

Accessibility Progress Report 2025-2026



May 2026

New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
42-09 28th St., Long Island City, New York 11101

Contents

General.....	3
Accessibility Statement.....	4
NYC Health Department Disability Services Facilitator	5
NYC Health Department Office of Access and Disability Justice	5
Email:.....	5
NYC Health Department Digital Inclusion Officer	5
NYC Health Department Office of Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO).....	5
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Notice of Rights and Grievance Procedure	5
Website Accessibility Statement.....	6
Feedback Process	6
Agency Progress Report.....	7
Physical Access	7
Digital Access.....	7
Effective Communications.....	8
Programmatic Access	9
Workplace Inclusion	11
Consultations and Feedback.....	12
Conclusion	13

General

With an annual budget of \$1.6 billion and more than 7,000 employees throughout the five boroughs, the New York City (NYC) Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (Health Department) is one of the largest public health agencies in the world. It is also one of the nation's oldest public health agencies, with more than 200 years of public health leadership.

Every day, the NYC Health Department protects and promotes the health of 8 million New Yorkers. The agency's work is wide-ranging. It can be seen in the inspection grades of restaurants, the licenses dogs wear, the low- to no-cost health clinics in neighborhoods, and vaccination programs for all New Yorkers.

The Health Department also works behind the scenes with epidemiologists who investigate and work to stop the spread of communicable disease and who study the patterns, causes, and effects of health conditions in NYC neighborhoods. These studies shape policy decisions and the City's health agenda.

In compliance with Local Law 12 of 2023, the Health Department posted its Five-Year Accessibility Plan in 2024. The plan was designed in collaboration with representatives from the disability community, disability community allies, and offices within the agency that support reasonable accommodation requests and disability-related inquiries. The Health Department published a proposed plan for public comments and received comments considered for the final plan.

In this second annual Progress Report, the Health Department highlights some of the achievements from the past year. This Progress Report also indicates some of the items of focus for the next year and beyond.

Accessibility Statement

The Health Department is proud to declare our commitment to fostering an inclusive environment that welcomes and supports people of all abilities. We firmly believe in the inherent dignity and unique contributions of every person. As such, we are dedicated to addressing bias and mitigating remnants of ableism, neuro-ableism, and discrimination in favor of nondisabled people so that all staff and members of the public accessing Health Department programs and services can thrive as their authentic and unlabeled selves.

At the Health Department, we recognize that a truly inclusive environment requires proactive and intentional efforts to remove barriers and challenge stereotypes and that we must seek input from the people who are most impacted. We are committed to cultivating a culture that not only respects diverse backgrounds and experiences but actively celebrates the strengths that arise from our differences and aims to constantly expand our thinking and actions with respect to accessibility to fully represent the diverse array of people we serve. We continue to seek to understand and address the unique challenges faced by people with disabilities, taking care to partner with them and center their lived experiences. When communicating with people with disabilities, the Health Department uses person-first language, unless otherwise directed by the person, and their preferred method of communication.

The Health Department strives to be a beacon of inclusivity, knowing that it is through our diversity that we can achieve greatness. We welcome everyone to join us in this journey toward creating a more accessible, equitable, and inclusive environment.

NYC Health Department Disability Services Facilitator

Amanda Alvarado-Frantz, Director of Accessibility

Email: aalvaradofrantz@health.nyc.gov

Mail: NYC Health Department
Attn: Amanda Alvarado-Frantz
42-09 28th St., WS 16-87
Long Island City, NY 11101

NYC Health Department Office of Access and Disability Justice

Email: access@health.nyc.gov

Mail: NYC Health Department
Attn: Office of Access and Disability Justice
42-09 28th St., CN #29A
Long Island City, NY 11101

The Office of Access and Disability Justice (OADJ) is responsible for preparing and updating the NYC Health Department's accessibility plan.

NYC Health Department Digital Inclusion Officer

Jennifer MacGregor, Director of Digital Strategy

Email: jmacgregor@health.nyc.gov

Mail: NYC Health Department
Attn: Jennifer MacGregor
42-09 28th St., WS 8-4
Long Island City, NY 11101

NYC Health Department Office of Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO)

Sye-Eun Ahn, EEO Director

Email: sahn1@health.nyc.gov

Mail: NYC Health Department
Attn: Sye-Eun Ahn
42-09 28th St., WS 16-88
Long Island City, NY 11101

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Notice of Rights and Grievance Procedure

nyc.gov/site/doh/about/about-doh/ada-notice-of-rights.page

Website Accessibility Statement

nyc.gov/site/doh/about/about-doh/website-accessibility-statement.page

Feedback Process

The Health Department is committed to uplifting the voices of the disability community and welcomes feedback on accessibility-related issues within the Health Department. Provide feedback to the Health Department's Disability Services Facilitator via email or mail.

Email: access@health.nyc.gov

Mail: NYC Health Department
Attn: Amanda Alvarado-Frantz
42-09 28th St., WS 16-87
Long Island City, NY 11101

Agency Progress Report

In creating the following Progress Report, the Health Department worked with teams across the agency and considered goals outlined in our Five-Year Accessibility Plan to highlight the areas we have addressed and the ones we will target in the coming year. This report covers the five areas of accessibility required by Local Law 12: physical access, digital access, effective communications, programmatic access, and workplace inclusion.

Physical Access

As of May 2026, we have:

- Opened a new Public Health Laboratory that is fully compliant with accessible building code and other ADA requirements. The building features an accessible main entrance, auditorium seating, tactile wayfinding signage, and accessible restrooms.
- Renovated the Corona Health Center's exterior and interior lobbies, which enhanced accessibility. This location's ramp and main lobby are ADA compliant.

By the end of May 2026, we will have:

- Surveyed the existing ramps located at the main entrances of the Bedford Health Center and Brownsville Health Center and determined if they are ADA compliant or if modifications are required.

By May 2027, we will:

- Continue improving accessibility at the Brooklyn and Bronx Animal Care Centers (ACC) with accessible restrooms, an accessible main entrance, designated accessible parking spaces, and tactile wayfinding signage.
- Evaluate signage at Health Department facilities and implement accessible signage, starting with the agency's East Harlem facility and working through all agency sites as funding and staff capacity allows.

Digital Access

As of May 2026, we have:

- Reassigned the Digital Inclusion Officer role to the agency's Director of Digital Strategy to ensure the agency is equipped with the knowledge and skills needed.
- Removed 1,180 inaccessible PDFs from the NYC Health website.

- Coordinated with all agency divisions to develop a plan to remediate remaining web content for accessibility.
- Developed a plan for ensuring all new digital assets are compliant with accessibility regulations.
- Created guidelines for accessibility best practices for data visualizations on the NYC Health website.

By May 2027, we will:

- Aim to ensure the Health Department’s digital content meets the current NYC standard, Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2 Level AA with the exceptions set forth by the Department of Justice (28 CFR § 35.201).
- Design templates for various types of digital content (such as annual reports, health advisories, mosquito control notices) to facilitate development of accessible digital content going forward.
- Train website editors to use digital accessibility software to help identify and remediate issues related to screen reader compatibility and navigation.
- Create a roadmap to ensure the agency’s most visited public-facing applications and resources on the website are accessible to individuals with disabilities.

Effective Communications

As of May 2026, we have:

- Provided American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation services for 37 Health Department events and 102 ASL services for employees as a reasonable accommodation.
- Started reassigning most language access liaison positions to ensure availability of liaisons to participate in consistent meetings and trainings.
- Delivered approximately 60 language access trainings to public-facing staff. The Language Access Unit has been developing a partnership with the Community Health Worker Resource Hub to embed behavior change frameworks, including trauma-informed practice and motivational interviewing, into their training curriculum, moving beyond compliance toward sustained practice change.
- Through the Division of Environmental Health, printed and distributed copies of two informational documents in braille — one on civic engagement and one on hot weather safety guidance. Both were distributed to community groups that work with blind and low-vision New Yorkers.
- Through the Bureau of Environmental Surveillance and Policy, budgeted for ASL interpreters at public-facing meetings, trainings, and events.

By May 2027, we will:

- Ensure that, where practicable, print documents comply with the print accessibility guidelines that will be issued pursuant to Local Law 187 of 2025.
- Align efforts between the Health Department's Language Access Unit and the agency's OADJ to ensure the ASL interpretation needs of employees and New Yorkers are appropriately met, tracked, and funded.
- Review the Language Access Implementation Plan and prepare to update the Health Department's Five-Year Accessibility Plan to better incorporate Language Access into the agency's disability justice work.

Programmatic Access

As of May 2026, we have:

- Developed a resource hub on the Health Department's intranet to provide employees with easy access to agency-branded accessibility implementation tools including accessibility checklists, guides, and toolkits.
- Facilitated 22 disability justice trainings directly impacting 250 employees. The trainings build a shared definition of disability, intersectionality, and ableism with a particular focus on embedding anti-ableist practices into the agency's daily work and practices.
- Ensured programmatic access for employees by providing multiple methods for requesting reasonable accommodations through the Health Department's EEO Office. Employees may initiate accommodation requests through any accessible channel, including email, phone, written correspondence, verbal request, or other alternative means. This flexibility recognizes that standardized or technology-dependent processes may create barriers for some individuals and affirms the EEO Office's commitment to equitable access. By accepting requests through multiple channels, the EEO Office promotes timely engagement in the interactive process, reduces procedural obstacles, and ensures that employees can exercise their rights regardless of disability, medical condition, or other protected need.
- Collaborated with the agency's Accessibility Liaison Committee, comprised of 30 representatives from all agency divisions to assist in the implementation of the Five-Year Accessibility Plan and report on accessibility progress and challenges.
- Through the agency's Division of Environmental Health, enhanced programmatic accessibility in the following ways:
 - Developed "Accessibility" as a key topic on the Environment and Health Data Portal.
 - Evaluated and revised data visualizations on the Environment and Health Data Portal to be more accessible for blind and low-vision users.

- Facilitated the division’s first-ever focus group in ASL for “A Partnership for Healthy Cities” research on energy insecurity.
- Added stories about disability to the “Your Heat Story” data story on the Environment and Health Data Portal.
- Developed a standard accessibility check slide to include at the start of all presentations to ensure all participants have what they need to fully engage. This slide has already been used at divisional Customer Service trainings.
- Attended day-long emergency preparedness and accessibility community events.
- Integrated accessibility and disability justice practices into the division’s Five-Year Equity Plan.
- Met with four disability community-based organizations and added two other organizations to the Climate Resilience Advisory Network.
- Worked with disability-based community partners to learn ground truth programmatic and policy efforts.
- Added accessibility language at the start of Climate Resilience Advisory Network meetings.
- Provided additions to the Active Design Guidelines 2.0 and the Family-Friendly City design proposals to more fully incorporate accessibility.

By May 2027, we will:

- Continue tracking and working to address access-related issues submitted by New Yorkers and agency employees with disabilities.
- Participate in trainings, gathering resources and disseminating materials across divisions. Resources about accessibility, equity, and inclusion in programming are available to Health Department personnel, including trainings and materials offered by the Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities, the NYC Commission on Human Rights, and other internal and external partners.
- Through the Division of Environmental Health, accomplish the following specifically within the division:
 - Create infrastructure for braille printing.
 - Publish a one-page interpreter request and payment guide.
- Through OADJ, continue to consult with agency staff on projects and initiatives to ensure people with disabilities are considered at all stages of the development and implementation process, including improving the accessibility of the Health Department’s food protection certification study materials and online course.
- Collaborate with accessibility-focused groups across the agency to identify the various definitions of disability used in NYC and propose a more comprehensive and justice-centered definition.

Workplace Inclusion

As of May 2026, we have:

- Drafted a disability justice assessment tool to explore areas of success as well as growth opportunities. The tool is in the final stages of approval.
- Centralized the agency's reasonable accommodation budget to improve efficiency and access to reasonable accommodations based on disability or medical condition. This included training staff on new processes, systems, and software to establish an effective workflow.
- Partnered with the EEO Office and Job Accommodation Network (JAN) to host seven agencywide virtual education workshops on various inclusion topics, including "Understanding EEO and Reasonable Accommodations," "Navigating Telework Accommodation Requests and Exploring Alternative Solutions," and "Defining 'Undue Hardship' in Practice." Across the trainings, over 629 employees participated.
- Participated in disability awareness-building presentations organized by DREAM, the Health Department's disability justice-centered employee resource group (ERG). Presentations included "DREAM ASL Lessons" hosted by Deaf employees, "Crip Café: Disability Justice Principles," and "DREAM Unplugged Series" led by staff with lived disability experience.
- Through the DREAM ERG, presented eight recommendations to EEO, based on survey data collected in 2025, to improve the experiences of staff navigating the reasonable accommodation process. The recommendations included short-term goals, such as making the EEO request portal more visible on the agency's intranet, and aspirational goals that require additional funding, staff capacity, and technical support, such as hiring Reasonable Accommodation Navigators to support employees through the process.
- Initiated discussions with AHRC NYC, a chapter of The Arc New York, to introduce the Partnership for Inclusive Internships (PII) program to the Health Department. Once finalized, the PII program will create additional pathways for New Yorkers with disabilities to gain meaningful employment experience in public health through internships at the Health Department.

By May 2027, we will:

- Continue to support the DREAM ERG and partner with it whenever appropriate to promote disability justice across the agency.
- Review workplace policies and procedures and revise them as necessary to ensure they use inclusive language and consider the needs of people with disabilities.

- Through OADJ in collaboration with EEO, finalize and disseminate to all employees a reasonable accommodation guide specific to the Health Department. This guide will provide step-by-step instructions on navigating the accommodation request process at the Health Department. It will also create greater transparency about procurement processes and timelines.
- Conduct an internal disability justice assessment to help agency divisions identify their strengths and areas of improvement in the practice of disability justice. OADJ will work with divisional leadership and employees in equity-centered roles to strengthen the practice of disability justice and anti-ableism based on data collected through the assessment.

Consultations and Feedback

Since posting the Health Department's first annual Progress Report, the agency worked with the interdivisional accessibility liaison committee and other staff in equity-focused roles to implement accessibility goals within divisions. The committee, made up of 30 employees, continues to meet on a quarterly basis to provide updates on accessibility goals and strategically plan to address the challenges their divisions, bureaus, and programs face in implementing the Five-Year Accessibility Plan. In addition to the committee, the Health Department has consulted and received feedback on disability and accessibility-related issues from the DREAM ERG, OADJ, and community members.

The agency has promoted the opportunity for New Yorkers to provide feedback on disability and accessibility-related matters via email or mail. Additionally, the Health Department engages disability communities as needed to provide feedback on specific initiatives of the agency to ensure the Health Department considers the diverse needs and experiences of all New Yorkers.

Conclusion

This second annual Progress Report highlights some of the achievements the Health Department has made in the year since posting the last update. It also highlights some of the Health Department's anticipated projects and initiatives planned for in the upcoming year.

The Health Department remains committed to ensuring its facilities, programs, services, and workplace are inclusive of and accommodating to people with disabilities. By establishing the OADJ, the Health Department is increasing opportunities for agency employees to engage more deeply in disability justice work and further its dedication to embedding equity into daily operations.

Since the development of the Five-Year Accessibility Plan, the Health Department has made progress in all five Local Law 12 areas of accessibility: physical access, digital access, effective communications, programmatic access, and workplace inclusion. The Five-Year Accessibility Plan will continue to guide accessibility work, and the Health Department welcomes feedback from the public on accessibility and disability-related issues via the methods listed under the Feedback Process section of this report.