f36b18-6ede-57fb-aa42-8bf2746b07d9.html

Wait, the ADA applies to websites?!?

Yes. While the ADA does not explicitly mention the internet, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) — the primary enforcer of the ADA — has taken the position that ADA-accessibility requirements extend to websites and “apps.” As part of its aggressive enforcement efforts, the DOJ has required a wide variety of companies to make both their websites and their mobile “apps” ADA-accessible. The emerging consensus is that if your company sells goods or services through its website, then there is likely an obligation to comply with the ADA.

How big of a deal is ADA-accessibility for websites and apps?

Companies may find themselves asking whether it is really necessary to undergo efforts to make their websites ADA-accessible and wondering “what is the worst that could happen?” The short answer is that plaintiffs and the federal government have pushed this issue to the forefront and the DOJ is empowered to level substantial civil penalties for non-compliance. Of course, there are also significant PR concerns.

Moreover, putting aside legal concerns, ensuring ADA-accessibility also protects companies against negative publicity or being singled out as unfriendly to the disabled.

Kudos to Bill Parks!

Bill has made significant ADA compliance recommendations during several walkthroughs in the City of Tucson’s renovation projects. Additionally, Bill was quick to respond to a recent ADA Complaint regarding the installation of a door operator to improve wheelchair access at the Tucson Police Department - Midtown Division (1100 S. Alvernon Way Tucson, Arizona 85711).

This is just an example of the commitment by our COT employees to serving our constituents with disabilities. Kudos to a job well done Bill!