



Office of the District Attorney
Richmond County

Michael E. McMahon
District Attorney

Office of the Richmond County District Attorney
Accessibility Progress Report, 2024-2025

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A. General

The employees of the Richmond County District Attorney's Office ("RCDA") work each day in partnership with law enforcement and the people of Staten Island to pursue justice for victims of crime, to prevent crime in all its forms, and to promote the safety and well-being of all citizens of Staten Island.

RCDA has approximately 230-240 employees who work in multiple bureaus and units, and at three locations, two of which are satellite offices. RCDA's main office is located at 130 Stuyvesant Place in Staten Island, where the agency utilizes floors six through nine, as well as the third floor where the Grand Jury sits. The first satellite office is in the basement of the Staten Island Criminal Courthouse, located at 26 Central Avenue. The second satellite office is located within the Family Justice Center ("FJC") at 126 Stuyvesant Place. Additionally, all three buildings RCDA utilizes are City-owned and under the jurisdiction of the NYC Department of Citywide Services ("DCAS"). Thus, RCDA is responsible for the demised areas within these buildings (i.e., the offices themselves), whereas DCAS is responsible for common areas, including, but not limited to, bathrooms, staircases, and lobbies.

This is RCDA's first annual accessibility progress report. RCDA submitted its Final 5-year Accessibility Plan to the NYC Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities ("MOPD") in March of 2024, pursuant to Local Law 12 of 2023 ("Local Law 12").¹

¹ Local Law 12 of 2023, available at <https://intro.nyc/local-laws/2023-12>. According to Local Law 12, the accessibility plan must have set forth the steps being taken to "ensure that the agency's workplace, services, programs, and activities are accessible to and accommodating and inclusive of persons with disabilities" by "improving physical, digital, and programmatic access, and effective communications for persons with disabilities."

Some of the improvements regarding accessibility RCDA has achieved this past year include, but are not limited to, procuring an Assistive Listening System to be used in two conference rooms and in two interview rooms, the revision of RCDA's floor plan that includes the renumbering of all rooms and workstations, and beginning the process of purchasing braille signage for every room and in all demised areas where there is directional signage.

However, one challenge RCDA has encountered is with the procurement of the braille signage, which is taking longer than expected due to the cost of the overall project and the requirement within City procurement rules for multiple bids from different braille signage vendors. Additionally, and due to RCDA's expansion over the past several years (described more fully below), the procurement process of braille signage created a chain reaction requiring the revision of RCDA's floor plan and the renumbering of all rooms and workstations, which will create more accessibility for employees and visitors, as a prerequisite to purchasing such braille signage. Thus, the revision of the floor plan also contributed to delays in completing this project.

Some of the things RCDA will focus on in the upcoming year include, but are not limited to: implementing the revised floor plan; installing braille signage on all rooms, workstations, and in all demised areas where there is directional signage; and obtaining greater accessibility in our communications, such as providing Communication Access Realtime Transcription ("CART") and a mechanism for closed captioning of videos.

1. Statement of Commitment

RCDA is committed to an environment in which equitable, diverse, and inclusive practices are promoted and encouraged. RCDA understands the importance of providing persons with disabilities with access to the office's services; to identifying, preventing, and removing barriers to accessibility; and to complying with accessibility requirements in a way that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. However, we also understand that identifying and removing barriers is an ongoing process. RCDA is committed to addressing obstacles and barriers as soon as we

become aware of them, even if they were not addressed and identified in our 5-Year Accessibility Plan.

Thus, consistent with the purpose of Local Law 12, RCDA endeavors to use reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, practices, and procedures are consistent with the following principles:

- Receipt of complaints, investigations and other services are provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities to enable them to obtain, use, or benefit from RCDA's resources and/or services;
- People with disabilities are given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use, and benefit from RCDA's resources and/or services;
- When communicating with a person with a disability, RCDA will do so in a manner that considers the person's disability and preferred method of communication; and
- People with disabilities and their service animals are accommodated in all aspects of service provision unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law.

2. Disability Service Facilitator and Key Accessibility Information

The Disability Service Facilitator ("DSF") coordinates agency efforts to comply with and carry out the agency's responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA") and other federal, state, and local laws and regulations concerning access to agency programs and services by people with disabilities. DSFs are liaisons to New Yorkers with disabilities, connecting people with disabilities to City government. Employees and/or members of the public who need assistance accessing a particular program or service, should contact RCDA's DSF, Andrew Sterrer, at (718) 524-0567 or disabilityservices@rcda.nyc.gov.

RCDA's website also contains valuable information for people with disabilities, which includes the following:

1. Non-discrimination Policy and Notice of Rights.
2. Grievance Procedures.
3. Website Accessibility Statement.
4. Language Access Statement.
5. Five-Year Accessibility Plan.
6. Accessibility Progress Report: 2024-2025.

To access RCDA's online accessibility resources, please visit:

<https://www.statenislandda.org/accessibility/>.

3. Feedback Process

RCDA welcomes feedback on accessibility issues that may affect our agency. Members of the public and RCDA employees are encouraged to share their feedback regarding any accessibility issues by submitting a response to RCDA's DSF Andrew Sterrer at disabilityservices@rcda.nyc.gov. People who wish to submit their feedback anonymously can also send it via regular mail to DSF Andrew Sterrer, Office of the Richmond County District Attorney, 130 Stuyvesant Place, 7th Floor, Staten Island, NY 10301.

B. Progress Report

1. Physical Access

As of May 2025, RCDA has taken the following measures regarding physical access:

- Procured an assistive listening system so that people with disabilities may use assistive devices to support access to RCDA's resources and services. The assistive listening system is available for use in four (4) different rooms, including the large conference room on the 6th floor and on the 8th floor at 130 Stuyvesant Place, as well as in two interview rooms – one at 26 Central Avenue in our satellite office in the basement of the Courthouse and one at 126 Stuyvesant Place in our other satellite office in the Family Justice Center.

- Began the process of purchasing braille signage for all numbered rooms, offices, workstations, and in all demised areas where there is directional signage. However, due to the cost of the overall project and City procurement rules, RCDA is currently in the process of obtaining required multiple bids from perspective braille signage vendors.
- Provided tools, technology, and workspaces that are accessible to all employees, such as ergonomic office equipment and the availability of access technology.

By May of 2026, RCDA intends on the following:

- Installing braille signage on all numbered rooms, offices, workstations, and in all demised areas where there is directional signage.
- Implementing a revised floor plan that will create more accessibility for employees and visitors and will coincide with the installation of the braille signage. It must be noted that when RCDA began the procurement process of braille signage it created a ripple effect requiring the revision and implementation of a revised floor plan and the renumbering of all offices, workstations, and conference rooms. The main reason behind the revised floor plan is that RCDA, in addition to procuring braille signage, expanded over the past nine years under the leadership of District Attorney Michael E. McMahon, including, but not limited to: a two-fold increase in the number of Assistant District Attorneys, and new discovery obligations that required the creation of additional units, including a Body Worn Camera Unit and Giglio Unit, and the hiring of more employees to staff such units and work on those and other discovery-related matters. As a result, many additional workstations were created as well as conference rooms converted into offices.

In addition, within the past year, RCDA took over office space on the 6th floor at 130 Stuyvesant Place for misdemeanor Assistant District Attorneys due to an expansion of our Criminal Court Bureau. This space was previously used by the Staten Island office of the NYC

Department of City Planning. Thus, all offices, workstations, and conference rooms at RCDA will be more accessible through such renumbering via the revised floor plan and the addition of braille signage on all rooms and workstations.

- Continued evaluation of space usage to ensure accessible access for visitors and employees at all three RCDA locations, including offices and workstations, as well as consideration of maintenance and/or removal of carpeting or other structures that may prevent accessibility and/or cause health problems.

2. Digital Access

As of May 2025, RCDA has:

- Made its digital content partially conformant with WCAG 2.1 level AA. The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) defines requirements for designers and developers to improve accessibility for people with disabilities. It defines three levels of conformance: Level A, Level AA, and Level AAA. Partially conformant means that some parts of the content do not fully conform to this accessibility standard.
- Completed a wireless upgrade that includes supplementary Wi-Fi and a Guest Wireless network on all office floors at RCDA's main location at 130 Stuyvesant Place.
- Recently completed an IT equipment upgrade that included providing every employee with the use of a new work iPhone and/or iPad that will better assist with work and accessibility.
- Ensured that every employee is provided with the use or access of a computer with a Windows operating system and a full suite of Microsoft Office applications. Windows is equipped with an array of tools designed to aid individuals with disabilities, including a narrator (or talk-to-text speech) function, high contrast setting, and magnifier. These tools can be found at: Control Panel\All Control Panel Items\Ease of Access Center. Additionally, the Microsoft Office suite of applications include default settings regarding accessibility that alerts

the user if there are any identified accessibility issues that may impact how an individual with disabilities can make use of a document.

By May 2026, and to attain greater digital accessibility and remove barriers for people with disabilities, RCDA plans on:

- Continuing to do our utmost to meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 Level AA for both our internal and public-facing websites.
- Providing or arranging, upon request, for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports to people with disabilities in a timely manner, taking into account the person's accessibility needs.
- Providing, upon request, accessible formats and communication supports for receiving and responding to feedback from people with disabilities.
- Organizing professional training sessions, including those offered by MOPD and DCAS.
- Continuing to work diligently to ensure that our programs are held at spaces or on virtual platforms that support accessibility for people that have mobility disabilities, are blind or have low vision, are deaf or hearing impaired, or have cognitive disabilities.

3. Programmatic Access

As of May 2025, RCDA has:

- Held an office-wide training on Disability Etiquette, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and RCDA's 5-Year Accessibility Plan, presented by Person Centered Care Services ("PCCS") and RCDA's Disability Service Facilitator.
- Required all employees to complete the Disability Etiquette and Awareness training provided by DCAS.
- Provided educational materials on the Principals for Plain Language writing to public-facing employees, including all Assistant District

Attorneys, Victim Advocates, and all members of the Community Partnership Unit.

- Provided educational materials on how to create accessible documents to public-facing employees, including all Assistant District Attorneys, Victim Advocates, and all members of the Community Partnership Unit.

By May 2026, we intend to do the following:

- Provide educational or training resources in an accessible format that considers the accessibility needs of people with disabilities.
- Require all employees and volunteers, every year, to complete the Disability Etiquette and Awareness training provided by DCAS.
- Keep, maintain, and update a database, annually, of all training participants' names and dates of completion for trainings provided by DCAS.
- Have accessibility guidance available to all employees to ensure they follow best practices when choosing a platform, fulfilling reasonable accommodation requests for ASL, interpretation, Captioning, and obtaining documents in accessible formats.
- Include accessibility information on advertisements for public events that includes information on accommodations to be provided (e.g., ASL interpretation, assistive listening system, Captioning, etc.), a point of contact to request an accommodation including both a phone number and email address, and a deadline to request accommodations which is usually 72 hours before the event.
- Require the Community Partnership Unit and DSF to share the responsibility of ensuring that advertising and other materials concerning public events include information regarding accessibility for people with disabilities.²

² Local Law 28 of 2016, available at <https://intro.nyc/local-laws/2016-28>.

- Hold a live or virtual training on the Principals for Plain Language writing and how to create accessible documents for public facing employees, including all Assistant District Attorneys, Victim Advocates, and all members of the Community Partnership Unit.

4. Effective Communications

As of May 2025, RCDA has put in place mechanisms for providing the following:

- In-person sign language;
- Website accessibility tools and plug-in;
- Video remote interpretation;
- Providing documents in large print; and
- Ensuring that electronic/digital documents are reviewed for accessibility prior to their posting online.

In addition, within this past year, RCDA submitted its Draft Language Access Implementation Plan (“LAIP”) and Language Access Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2024 to the NYC Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs. We are currently awaiting review and approval and thereafter will post the LAIP on our accessibility webpage. The LAIP is intended to improve timely and meaningful access for persons with Limited English Proficiency (“LEP”) who come in contact with RCDA, including victims and their family members, witnesses, unrepresented defendants, and defendants in RCDA programs, in accordance with Local Law 30 of 2017.

By May 2026, RCDA intends to take the following measures to make our communications more accessible by:

- Providing Communication Access Realtime Transcription (CART).
- Providing a mechanism for closed captioning of videos.
- Establishing a mechanism for providing documents in braille.
- Establishing a mechanism for providing documents as audio recordings.

5. Workplace Inclusion

Hiring and Recruitment

As of May 2025, RCDA has taken the following steps to help ensure that potential applicants with disabilities are given the same opportunity as those without a disability, by:

- Hiring and promoting people with disabilities at all levels, not just entry-levels.
- Having a 55-a Program Coordinator on staff who uses the 55-a Program to hire people with disabilities for competitive positions.
- Participating in disability recruitment events.
- Reviewing all job descriptions to ensure that they are disability inclusive.
- Posting electronic job announcements that are accessible to those who use access technologies.
- Providing documents and forms to applicants as part of the pre-employment process that are accessible to those who use access technology; or hard copies that are available in alternative formats.
- Providing different options for where interviews can be held, such as in-person or virtual.

Performance Management, Career Development and Redeployment

As of May 2025, RCDA has taken the following measures with respect to performance management and career development:

- Provided coaching opportunities and clear pathways to help ensure that all employees, including those with disabilities, have the information to be successful and the opportunity to advance.
- Encouraged 55-a employees to take promotional exams.
- Provided trainings and professional development opportunities that were accessible to all employees, including employees with disabilities.

- Continued to ensure that all employees completed the Disability Etiquette & Awareness training provided by DCAS on Citynet.

Reasonable Accommodations & Documented Individual Accommodation Plans

As of May 2025, and consistent with the Citywide EEO Policy and relevant laws and rules, RCDA produces and provides documented individual accommodations based on the following practices:

- Cooperative dialogue with the employee or applicant requesting and/or requiring the accommodation;
- External medical evaluations to determine appropriate and effective accommodations that address the specific disability or condition;
- High level of privacy;
- Regular review and updates, where applicable;
- Reasons for denial, if applicable;
- The means of providing the accommodation in a format that considers the needs of the employee; and
- If required, include individualized workplace emergency response information.
- In addition, RCDA's employee reasonable accommodation process follows the DCAS Reasonable Accommodation Procedural guidelines.

By May 2026, RCDA intends on taking the following actions regarding workplace inclusion:

- Posting job announcements on the NYC:ATWORK Job Board.
- Providing internship opportunities for people with disabilities through programs such as the Partnership for Inclusive Internships.
- Establishing an affinity group/employee resource group ("ERG") for people with disabilities.
- Providing all employment/personnel notices in an accessible format.

- Providing expanded periodic training for employees on the disability-related issues that affect RCDA.
- Update the Employee Handbook that includes the Citywide EEO policy with policies and processes that stem from RCDA's 5-Year Accessibility Plan.

6. Agency-Wide Trainings

As of May 2025, RCDA has:

- Ensured that every employee completed the Disability Awareness and Etiquette online training course offered by DCAS.
- Required every employee to attend an in-house virtual training on Disability Etiquette, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and RCDA's 5-Year Accessibility Plan, presented by Person Centered Care Services ("PCCS") and our DSF.
- Ensured that all public facing employees, including Assistant District Attorneys, Victim Advocates, and members of the Community Partnership Unit, received training on creating accessible documents and the Principals for Plain Language writing.

By May 2026, RCDA intends on the following:

- Require all members of the Community Partnership Unit and the DSF to attend MOPD's Planning Accessible Events virtual training.
- Require all members of the IT Unit, Community Partnership Unit, and the DSF, to attend MOPD's Digital Accessibility Training, if offered virtually.
- Require every employee to complete the Disability Awareness and Etiquette online training course offered by DCAS.
- Require every employee to attend the live and virtual Disability Awareness and Etiquette training offered by MOPD, which supplements DCAS's online training.

C. Consultations and Feedback

RCDA's Website Accessibility Feedback form can be found on our accessibility webpage for use by the public and all employees.³ RCDA also plans on creating a survey to be distributed to all employees that invites feedback regarding any gaps or barriers to accessibility at RCDA and at each of our three locations.

D. Conclusion

RCDA is prepared to achieve greater accessibility throughout our office by the following: providing people with disabilities with access to our services; to continue to identify, prevent, and remove barriers to accessibility; and to meet accessibility requirements in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We look forward to achieving the goals presented in this report for the following year, including but not limited to, implementing a revised floor plan that includes the renumbering of all rooms and workstations, and installing braille signage on all rooms, workstations, and in demised areas where there is directional signage, thereby creating greater accessibility for all visitors and employees.

³ See <https://www.statenislandda.org/accessibility/>.