Activating Change



DISABILITY ACCESS TOOLKIT

ActivatingChange.org

What's Included in This Toolkit

1. Disability Access Review Tools
2. Disability Access Plan Instructions
3. Disability Access Plan Template
4. Additional Resources



Section One

Disability Access Review Tool

Instructions

Introduction and Purpose of the Tool

The Disability Access Review Tool was developed by Activating Change to Victim Service Organizations in assessing the accessibility of their organizations. The tool aims to ensure that survivors (victims) with disabilities and Deaf survivors (victims) who experience violence and abuse receive equitable and welcoming support.

How to Use This Tool

Ensuring and enhancing accessibility for all victims and survivors is a shared value and guiding principle that informs this process.

It is important to approach the tool with a solution-focused mindset and be immediately followed by the development of a Disability Access Plan.

You can link directly to each tool by clicking on the links below.

- Physical
- Communication



The online tools were developed in Microsoft Forms. Once you begin one of the tools, you will not be able to save and return to it. Additionally, if you refresh the page, it will clear all of the data that you have entered. So, be sure that you have allotted enough time to complete each review before you begin and ensure that you have a stable internet connection to avoid freezing and needing to refresh.



Section Two

Disability Access Plan Instructions

Disability Access Plan Instruction Guide

What is a Disability Access Plan

The purpose of a disability access plan is to identify solutions for the barriers documented during the disability access review process, such as inaccessible entrances, small and hard-to-read font used in the agency materials, or a lack of a language access plan. In addition, disability access plans provide an opportunity for agencies to highlight actions that support or increase the accessibility of their services.

What Should Be Included in a Disability Access Plan

Disability access plans should include practical and feasible solutions that balance the agency's needs with existing conditions and available resources. Additionally, they should provide detailed planning and action steps to implement the suggested solutions. This includes documenting any funding needed for implementation, identifying key individuals needed for implementation, and estimating the time required for implementation.

It is important to remember that the Disability Access Plan is a living document that needs to be reviewed and updated as needed to ensure that readily achievable changes are implemented.

Completing the Disability Access Plan

Activating Change has designed a Disability Access Plan Template to assist agencies in developing their comprehensive plan. While needs vary from one agency to the next, and no two plans will be identical to another, the attached template provides a foundation from which agencies can build.

In addition to the introductory text, which provides context on the purpose of a disability access plan, the template includes a table that balances organizational capacity with responsibilities under federal law.

The Disability Access Plan template table is divided into three parts.

The first part addresses the strengths identified during the Disability Access Review. The second part addresses the barriers identified during the Disability Access Review and assigns a priority level to each barrier. Finally, the third part addresses the potential solutions to the barriers and assigns an impact and output level.



Before making any accessibility improvements, always refer directly to the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design (ada.gov) and your state and local building codes for complete technical requirements.

Follow the following steps to complete the table.



Strengths

In this section, agencies should describe the strengths identified during the disability access review. Strengths constitute anything that improves access to services and accessibility within services. To complete this section, agencies should follow the following steps:

A. Identify which area was assessed.

   I. For example, if your agency assessed the physical environment, you should indicate the assessment area(s) within the physical environment (e.g., entry door, reception area, or resident

lounge).

Strengths
Physical Environment
Areas Assessed:

B. Complete the Findings Section.

I. Describe the existing strengths found during the disability access review process. For example, the agency has tactile signage, accessible restrooms, and accessible entrances.

Strengths
Physical Environment
Areas Assessed:
Findings
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

For each finding, indicate an Accessibility Level.

Indicating an accessibility level establishes a baseline of access strengths while also offering suggestions for building on those strengths.

I. **Accessibility Level: Low.** To meet this standard, the environment must comply with the ADA, but there is still much room for continued improvement.

II. **Accessibility Level: Medium.** To meet this standard, the environment must exceed compliance with the ADA yet still have some room for improvement.

III. **Accessibility Level: High.** To meet this standard, environments must be useable by the broadest range of people with a wide variety of disabilities.

Strengths	
Physical Environment	
Areas Assessed:	
Findings	Accessibility Level (Low, Medium, or high)
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

C. Describe the agency's plan to improve or maintain identified strengths.

I. Agencies should provide a detailed description of how they plan to improve upon or maintain the strengths identified in the findings section of the table. In addition, agencies should list any resources needed to improve the current level of access, if applicable.

Strengths	
Physical Environment	
Areas Assessed:	
Findings	Accessibility Level (Low, Medium, or high)
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
To maintain and improve on the strengths identified during the review of our physical areas, (Insert organization) will:	

2 Barriers Indicated

In this section, agencies should describe the barriers identified during the disability access review. Barriers constitute anything that hinders access to services and accessibility within services. To complete this section, agencies should follow the following steps:

A. Identify which area was assessed.

I. For example, if your agency assessed the physical environment, you should indicate the assessment area(s) within the physical environment (e.g., entry door, reception area, or resident lounge)

Barriers Identified
Physical Environment
Areas Assessed:

B. Complete the Findings Section.

I. Describe the existing barriers found during the disability access review process. For example, there are no accessible restroom stalls on the agency's first floor.

Barriers Identified
Physical Environment
Areas Assessed:
Findings
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

C. For each finding, indicate a Priority Level.

Identifying a priority level will aid agencies in prioritizing the order in which barriers need to be addressed.

I. **Priority Level Critical:** The lack of accessibility poses a risk to health and safety for clients/survivors/participants with disabilities.

II. **Priority Level High**: The lack of accessibility makes it very difficult for people with disabilities to actually participate in services.

III. **Priority Level Medium**: The lack of accessibility creates a barrier to the full participation of clients with disabilities as compared to clients without disabilities.

IV. **Priority Level Low**: The barrier does not significantly hinder participation by clients with disabilities but should be addressed.

Barriers Identified	
Physical Environment	
Areas Assessed:	
Findings	Priority Level (Critical, high, medium, low)
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

3 Improvements

In this section, agencies should describe short-term and long-term goals to address the barriers identified in section two (2). This includes providing a detailed description concerning grant funding requirements, board approval, and steps needed to achieve each goal.

A. Identify which area was assessed.

I. For example, if your agency assessed the physical environment, you should indicate the assessment area(s) within the physical environment (e.g., entry door, reception area, or resident lounge)

Improvement Plan
Physical Environment
Areas Assessed:

B. Complete the Short-Term Goals Section.

I. For each barrier listed in the finding section, agencies should create a short-term goal to assist in removing the barrier. For example, to address the barrier found while reviewing the resident lounge, the agency will rearrange the furniture to increase maneuverability and space for clients using wheelchairs.

Improvement Plan
Physical Environment
Areas Assessed:
Short Term Goals
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

C. For each short-term goal, indicate an Output Level.

Identifying an output level will aid agencies in identifying and categorizing the measures and efforts required to achieve the goal.

a. **1:** This option is easily achievable with low to no cost.

b. **2:** This option can be achieved with resources that the agency already has.

c. **3:** This option can be achieved but will require fundraising.

d. **4:** This option would require significant fundraising and external approvals.

Improvement Plan	
Physical Environment	
Areas Assessed:	
Short Term Goals	Output Level
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

D. For each finding, indicate the Impact of Change.

Indicating the impact of change aids agencies in understanding how each short-term goal will increase accessibility and identifies areas for future improvement.

I. **Low:** To meet this standard, the proposed changes will help the agency comply with the ADA, but there is still much room for continued improvement.

II. **Medium:** To meet this standard, the proposed changes will help the agency exceed compliance with the ADA, yet there is still some room for improvement.

III. **High:** To meet this standard, the proposed changes will help the agency be useable by the broadest range of people with a wide variety of disabilities.

Improvement Plan		
Physical Environment		
Areas Assessed:		
Short Term Goals	Output Level	Impact of Change
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

E. For each goal, indicate the cost of each suggested improvement.

Improvement Plan			
Physical Environment			
Areas Assessed:			
Short Term Goals	Output Level	Impact of Change	Cost
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

Improvement Plan			
Physical Environment			
Areas Assessed:			
Short Term Goals	Output Level	Impact of Change	Cost
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

F. Complete the long-term goals.

I. Describe the long-term goals and resources needed to address the barriers indicated in part two.

Improvement Plan			
Physical Environment			
Areas Assessed:			
Short Term Goals:	Output Level	Impact of Change	Cost
1. In order to provide access we would like to purchase and install an ADA compliant intercom system.	2	High	$150
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
Long Term Goals (Recommendations/Resources):			

G. If needed, complete the additional notes section.

Example Disability Access Plan Table Template

Strengths	
Physical Environment	
Areas Assessed: Reception Area and Parking	
Findings:	Accessibility Level (Low, Medium, or High)
1. The area is well-lit.	Low
2. The furniture is moveable and allows for individuals to create space as needed.	Medium
3.	
4.	
5.	
To maintain and improve on the strengths identified during the review of our physical areas, we will: Maintain the parking area and ensure individuals are able to clearly find accessible parking.	

Barriers Identified	
Physical Environment	
Areas Assessed:	
Findings:	Priority Level (Critical, High, Medium, Low)
1. The entrance uses an intercom system for entry; staff activates lock for entry, a click	High

sound at the door indicates it is open. Deaf and hard of hearing individuals cannot use current system.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Improvement Plan			
Physical Environment			
Areas Assessed:			
Short Term Goals:	Output Level	Impact of Change	Cost
1. In order to provide access we would like to purchase and install an ADA compliant intercom system.	2	High	$150
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
Long Term Goals (Recommendations/Resources):			

Additional Notes:



Section Three

Disability Access Plan Template

(Insert Organization) Disability Access Plan

Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to ensure that {Insert organization} provides meaningful and accessible services, accessible agency information, and adaptive equipment to meet the needs of crime victims who have disabilities or are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing.

Process

Utilizing the Disability Access Review Tool developed by Activating Change, our organization completed a comprehensive review of the accessibility of our physical locations, communication/information, attitudes, policies, and adaptive equipment. Therefore, this Disability Access Plan is designed to address and identify solutions to the barriers found during the agency's disability access review. In addition, this disability access plan includes recommendations that balance the organization's needs with the limitations of existing conditions and available resources.

{Insert organization} established a disability access review team to complete the comprehensive organizational review and develop this plan. The members of the review team included:

(List members)

This Disability Access Plan table is divided into three sections: organizational strengths, organizational barriers, and a barrier removal and improvement plan to increase access. Strengths are defined as aspects of the organization's environment that promote accessibility. For instance, automatic entrances, wider doorways, and tactile signage. Barriers are defined as aspects of the organization's environment that hinder or decrease access to our services and programs. Lastly, the improvement plan section includes recommendations that balance the organization's needs with the limitations of existing conditions and available resources.

Table Classifications

Accessibility Level

Our organization has assigned an accessibility level to each identified strength outlined in this plan. This measurement indicates the current level of accessibility that our organization is providing to victims of crime with disabilities, Deaf victims, and HOH victims. It also indicates the potential impact that proposed changes will have on the accessibility of our organization. The accessibility levels are defined as follows:

- **Low.** A low rating is applied when the environment is only meeting basic ADA requirements. In addition, there are more things **(insert organization)** can do to ensure victims with disabilities can fully access our services.

- **Medium.** To meet this standard, the environment must go beyond the basic requirements of the ADA. However, limitations still make it difficult for **(insert organization)** to make more changes that would ensure complete access.

- **High.** To meet this standard, **(insert organization)** has made changes that meet the ADA requirements, **and** we have been able to address any limitations to make our services fully accessible. The environments are useable by the broadest range of people with a wide variety of disabilities.

It is vital to our organization to maintain and improve the current accessibility standards and ensure that everyone can access our services. Therefore, we have outlined strategies to maintain and improve upon the strengths identified during the disability access review process.

Priority Level

The plan provides a detailed report of the barriers identified during the Disability Access review. This report describes the existing conditions and mitigating factors of each environment and areas assessed during the organizational review.

To ensure that we effectively address the barriers outlined in this plan

and effectively utilize available resources, our organization established priority levels. The priority levels are assigned to each barrier to indicate the severity of the barrier and its potential impact on victims. In addition, this prioritization will focus our efforts and resources on addressing the most critical barriers and work towards resolving the identified barriers. The priority levels are defined as follows:

- **Critical:** The lack of accessibility poses a risk to health and safety for clients/survivors/participants with disabilities.
- **High:** The lack of accessibility makes it very difficult for people with disabilities to participate in services.
- **Medium:** The lack of accessibility creates a barrier to the full participation of clients/survivors/participants with disabilities as compared to clients without disabilities.
- **Low**: The barrier does not significantly hinder participation by clients with disabilities but should be addressed.

Output Level and Impact of Change Level

To ensure that the plan is as comprehensive and effective as possible, **(insert organization)** has outlined a reasonable and actionable barrier removal and improvement plan. This includes a detailed list of short-term and long-term goals, improvement levels, accessibility levels, associated costs, and resources required to address barriers outlined in section two of this plan.

For each short-term goal identified within this section, **(insert organization)** assigned a corresponding output level. The output level enables our organization to evaluate the resources required to remove the barriers. This includes associated costs while removing barriers and whether we are seeking grant funding to address them. Establishing improvement levels also enhances our ability to indicate and prepare for future needs. The output levels are defined as follows:

- **Level #1:** This option is easily achievable with low to no cost.

- **Level #2:** This option can be achieved with resources that the agency already has.
- **Level #3:** This option can be achieved but will require fundraising.
- **Level #4:** This option would require significant fundraising and external approvals.

Lastly, to measure the impact the proposed changes outlined in this plan will have on the accessibility of our services and to assist with monitoring this plan, **(insert organization)** generated Impact of Change indicators. The Impact of Change indicators are defined as follows:

- **Low:** To meet this standard, the proposed changes will help **(insert organization)** comply with the ADA, but there is still much room for continued improvement.
- **Medium:** To meet this standard, the proposed changes will help the **(insert organization)** exceed compliance with the ADA, yet there is still some room for improvement.
- **High:** To meet this standard, the proposed changes will help **(insert organization)** be useable by the broadest range of people with a wide variety of disabilities

Monitoring and Compliance

(Insert Organization) Disability Access Plan is a living document, and to ensure compliance, this plan will be reviewed and updated **(select timeframe; once a year, every two years, or every 3 years)** or as needed to ensure that our organization is addressing barriers for victims and enhancing the accessibility of our services. **(Insert organization**) will establish a disability access plan evaluation team that will include the following staff:

- {Insert staff responsible (title)}

This evaluation team will assess our Disability Access Plan for the

following:

- Progress on previously identified strengths and stated goals
- Staff compliance
- Overall effectiveness
- New goals and strategies necessary to provide accessible services

To ensure compliance with this Disability Access plan and suggested changes are achieved within a reasonable timeframe, all staff will receive a copy of this plan and will be provided with annual training. Staff training will include, but will not be limited to, the following topics:

- Disability 101 and access
- Asking about accommodations
- Providing accommodations

(Insert Organization) Disability Access Plan

Strengths	
Physical Environment	
Areas Assessed:	
Findings:	Accessibility Level (Low, Medium, or High)
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
To maintain and improve on the strengths identified during the review of our physical areas, (insert organization) will:	

Barriers Identified
Physical Environment
Areas Assessed:

Findings:	Priority Level (Critical, High, Medium, Low)
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Improvement Plan			
Physical Environment			
Areas Assessed:			
Short Term Goals:	Output Level	Impact of Change	Cost
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
Long Term Goals (Recommendations/Resources):			

Additional Notes:

Strengths
Communication Environment
Areas Assessed:

Findings:	Accessibility Level (Low, Medium, or High)
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
To maintain and improve on the strengths identified during the review of our communication and agency information, (insert organization) will:	

Barriers Identified	
Communication Environment	
Areas Assessed:	
Findings:	Priority Level (Critical, High, Medium, Low)
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

5.	

Improvement Plan			
Communication Environment			
Areas Assessed:			
Short Term Goals:	Output Level	Impact of Change	Cost
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
Long Term Goals (Recommendations/Resources):			

Additional Notes:



Section Four

Additional Resources

Additional Resources

Consult local resources for assistance if needed.

ADA Resources:

- ADA National Network (find your regional ADA Center)
  - URL: https://adata.org/national-network#map
- Independent Living Research Utilization (find your local Center for Independent Living)
  - URL: http://www.ilru.org/projects/cil-net/cil-center-and-association-directory
- ADA Checklist for Readily Achievable Barrier Removal (2010 ADA Standards)
  - URL: http://www.adachecklist.org

Universal Design Resources:

- Center for Excellence in Universal Design
  - URL: http://universaldesign.ie/
- Universal Design: Process, Principles, and Applications
  - URL: https://www.washington.edu/doit/universal-design-process-principles-and-applications
- Building for Everyone
  - URL: http://universaldesign.ie/Built-Environment/Building-for-Everyone/