



Department of
Design and
Construction

NYC Department of Design and Construction

5-Year Accessibility Plan

Local Law 12 of 2023

March 2024

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General

Local Law 12 of 2023 (“Local Law 12”) requires every New York City agency to develop and implement a five-year accessibility plan, in consultation with the Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities (“MOPD”), that should include at minimum:

1. The steps the agency is taking and will be taking over the next five years to ensure that the agency’s workplace, services, programs, and activities are accessible to and accommodating and inclusive of persons with disabilities; and
2. Information regarding ongoing projects and projects planned over the next five years that are related to improving physical, digital, and programmatic access, and effective communications for persons with disabilities, including, but not limited to:
 - a. any alterations or structural changes to facilities or premises that are owned and operated by the agency or contracted for use by the agency or otherwise under the agency’s jurisdiction;
 - b. any planned upgrades or investments in technology or tools that will improve accessibility within the agency or access to such agency’s services and programs;
 - c. and additional steps to make the agency’s programs and services more accessible to and inclusive of persons with disabilities.

The New York City Department of Design and Construction’s (DDC) **ADA Compliance Unit** is responsible for preparing, updating, and implementing DDC’s Five-Year Accessibility Plan.

Pursuant to Local Law 27 of 2016, every City agency is required to designate a **Disability Service Facilitator (“DSF”)** to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under the ADA and other federal, state, and local laws and regulations concerning accessibility for persons with disabilities. DDC’s Disability Service Facilitator is:

Jason Wood

30-30 Thomson Avenue

Long Island City, NY 11101

Phone: 718-391-1806

WoodJa@ddc.nyc.gov

DDC's website contains useful information for individuals with disabilities, including:

1. Five-Year Accessibility Plan
2. Language Access Plan
3. Website Accessibility Statement

For more information on DDC's accessibility resources, please visit DDC's website <https://www.nyc.gov/site/ddc/about/WebsiteAccessibilityStatement.page>

Please see the appendices of this document for the [**DDC Notice of Rights and Grievance Procedure under the Americans with Disabilities Act**](#) and DDC's [Website Accessibility Statement](#).

Individuals may request a copy of this document in an accessible alternative format by contacting the DSF at WoodJa@ddc.nyc.gov or (718) 391-1806.

Agency Overview

About NYC DDC

The Department of Design and Construction (DDC) was created to build and renovate the City's public works as its chief design and construction manager. DDC delivers public works to every part of the City, designing and building best-in-class public buildings and infrastructure. These projects enhance every neighborhood and each borough, improving the lives of more than 8.5 million New Yorkers.

As the City's primary capital construction project manager, DDC builds many of the civic facilities New Yorkers use every day. We provide communities with new or renovated structures such as firehouses, libraries, police precincts, courthouses, senior centers and more. To successfully manage this \$28 billion portfolio, DDC collaborates with other City agencies, as well as with emerging and world-renowned architects and consultants, whose experience bring efficient, innovative, and environmentally conscious design and construction strategies to City projects.

DDC also designs and improves vital public infrastructure. Our staff delivers roadway, sewer, and water main construction projects in all five boroughs. We provide sidewalks, street reconstructions, pedestrian ramps, green infrastructure, water mains, sewers, and public plazas — quality infrastructure that is essential for a healthy, resilient city.

Five-Year Accessibility Plan

DDC has developed a Five-Year Accessibility Plan in accordance with Local Law 12 of 2023. DDC's **ADA Compliance Unit** is the office responsible for developing the plan and for addressing any public comments received (reflected in this revised version). DDC posted the proposed plan and a notice of opportunity to comment on its website and on the NYC Agency Accessibility Plans website via MOPD. On the Accessibility Plans website, DDC received one public comment, and received none by mail or via the Agency Accessibility Plan website at nyc.gov/accessibilityplans.

Accessibility Statement

At DDC, ensuring accessibility is a fundamental principle for our design and construction services. Our guiding [Design and Construction Excellence](#) principles, which define our broadest goals for all our projects and orient our partners to the agency's values, emphasize that the spaces we build must be civic and community-oriented, as well as inclusive, healthy, and safe. A guiding tenet within these principles is **creating accessibility for all** through dignified, well-designed spaces that are universally accessible, inviting, comfortable, and promote equitable usability for people with diverse needs. For more information on DDC's Design and Construction Excellence program, please visit DDC's website https://www.nyc.gov/site/ddc/projects/design_construction_excellence.page

As the City's leading design and construction agency, we ensure our Infrastructure projects, which include public spaces like streets and sidewalks, pedestrian bridges, plazas, and pedestrian ramps, comply with the ADA Standards for Accessible Design, the NYC Department of Transportation (DOT) Standard Details of Construction, and the Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines, as well as industry standards and best practices. DDC partners with DOT on the **Pedestrian Ramp initiative**, the City's 30-year, \$6 billion program to overhaul more than 180,000 sidewalk pedestrian ramps to ensure they are ADA-compliant. DDC's **pilot Design-Build program** includes both a pedestrian ramps project and a raised crosswalks project, two critical portfolios where time savings are crucial and where the work will most benefit from the potential for innovation and collaboration.

Our Public Buildings projects, which include new buildings, renovations, and systems upgrades, are reviewed by a dedicated **ADA Compliance Unit**, whose sole function is to ensure that the design and construction of our public works projects comply with the latest [ADA Standards for Accessible Design, Chapter 11 of the NYC Building Code](#), International Code Council A117.1: Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities, [Local Law 51 of 2017](#), and [Title 8: Civil Rights](#) for equal and non-discriminatory facilitation.

At DDC, we recognize that accessibility is not just a legal requirement but an ethical commitment that enhances the inclusivity and usability of our services and programs for all New Yorkers. To that end, DDC is committed to upholding the following principles in its policies, practices, and procedures:

1. Ensuring that people with disabilities can benefit from DDC-managed projects as end users, sponsor agencies, design consultants, vendors, and/or employees, while preserving their dignity and independence. This involves delivering capital projects compliant with all accessibility standards.
2. Adapting communication methods when engaging with people with disabilities, considering their specific disability and preferred mode of communication.
3. Ensuring our three offices provide equal access and an inclusive workplace for people with disabilities.

These principles form the foundation upon which DDC operates to support inclusivity and accessibility for people with disabilities.

NYC DDC Website Accessibility Statement

The NYC Department of Design and Construction is committed to ensuring its digital content is accessible to and usable by people with disabilities. We are continually improving the user experience for everyone and applying the relevant accessibility standards.

Conformance Status

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. Our digital content is partially conformant with WCAG 2.1 level AA. Partially conformant means that some parts of the content do not fully conform to this accessibility standard.

Feedback

We welcome your feedback on the accessibility of our digital content. Please let us know if you encounter accessibility issues by using the [Website Accessibility Feedback Form](#).

If you need assistance accessing a particular program or service, please reach out to the NYC Department of Design and Construction's **DSF, Jason Wood**, at 718-391-1806 or WoodJa@ddc.nyc.gov.

For more information regarding DDC's accessibility statement and resources for persons with disabilities, please visit DDC's website:

<https://www.nyc.gov/site/ddc/about/WebsiteAccessibilityStatement.page>

Assessment Approach

The NYC Department of Design and Construction assesses the accessibility of its digital content through self-evaluation.

Language Access Plan

Language access is critical to NYC's diverse communities. Executive Order 120 of 2008 and Local Law 30 of 2017 mandate a centralized and inclusive language access policy for the City of New York. The law mandates that all city agencies providing direct public services create a language access plan to ensure meaningful access to services and information.

Access the Department of Design and Construction's language access implementation plan:

[2021 Language Access Implementation Plan](#)

If you have a question, or concern about translation or interpretation at our sites, please contact DDC's Language Access Coordinator, Dalela Harrison, at Accessibility@ddc.nyc.gov or call (718) 391-1776.

Agency Plan

Physical Access

Implementation timeframe: 2024-2028

Responsible offices: ADA Compliance Unit, Operations & Facilities Management

The NYC Department of Design and Construction (DDC) operates out of three Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS)-leased buildings:

30-30 Thomson Avenue, Queens, NY 11101. DDC's main office, which consists of shared spaces located on the first through fifth floors.

40 Worth Street, New York, NY 10013, eighth floor (shared).

101 Tyrellan Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10309, second floor (and parking lot).

DCAS is responsible for the main entrances of the buildings and common areas in the building and DDC is responsible for the non-common areas it occupies, also known as its demised areas. DDC's **ADA Compliance Unit** conducted assessments of all demised areas and some common areas in DDC's leased spaces. While the findings show that DDC's facilities are primarily compliant, they also identified some barriers to physical access and areas of improvement that DDC can address with targeted changes.

DDC's ADA Compliance Unit assessed the following common and demised areas:

- Employee and public entrances
- Reception desks
- Circulation paths
- Conference rooms
- Employee workstations
- Offices
- Drinking fountains
- Kitchens and kitchenettes
- Toilet rooms
- Lactation rooms
- Parking lots (where provided); and
- Signage

The main entrances to enter the demised areas are accessible to individuals who use a wheelchair or other mobility device. Additionally, agency signage in demised areas is of high color contrast from the large, background characters that, large sized to exceed minimum requirements, and mounted within the required horizontal viewing distance to facilitate persons of low vision in locating our space. All toilet rooms have at least one accessible stall but do require modifications to be

fully accessible and compliant with both NYC Building Code and the ADA standards. Furthermore, all employee workstations are accessible and can be easily modified to accommodate any person with a disability by, for example, adjusting workstations, shelving heights, and equipment. Additionally, most demised offices are readily accessible in that an employee can approach, enter, and exit such space; however, there are some offices that are inaccessible due to the location of structural columns and their proximity to office doorways. As such, DDC Operations & Facilities Management is aware of the few inaccessible offices and can relocate employees to other offices, on the same floor as their respective division, within 10 business days of request. Lastly, employees have been informed by the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Officer of their right to an accessible environment and how to request a reasonable accommodation, if needed.

As part of DDC's ongoing effort to improve physical access to all its locations, DDC will take the following actions as part of its five-year plan:

- Modify main reception desk at 30-30 Thomson Avenue for height compliant.
- Replace room identification signage in all three locations with uniform signage with raised characters and braille and at proper mounting heights.
- Remove protruding objects along circulation paths or provide cane detection.
- Relocate dispensers in all kitchen(ettes) to a permitted reach range.
- Relocate any operable parts and controls that are considered common use, to a permitted reach range.
- Replace the conference room desk at 40 Worth Street to provide compliant knee and toe clearances.
- Provide FM Assistive Listening device access in main conference rooms.
- Discuss the following with building management as part of lease negotiations or where possible:
 - Purchase of window adaptors, for accommodation requests for fresh air access from accessible offices.
 - Improvements to toilet rooms, kitchen(ettes), and 101 Tyrellan Avenue parking lot.

Digital Access

Implementation timeframe: 2024-2028

Responsible offices: Technology & Innovation, Office of Communications and Policy, Creative Services, Office of Equal Employment Opportunity

DDC will continue its efforts to ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to DDC's web platform and social media and parity in the same services and information received. As a capital construction agency, DDC extensively uses web-based programs, applications, social media, and its website to interact with the public. Internal, virtual meetings, electronic document creation and usage, and computer-based trainings are also integral to DDC's operations. DDC staff tasked with creating public-facing content are aware of the relevant laws and standards relating to digital accessibility (WCAG 2.1 Level AA, Local Law 26 of 2016, ADA, Section 508, etc.) and will receive more specific training on digital accessibility and accessible content creation to increase access for all end users.

In compliance with Local Law 12 of 2023, DDC's Web Accessibility Statement is posted on DDC's Accessibility webpage:

<https://www.nyc.gov/site/ddc/about/WebsiteAccessibilityStatement.page>

Over the next five years, DDC will begin implementing the following to improve digital access:

- Create a review process to check that digital products and services DDC purchases are accessible and usable by all people with disabilities.
- Ensure DDC's internal and public-facing websites meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 Level AA.
- Provide digital accessibility training for all employees responsible for content creation and incorporate digital accessibility into their tasks and standards.
- Provide a live-caption solution, like AI-generated or live Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART), for use in digital communications until a better solution is established.
 - This improvement will make virtual meetings more accessible (both internally and externally).
- Ensure that all workforce- and public-facing documents, virtual engagement, and digital content are fully accessible.

- Work with NYC Office of Technology and Innovation to ensure internal applications meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 Level AA standards, collaborating to determine best practices, develop a process to update existing applications, and embed accessibility in future applications.

Programmatic Access

Implementation timeframe: 2024-2028

Responsible offices: Infrastructure, Public Buildings, Office of Communications and Policy, Creative Services, and Technology & Innovation.

DDC's main programmatic function is to deliver capital projects on behalf of our sponsor agencies. DDC helps sponsor agencies' balance their programmatic and functional needs in their capital projects with laws and regulations, inclusive of accessibility and ADA compliance requirements. Embedded in our processes are various mechanisms to ensure sponsor agencies consider and review for accessibility and inclusive design, like initial project review through Front-End Planning, or as mentioned earlier, our guiding [Design and Construction Excellence](#) principles, which center **accessibility for all** through high-quality design to produce dignified, universally accessible spaces that promote equitable use for all people with disabilities. DDC has also focused resources on supporting accessibility initiatives and helping our sponsor agencies deliver accessible public space and infrastructure more expeditiously. DDC created a dedicated complex program to support DOT's **Pedestrian Ramps Initiative**, as well as an **ADA Compliance Unit** in the Public Buildings division, to ensure ADA compliance in the design and construction of our public works projects.

To achieve the agency's programmatic functions, our services are facilitated by both in-person and virtual meetings, in-house and retained design services, and public outreach. As outlined in our Digital Access section, DDC will ensure all digital content is accessible and adheres to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), and the incorporation of features like screen reader compatibility, alternative text for images, keyboard navigation, and other assistive technologies. As outlined in our Physical Access section, all three DDC locations will undergo improvements to ensure that our facilities are inclusive and accessible to all people, including people with disabilities.

Lastly, as it pertains to public outreach, DDC will ensure that digital and physical content, services, and programs are fully accessible to individuals with disabilities as described in our Effective Communications section. This encompasses designing and developing services and notifications that allow people with various disabilities, including those who are blind or have low vision, D/deaf or hard of hearing, or have motor, cognitive or other disabilities, to perceive, understand, navigate, and interact with the information more effectively.

If you have a comment, question, or concern about DDC's programs, please see our contacts provided here: <https://www.nyc.gov/site/ddc/about/contact-ddc.page>.

Effective Communications

Implementation timeframe: 2024-2028

Responsible offices: Office of Communications and Policy, Creative Services, Office of Equal Employment Opportunity

DDC communicates regularly with vendors and industry stakeholders, elected officials, and the public regarding our Infrastructure and Public Buildings projects. As such, DDC strives to ensure that people with disabilities can receive and convey information related to our work in a manner that is accessible and consistent with their preferred communication methods. These services may include qualified sign language interpreters, documents in Braille, closed captioning, speech-to-text software, or other assistive technology to make information and communications accessible to people who are D/deaf or hard of hearing, blind or have low vision, or with speech disabilities.

DDC follows these policies and practices to ensure effective communication with individuals with disabilities:

- As required by law, the EEO Officer always engages in a cooperative dialogue with individuals requiring reasonable accommodations to assess their needs and provide reasonable accommodations, as appropriate, that allow employees with disabilities to perform the essential functions of their job.
- Employees are informed of the Agency's obligation to provide auxiliary aids and services, and how to request them. Primary consideration is given to the choice of aid or service requested by the person with a disability.

- Employees are encouraged to use current/appropriate terminology and symbols when referring to people with disabilities, especially with any public-facing communications.
- All public-facing documents are written in plain language to ensure the information being conveyed is accessible to everyone, including those with disabilities.

DDC will take the following steps to make communication with individuals with disabilities more effective:

- Create an ongoing schedule to train employees on policies and procedures for accommodation requests to ensure continued awareness among current and new staff.
- Provide trainings for employees on Disability Etiquette at least every two years.
- Provide accommodations for all public-facing events, when requested.

Workplace Inclusion

Implementation timeframe: 2024

Responsible offices: Human Resources and Staff Development, Office of Equal Employment Opportunity, Technology & Innovation

DDC uses various strategies to bolster workplace inclusion, including but not limited to people with disabilities, and is always working to build upon these initiatives further to help recruit, retain, and support employees with disabilities. As such, DDC will continue to:

- Participate in disability-inclusive recruitment events, such as, but not limited to, DCAS and NYC: ATWORK recruitments events. In addition, DDC will post open positions on NYC: ATWORK job boards via the Job Submission Form.
- Review all new postings to ensure positions are disability-inclusive (i.e., that they focus on the essential duties of the job and do not include any outdated/ exclusionary language).
- Post open positions with State Vocational Rehabilitation agencies and other organizations that work with people with disabilities, such as CUNY LEADS, Job Path, and independent living centers in New York City.

- Use the 55-a Program to hire people with disabilities for competitive positions. All 55-a employees are encouraged to take promotional exams, when they are offered. DDC also has a 55-a Program Coordinator, to provide additional assistance when needed.
- Hire and promote people with disabilities at all levels.
- Engage in various methods of conducting interviews, such as in person and virtually, to be more inclusive.
- Establish clear procedures for facilitating any accommodations required for interviews, such as reserving rooms that are fully accessible and providing auxiliary aids and services like ASL interpretation and CART.
- Require hiring managers to use structured interview questions, where all candidates are asked the same questions. These questions are also reviewed by HRSD prior to conducting such interviews.
- Ensure full agency completes the mandatory Disability Etiquette and Awareness Training by the end of 2024 and continue training new employees as part of DDC's onboarding process.
- Support an affinity group/employee resource group (ERG) for people with disabilities (to date, no such group has been requested).
- Provide tools, technology, and workspaces that are accessible to all employees, such as ergonomic office equipment and the availability of access technology (magnification, voice recognition, and screen readers).
- Make available and accessible employee social and recreational activities to all employees, including people with disabilities.
- Offer trainings and professional development opportunities to all employees, including people with disabilities.
- Follow DCAS's Reasonable Accommodation Procedural Guidelines for DDC's reasonable accommodation process. In addition, this process is offered in-person, over the phone, via email, and virtually.
- Provide coaching opportunities to help ensure that all employees, including employees with disabilities, have the information needed to be successful, i.e., providing information of the agency/ office culture, guidance and support with office procedures, and orientations.
- Provide a clear path to ensure that employees, including those with disabilities, are given an opportunity to advance their career and achieve their full potential.

- Train all DDC Fire and Life Safety Staff on what to do in the event of a fire or other emergency to ensure the safety of all staff and visitors, including employees and visitors with disabilities. Evacuation chairs are available at multiple locations, at each floor of DDC, that are labeled and accessible to all persons.

Methodology

DDC employed a phased, cross-divisional approach to developing its Five-Year Accessibility Plan. Spearheaded by DDC's ADA Compliance Unit and DSF, the Local Law 12 working group included representatives from different DDC's divisions at the division-head level or their designated representative, with support from the Office of Strategic Initiatives. DDC's DSF attended monthly meetings hosted by MOPD with other government agencies to brainstorm and receive input on areas that could collectively impact both our sponsor agencies and members of the public who interact with DDC. Following an information gathering phase comprised of various self-assessments, DDC's committee met over the course of several months to hold panel discussions on each accessibility topic, evaluate the agency's systems and propose a Five-Year Accessibility Plan.

The evaluation panel committee included representatives from DDC's Office of Communications and Policy, Creative Services, Technology & Innovation, Public Buildings and Infrastructure divisions, Legal Department, Office of Equal Employment Opportunity, Human Resources and Staff Development, Operations division and its Facilities Management unit, and the Office of the Commissioner. These divisions participated in an information gathering phase and conducted several self-evaluations of various programs, building upon guiding documents from MOPD. For the physical assessments, DDC has an in-house ADA Compliance Unit comprised of experts in the field of physical accessibility, and as such, conducted all physical accessibility assessments. With its general knowledge of other areas pertaining to providing access and equity to all end users, the ADA Compliance Unit helped guide the digital accessibility, programmatic access, workplace inclusion, and effective communication portions of this document.

To further develop and implement our plan, DDC will seek public input via MOPD during the public comment process, develop public outreach, and provide technical trainings to our team to identify areas to improve to better serve people with disabilities.

Appendices

Appendix A: DDC Notice of Rights and Grievance Procedure under the Americans with Disabilities Act

Notice of Rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act

The New York City Department of Design and Construction (DDC) prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in the operation of its programs, services, or activities. Pursuant to the American with Disabilities Act and the New York State and New York City Human Rights Laws, individuals with disabilities are entitled to reasonable accommodations to enable them to participate in programs, services, and activities.

Effective Communication

DDC will, upon request, provide appropriate aids and services leading to effective communication for qualified persons with disabilities so they can participate equally in DDC programs, services, and activities, including qualified sign language interpreters, documents in Braille, and other ways of making information and communications accessible to people who have speech, hearing, or vision disabilities.

Modifications to Policies and Procedures

DDC will make reasonable modifications to policies and procedures to ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to all DDC programs, services, and activities. Anyone who requires an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures to participate in a DDC program, service, or activity should contact Department of Design and Construction (DDC), Office of Equal Employment Opportunity by mail, email, or telephone as soon as possible but no later than three (3) business days before the scheduled event or activity.

Grievance Procedure under the Americans with Disabilities Act

This complaint procedure is established to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"). It may be used by any member of

the public who wishes to file a grievance alleging discrimination on the basis of a physical or mental disability, for the provision of services, activities, programs or benefits by the Department of Design and Construction (“DDC”) (not related to employment).

The grievance should be in writing and contain information about the alleged discrimination such as the name, address, and telephone number of the grievant, as well as the location, date, and description of the complaint or alleged violation of the ADA. Alternative means of filing grievances, such as in-person interviews or an audio recording of the grievance may be made available for persons with disabilities upon request.

The allegation should be submitted by the grievant or their designee as soon as possible, but no later than 60 calendar days after the alleged incident, to:

Department of Design and Construction (DDC)

Office of Equal Employment Opportunity

ATTN: AGENCY EEO OFFICER

30-30 Thomson Avenue, 5th Floor

Long Island City, New York 11101

Tel: 718-391-1393 or 718-391-1776

Or by email at DDCEEO@ddc.nyc.gov

The grievant or their designee may appeal the agency’s decision within fifteen (15) calendar days after receipt of the response by mail to:

Thomas Foley, Commissioner

Department of Design and Construction

30-30 Thomson Avenue, 4th Floor

Long Island City, New York 11101

Within thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of the grievance, the ADA Coordinator will contact the grievant to discuss the grievance and any possible resolutions.

Within fifteen (15) calendar days of this contact with the grievant, the ADA Coordinator will respond in writing or, where appropriate, in a format accessible to

the grievant, such as large print, Braille, or audio recording. This response will explain DDC's position and offer options for substantive resolution of the grievance, where applicable.

The appeal should be submitted in writing explaining the disagreement with the agency's decision. Alternative means of filing an appeal, such as an in-person interview or an audio recording of the grievance may be made available for persons with disabilities upon request.

DDC's response to the appeal will be provided to the grievant within sixty (60) days following receipt of the request for the appeal.

* All responses by DDC will be in writing or, where appropriate, in a format accessible to the grievant. All written grievances, appeals, and responses received in connection with a grievance made to DDC, will be retained for at least three (3) years.

This notice is provided as required by Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Questions, concerns, complaints, or requests for additional information regarding the ADA may be directed to DDC's ADA Coordinator.

It is important to note that, employment-related complaints for employees and applicants seeking reasonable accommodations are covered separately, under the City of New York's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy. Applicants and current employees with related questions or concerns may contact 718-391-1393 for assistance. DDC employees may file employment-related discrimination complaints through the existing EEO complaint procedure.

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