

**Office of the Brooklyn Borough President
Antonio Reynoso**

Local Law



12 of 2023

Five Year Accessibility Plan

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I. General

Local Law 12 requires each agency to publish a plan describing the steps it is currently taking and will take over the next 5 years to ensure that the agency's workplace, services, programs, and activities are accessible to, accommodating and inclusive of persons with disabilities. The Law contemplates five specific areas identified in section (b)(2) of Local Law 12 (NYC Admin Code § 1004(b)(2)): physical access, digital access, programmatic access, effective communications, and workplace.

This plan embodies Borough President Reynoso's ("the BP") commitment to justice and equity to give all Brooklynites the opportunity to thrive and succeed. The Office of Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso ("OBBP") demonstrates its commitment to inclusion and diversity through endeavors like the Comprehensive Plan for Brooklyn. Borough President Reynoso and his team strive to ensure that persons living with disabilities are included and can participate effectively in government functions.

The Office of Equal Employment Opportunity ("the EEO Office") has prepared this Five-Year Accessibility Plan. This plan will be implemented from 2024-2028. The EEO Office will be responsible for updating and implementing the plan every three years.

Pursuant to Local Law 27 of 2016, every City agency must designate a Disability Service Facilitator (“DSF”) who is responsible for coordinating efforts to comply with the ADA and other federal, state, and local laws and regulations. The OBBP Disability Service Facilitator is:

Corina Lozada

209 Joralemon Street, Brooklyn NY 11201

Phone: 718-802-3883

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The OBBP Accessibility Statement is located on the [OBBP website](#).

II. Agency Mission and Background

The Office of Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso (“OBBP”) serves more than 2.73 million people who live in Brooklyn, who represent over 100 countries and speak over 150 languages. As a proud representative of Brooklyn, Borough President Reynoso (“the BP”) intends to guide the growth and development of Brooklyn in an effort to solve the disparities and inequities that we see across the borough in the hopes of creating a Brooklyn for all. Borough President Reynoso’s vision is to live and evolve with the hopes and needs of the people of Brooklyn and has made efforts to do so in his first two years in office by way of the Maternal Health Task Force and the Comprehensive Plan for Brooklyn. Borough

President Reynoso is backed by a dynamic team that is as passionate to serve Brooklyn and its constituents as the Borough President. Each department works collaboratively to ensure that the Borough President can effectively represent and advocate for Brooklynites.

[The Budget Department](#) supports the borough by executing the Borough President's charter mandated duty of allocating capital budget across Brooklyn projects to make improvements to parks, streets, schools, hospitals, economic development and affordable housing projects, cultural institutions, and other nonprofit organizations across the borough. The Department also oversees the Borough President's expense budget, including the processing of discretionary grants to non-profit groups across the borough.

[The Communications Department](#) supports Borough President Reynoso and his administration's priorities by developing and executing comprehensive communications strategies and materials. Whether by designing materials about Borough President Reynoso's historic comprehensive plan for Brooklyn or developing messaging about critical issues in the borough, the Communications Department ensures that members of the public and media are aware of how Borough President Reynoso is meeting Brooklynites' needs. In addition to providing executive

support, the department provides support to other departments across Borough Hall.

[The Community Affairs Department](#) implements community engagement borough wide by coordinating workshops and events towards providing services and information to all Brooklynites. In addition, the unit responds to meeting requests from residents and Community Based Organizations who wish to inform the office about local issues, advocate on platforms or new initiatives, or collaborate on providing services to the borough. The unit also conducts outreach on the activities and work of the office following the guidance of the Borough President's Comprehensive Plan.

[The Community Boards Department](#) assists the Borough President in supporting Brooklyn's 18 community boards. Primarily the unit recruits Brooklynites to apply to join one of the borough's 18 community boards, administers the annual appointment process of 450 members and coordinates member training and workshops. Each month the unit convenes an interagency Borough Service Cabinet meeting which reviews Brooklyn's service needs and the Borough Board meetings composed of the city council delegation and community board chairpersons which may review and make recommendations on matters affecting the borough.

[The Constituent Services Center](#) acts as a conduit and advocate for all residents of the borough. Our office will advocate, refer, or correspond with various City, State, federal or Community Based Organizations on behalf of all Brooklyn community members.

[Executive Team](#) provides leadership, supervisory, and operational oversight to ensure that the Office of the Brooklyn Borough President is advancing BP Reynoso's priorities to secure a better Brooklyn for all.

[Executive Support Staff](#) provide critical administrative support to ensure that the Brooklyn Borough President and Executive Team members are equipped to carry out their roles on a daily basis.

[The Human Resources Department](#) assists the Borough President in ensuring all compliance requirements regarding personnel are met. This is done through ensuring proper payroll and timekeeping procedures, recruitment, hiring and separations. The unit must oversee proper civil service procedures are maintained, this includes yearly performance evaluations, probation notices, and the creation of employee tasks and standards. Overall, the unit is responsible for assisting the agency in everything from their benefits to the daily aspects of their jobs.

[Intergovernmental Affairs](#) is responsible for coordinating with external stakeholders, including but not limited to elected officials, government

agencies, and community organizations in the efforts to collaborate and align OBBP efforts and priorities to achieve the best possible outcomes for Brooklynites and the City at large.

[The Legislative Department](#) works with partners in the New York City Council to develop and manage the Borough President's legislative agenda. The department also handles the BP's response to the City's budget and works closely with the Policy and Land Use teams on related policy areas, including housing, climate and environmental justice, transportation, and economic development.

[The Operations Department](#) serves as the backbone of Brooklyn Borough Hall, diligently overseeing building functions and providing technical support across departments and community boards. The department's commitment extends to procurement management, ensuring meticulous oversight of all purchases while maintaining comprehensive compliance. The department takes immense pride in being the integral foundation of Brooklyn Borough Hall's operational excellence.

[The Policy Department](#) focuses on understanding the needs and issues impacting the residents of Brooklyn to identify thoughtful solutions operationalized in the form of programming, legislation, and funding opportunities. From working with stakeholders through taskforces, working

groups, and Community Education Councils, among other groups, our team devises policy solutions in the areas of public health, safety, maternal health, education and more. In doing so, we also collaborate closely with other local legislators, agencies, and community groups.

[The Programs Department](#) initiates and executes programming to help Brooklyn constituents by providing services that support, enrich and benefit all communities with partnerships that include, Disability Pride, free tax prep, free summer jazz concerts, the Brooklyn Book Festival, Adopt-A-Shelter-Animal, Thanksgiving distribution and more.

[The Land Use Department and Topographical Bureau](#) are responsible for carrying out the Borough President's Charter mandates to review and make recommendations on applications moving through the City's Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) process, maintain the City Map for the Borough of Brooklyn and assign and maintain a record of street addresses through the Office's Topographical Bureau. The Land Use Division also advises the Borough President on land use matters as they relate to the Borough President's policy and program initiatives, engages in comprehensive planning for the Borough, and provides technical support to Community Boards regarding land use issues and the public review process.

III. Executive Summary

Brooklyn represents a conglomerate of multiracial and multiethnic groups that continues to grow and become more diverse with the passage of time. Borough President Reynoso has envisioned a Borough Hall that is both an equitable workplace as well as one that reflects the diversity of our borough. As such, the Office of the Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso (“OBBP”) proposes the following five-year accessibility plan, pursuant to Local Law 12 of 2023, §23-1004 of the New York City Administrative Code, which outlines the steps OBBP will be taking over the next five years to ensure accessibility and inclusivity for persons living with disabilities in its workplace, services, programs and activities, as well as planned and/or ongoing projects that are related to the improvement of the physical, digital, program access, and effective communication for persons living with disabilities.

IV. Accessibility Statement

Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso places justice and equity at the forefront of his advocacy and representation of Brooklyn. In compliance with the passage of Local Law 12 in 2023, OBBP will continue its efforts for more inclusivity and accessibility in its workplace, services, programs, and activities, specifically improving physical access, digital

access, programmatic access, effective communication, as well as workplace inclusion.

V. Agency Plan

Local Law 12 requires each agency to publish a plan describing the steps it is currently taking and will take over the next 5 years to ensure that the agency's workplace, services, programs, and activities are accessible to and accommodating and inclusive of persons with disabilities. The Law contemplates five specific areas identified in section (b)(2) of Local Law 12 (NYC Admin Code § 1004(b)(2)):

A. Physical Access

Brooklyn Borough Hall is a City-owned landmark building that is administered and operated by DCAS. As such, DCAS is responsible for the common areas of the building and OBBP is responsible for the offices themselves. OBBP's main entrance for visitors (located on the Adams Street side of the building) is ADA accessible and allows persons with disabilities to gain access to the building. Upon entering the building, visitors have access to two elevators that provide all visitors, including persons with disabilities, access to all floors for events, programs, meetings, and conducting business at our Topographical Bureau located on the third floor. Although, DCAS is responsible for maintaining the common

areas of the building, OBBP monitors the elevators and areas of the building to ensure that the building operations can run smoothly and to ensure that there are no barriers to accessibility. When OBBP identifies an issue, OBBP promptly notifies DCAS if maintenance is required and to ensure a timely remediation of the issue. OBBP offices, courtroom, community room, topographical bureau and rotunda all accommodate persons with disabilities, and are suitable for events, programming, meetings, and other regular business. ADA seating is provided for events onsite and off-site. OBBP will continue to regularly monitor the physical areas of Brooklyn Borough Hall to ensure that no barriers to accessibility exist and to effectively address any issues as they arise.

B. Digital Access

OBBP is currently working with OTI to update its website. Throughout this process, OBBP commits to ensuring all of its digital content, including but not limited to, its website and social media platforms, is accessible to and usable by persons living with disabilities. Pursuant to Local Law 26 of 2016, the City has adopted [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](#) (WCAG) 2.1 Level AA as its standard for accessibility of web content. Currently, the OBBP website uses an accessibility plug-in that includes a screen reader function and allows the user to customize the color scheme and other

settings. OBBP worked diligently to ensure that its website content met WCAG 2.1 Level AA by January 18, 2024, and WCAG 2.2 Level AA by the end of March 2024, exceeding the City's standard. OBBP is currently working on restructuring its website and through this process will continue to upgrade the accessibility of its web content. Additionally, the OBBP Communications team is working on increasing the accessibility of its social media. Although this plan is in its early stage of implementation, OBBP strives to meet or exceed City guidelines. OBBP will seek feedback from visitors to its website, including but not limited to constituents, stakeholders, prospective employees, etc.

With respect to hearings and Borough Board meetings, the Office ensures that members of the public have digital access pursuant to the Open Meetings Law. These meetings and hearings are livestreamed via Webex to allow virtual participation, are recorded and placed on the Brooklyn Borough President's YouTube channel with closed captioning. OBBP's Operations Department will explore different software for hybrid options that are more accessible.

The Brooklyn Borough President's Office encourages its sister agencies, the Brooklyn Community Boards, to do the same in compliance with the Open Meetings Law; however, the OBBP does not have jurisdictional

oversight over the Brooklyn Community Boards. As such the OBBP provides guidance on best practices and technical assistance when requested. OBBP looks forward to continued feedback on its livestreamed hearings and meetings as well.

C. Programmatic Access

Pursuant to the ADA, OBBP strives to give persons with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate and benefit from all of its services, programs, and activities. All programs and activities sponsored and orchestrated by OBBP are geared toward advancing and promoting diversity and inclusion and creating a more equitable Brooklyn. All members of the public are welcome to OBBP events, programs, activities, and hearings. Because OBBP is a small agency, it tries to plan for the needs of its audience including accessibility for its events. For example, annually the Brooklyn Borough President hosts the State of the Borough Address. OBBP ensures that this event is held at a location with ADA accessibility (for 2023 and 2024 the address took place/will take place at CUNY City Tech) and ensures to provide ASL interpretation. This year, OBBP received a constituent request for captioning three days before the event. It was the first time OBBP received such a request and was unfortunately unable to secure someone to caption the event with such

short notice. Moving forward, OBBP will be able to consider captioning and/or ASL interpretation for large scale events, and upon request for smaller events, due to budget constraints. OBBP has endeavored to notify the public in advance when ASL Interpretation has been provided through its flyers, emails, newsletters and social media announcements. In the cases where ASL interpretation was not provided outright for lower budget events, OBBP notified the public to allow those who wish to participate and may need to request a reasonable accommodation for OBBP's consideration. OBBP will endeavor to use these practices moving forward without limiting the accommodation to ASL Interpretation by trying to use other accommodations, such as captioning as well as assisted listening devices, when available. Unfortunately, OBBP does not have assistive listening devices available at Borough Hall at this time, but OBBP has utilized and made these devices available for events at other locations when needed.

The Brooklyn Borough President will continue to emphasize programmatic access for all because it allows our office to continue serving the borough through its various services, programming, and activities without sacrificing some vital opportunities that are beneficial to the public. The strides already taken by the OBBP has helped the office to further

understand which additional events, other than those already identified, may need larger budgets in the future to plan for additional services to achieve accessibility, such as captioning, assistive listening devices, or ASL interpretation, without placing the burden on persons with disabilities to always have to seek an accommodation to receive the same information, services, or to attend and benefit from programs or events. OBBP is open to feedback from the public on its progress and the DSF remains available for inquiries, comments, concerns, and reasonable accommodations requests.

OBBP will continue to regularly monitor the accessibility of its events, programs, activities, and hearings by ensuring that larger events provide for access such as ASL, as well as continuing to provide reasonable accommodation upon request for smaller events or hearings with budget constraints. In the event that OBBP identifies barriers to access, OBBP will take prompt action to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities by finding the solutions that will allow global participation and inclusivity for all OBBP services, programs, activities, and hearings.

D. Effective Communications

The EEO Office maintains an open-door policy and responds to all inquiries from employees, prospective employees, and members of the

public as such inquiries are received. All departments work effectively and efficiently to ensure that services, programs, and activities are accessible and inclusive for all constituents including persons with disabilities. The Operations Department ensures that the facilities are in excellent shape to accommodate constituents for services on site. The Programs Department plans and develops programming that benefits all constituents. In July 2023 and 2024, OBBP hosted its first and second annual Disability Pride Events during Disability Pride Month. The Constituent Services Center receives inquiries and provides advocacy to constituents throughout the borough and schedules workshops at locations that are ADA Accessible.

E. Workplace Inclusion

The Equal Employment Opportunity Office (“EEO Office”) ensures that OBBP maintains compliance with New York City and New York State Human Rights Laws, the ADA and other federal anti-discrimination laws including but not limited to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as well as the New York City Equal Employment Opportunity Policy. All employees and prospective employees are provided equal employment opportunities irrespective of their protected categories. All prospective employees are encouraged to apply to open listings and job opportunities at Brooklyn Borough Hall, and all applicants are apprised of their right to reasonable

accommodations throughout the application and interviewing process. Additionally, the EEO Office ensures that all employees are given the City Equal Employment Opportunity Policy along with information about the reasonable accommodation process and the complaint process during orientation and onboarding as well as via email once a year, as a reminder. Additionally, the EEO Office includes information about the reasonable accommodation process and the complaint process via the monthly EEO Newsletter at least once a year as well. The EEO Office maintains an open-door policy and responds to all inquiries from employees, prospective employees, community board members and staff, and members of the public as such inquiries are received. Finally, when the EEO Office receives a request for reasonable accommodation, the agency begins a cooperative dialogue and provides reasonable accommodations upon request after the conclusion of the cooperative dialogue. These accommodations include but are not limited to remote work, technological assistance, furniture, or adjustment to schedule or assignments.

VI. Training

The EEO Office ensures that all OBBP employees receive all City mandated Equal Employment Opportunity trainings. The EEO Office also assists Brooklyn Community Boards with ensuring that all Community

Board staff and chairs receive mandated trainings as well. The EEO Office will disseminate this plan to all staff and continue to ensure that each employee and supervisory employee is trained on the law. The EEO Office will hold an information session for all directors to apprise them of the plan and their responsibilities under the plan. Any updates to the plan will be disseminated to staff followed by training. The EEO Office will also continue to promote trainings including but not limited to the Disability Etiquette and Awareness training provided by DCAS.

VII. Methodology

In preparing this plan, OBBP conferred with the Programs department, Constituent Service Center, and the Communications department and their respective directors, with stakeholders such as Disability Unite Project Access for All and Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled (BCID) who are dedicated to advocating for accessibility and inclusion for persons with disabilities. OBBP reviewed the comments submitted by constituents on the accessibility plans website, and OBBP looks forward to receiving more feedback from constituents who interact with OBBP by visiting its website, attending events, programs, activities, and hearings, or by calling and seeking advocacy from the OBBP Constituent Service Center.

VIII. Glossary

Agency, New York City- a business or organization established to provide a particular service; in New York City an agency is any department, office, commission of the City that includes public benefit corporations and other public authorities that serve the constituency of the New York City.

ADA- The Americans with Disability Act; a federal civil rights act passed in 1990 that prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities.

City Equal Employment Opportunity Policy- the Citywide policy that protects every individual who works for the City of New York, within the City of New York workplaces, who apply for employment or who are contracted to work for the City of New York, or who intern/volunteer for the City of New York, from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation based on the 23 protected categories of the New York City Human Rights Law.

Cooperative dialogue- is an open conversation that each agency is required by the NYC's Human Rights Law to enter with a reasonable accommodation requestee. The conversation is a "good faith" written or oral discussion about the person's accommodation needs, the potential accommodations that may address the person's accommodation needs, including alternatives to a requested accommodation.

Disability- Any physical or mental impairment, either visible or invisible, that significantly limits an individual.

Five Year Accessibility Plan- a plan utilizing a template created by the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities pursuant to NYC Administrative Code § 23-1004 (b)

New York City Human Rights Law- a local civil rights law in Title 8 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York that prohibits discrimination for 23 protected categories.

New York State Human Rights Law- a state civil rights law in Chapter 18, Article 15 of the New York State Executive Law that prohibits discrimination.

Reasonable Accommodation- a change to a program, policy or procedure that makes a program, service or activity accessible to a person with a disability or, in the employment context, a change to the way a job is performed, to the work environment, or to the application or hiring process that allows a person with a disability to apply for a job or perform their job, as applicable.