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# NYC Department of Small Business Services Accessibility Progress Report

## General

The New York City Department of Small Business Services (SBS) is committed to unlocking economic potential and creating economic security for all New Yorkers. SBS provides various services to help businesses start, operate, and grow in New York City. SBS also offers services to help New Yorkers find jobs and acquire skills in growing fields. SBS works with various community organizations to build vibrant neighborhoods throughout the five boroughs. SBS is dedicated to providing services to New Yorkers and is committed to improving opportunities for people with disabilities.

### Key Functions and Services:

1. **Business Support:** Providing assistance and support with business and financial planning, licensing, and permits; and navigating government regulations.
2. **Workforce Development:** Job placement and training through Workforce1 Career Centers, industry aligned skills training programs, employer services including but not limited to recruitment and candidate screening.
3. **Neighborhood Development:** Support for Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), commercial revitalization initiatives, grants and programs to strengthen local business corridors.

SBS's diverse programs and initiatives play a vital role in creating a vibrant, inclusive, and resilient economic landscape across New York City. SBS is proud to present its first Annual Progress Report on the Agency's 5-Year Accessibility Plan. This milestone reflects our ongoing commitment to



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ensuring that all New Yorkers, including individuals with disabilities, have equitable access to our services and programs.

## **Agency's Commitment Statement**

Over the past year, SBS has made significant strides, including enhancing the accessibility of our digital platforms, expanding staff training on disability awareness, and improving physical access at select office locations. The Agency has found ways to ensure it meets accessibility standards across all service delivery points despite fiscal challenges in modernizing certain facilities. Looking ahead, SBS will focus on deepening community engagement with disability stakeholders and completing a comprehensive review of our facilities to identify further improvement opportunities. We remain dedicated to fostering an inclusive environment where every entrepreneur, business, and jobseeker can thrive.

## **Disability Services Facilitator and Other Key Accessibility Information**

Michelle Barnes-Anderson, MPA-IG is the Director for the Office of Disability Services (ODS) and serves as the Agency's Disability Service Facilitator (DSF)/Section 504/ADA Officer/55-a Coordinator.

The DSF contact information is below:

Email: [mbarnes-anderson@sbs.nyc.gov](mailto:mbarnes-anderson@sbs.nyc.gov)

Telephone: 212-618-6717

To file an EEO complaint or grievance regarding our programs and services, visit [the Equal Opportunity Employer/Program page on our website](#).

## **Feedback Process**

To ensure we are upholding our commitment to accessible programs and services, we welcome constructive feedback on our accessibility progress



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report and any issues of concern regarding accessible inclusion. Please let us know if you encounter accessibility issues by using [the City of New York's Website Accessibility Form](#). Feedback can also be submitted directly to our DSF by phone, email, and by mail including submitting anonymously by mailing to:

NYC Department of Small Business Services  
Michelle Barnes-Anderson, MPA-IG  
EEO/ODS  
One Liberty Plaza, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10006

## Progress Report

In 2023, Local Law 12 was enacted, requiring all Mayoral Agencies to implement a 5-Year Accessibility Plan on or about April 2024, with an annual progress report by May 1<sup>st</sup> of 2025. We are pleased to share our first Progress Report with the public. This report covers five areas identified in section (b)(2) of Local Law 12 (NYC Admin Code § 23-1004(b)(2)): (1) Physical Access, (2) Digital Access, (3) Programmatic Access, (4) Workplace Inclusion, and (5) Effective Communications.

Additionally, this report addresses other key areas including training initiatives aimed at supporting productivity and advancing accessibility throughout our agency.

## Physical Accessibility

As of May 2025, we have:

- Conducted onsite walk-throughs with the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD) at SBS Headquarters and Workforce1 Career Centers (WF1CCs) to ensure accessibility compliance and created an updated accessibility plan as needed.
- Provided Reasonable Accommodations (RAs) upon request.

By May 2026, we expect to:

- Continue to work closely with MOPD to implement recommended accessibility updates.

Assess the feasibility of making modifications to sites having temporary accessible structures.

- Continue to offer RAs to participants with disabilities.

## **Digital Access**

As of May 2025, we have:

- Completed training for two Digital Inclusion Officers (DIO).
- Completed an accessibility review of SBS Connect.
- Posted training materials on SBS Insider.
- Ensured program communication materials are fully accessible to users via alternative formats.

By May 2026, we expect to:

- Complete reviews of SBS vendor websites for accessibility.
- Continue digital accessibility trainings for staff. In May 2025, in partnership with the NYC Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) and the NYC Talent's Center for Workplace Accessibility and Inclusion, there will be a Digital Accessibility Roll Out Campaign called "Let's Get Accessible," this campaign will allow staff members to enroll and receive various trainings by the end July 26, 2025 (ADA Anniversary).

## **Programmatic Access**

As of May 2025, we have:

- The Mayor's Office of Talent and Workforce Development (NYC Talent), the NYC Workforce Development Corporation (WDC), and SBS' Division of Citywide Workforce Opportunity ("CWO") implemented the NY Systems Change and Inclusive Opportunities Network (NY SCION). NY SCION's mission is to improve the participation of individuals with disabilities in the workforce and to improve their employment outcomes through sustainable, job-driven, inclusive model that involves business and workforce demands.
- Through our work with NY SCION, we have completed successful accessibility assessments of the WF1CCs located throughout the city. Additionally, EEO staff received further guidance and tools on how to effectively conduct accessibility assessments.
- CWO has been working with the WDC on an RFP for an initiative which seeks to create and deliver comprehensive programs that both prepare and support individuals with disabilities for employment and equip employers to foster inclusive and accommodating workplaces ("Co-Designing and Delivering Inclusive Employment Programs with and for People with Disabilities." [WDC Contracting Opportunities - SBS](#)). The RFP was released in March 2025.
- Provided RAs upon request.

By May 2026, we expect to:

- Begin the co-design initiative described above.
- Review findings from accessibility assessments of the WF1CC with leadership.
- Continue conducting accessibility assessments for sector-based "cohort" trainings.
- Train CWO Program Managers on how to perform accessibility assessments effectively.
- Continue to ensure program standards and assessment tools clearly outline the vendors' obligation to comply with Title II ADA, and WIOA Section 188.

- Continue to provide RAs to participants with disabilities.
- Explore having SBS' EEO Division along with NY SCION team to partake in the ADA Coordinator Training Certification Program (ACTCP).

## Workplace Inclusion

As of May 2025, we have:

- Updated the “new hire” onboarding process to include immediate enrollment into *CityLearn*. This allows new employees to access various citywide training sessions, including Sexual Harassment Prevention, Everybody Matters, and Disability Etiquette Awareness (DEA) training.
- Promoted various events hosted by DCAS, MOPD, NYC Talent, and other entities. Some events that were promoted were:
  - Digital Accessibility Workshop
  - NYC Disability Network Special Event - Conversation with Former Federal Judge David Tatel
  - National Disability Employment Awareness Month
  - (NDEAM) - *CityTalk: Breaking Barriers: Access to Good Jobs for All*

By May 2026, we expect to:

- Continue to send out job postings to organizations working directly with people with disabilities.
- Promote the 55-a program on all competitive city job postings.
- Promote the city's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) policy on all job postings.
- Provide trainings such as: Sexual Harassment Prevention, Conflict of Interest Board's (COIB) Conflicts of

Interest Prevention Training, LGBTQ: Power of Inclusion, DOI's Corruption Prevention Awareness, and EEO and Diversity & Inclusion Training.

- Implement at least one resource through the volunteer-led Inclusion Diversity Equity Access (IDEA) Council, to inspire morale and advance the goal of maintaining an accessible workplace.
- Implement "Office Hours" for the Office of Disability Services where SBS staff members can ask questions on Reasonable Accommodations and obtain information regarding accessibility related issues.

## **Effective Communications**

As of May 2025, we have:

- Provided access to documents in alternative formats upon request, such as Braille, large print, and audio recordings.
- Created documents that are screen reader-ready and compatible with a variety of assistive software.
- Provided Sign Language Interpreters, and Auxiliary Aids upon request.
- Repaired Conference Room B's inductive loop system (located at One Liberty Plaza).
- Ensured that the Agency's public event marketing materials include information on how to request a Reasonable Accommodation in advance.

As of May 2026, we expect to:

- Continue to offer resources and services listed above.

## **Agency-Wide Trainings**

As of May 2025, we have:

- Provided Digital Accessibility Workshops.
- Collaborated with MOPD to provide training on Disability Etiquette Awareness (DEA) training in-person and virtually<sup>1</sup>.
- Provided Reasonable Accommodations training both in-person and virtually.
- Provided Training on 55-a Program both in-person and virtually.

By May 2026, we expect to:

- Provide new hires and additional staff with DEA training
- Collaborate with MOPD and SBS's NYC SCION team to provide additional training(s) such as:
  - Planning Accessible Events (virtual or in-person)
  - Digital Accessibility Trainings
  - Disability Etiquette Awareness Training ("DEAT") (virtual or in-person)
  - Deaf Awareness and Etiquette Training (in-person only)

## Consultations and Feedback

We continuously engage with clients, employees, and community members to better understand accessibility needs and priorities. We actively seek feedback through direct communication and informal discussions. Our DSF regularly attends quarterly community meetings hosted by MOPD, and we encourage individuals to share their experiences and suggestions. This engagement outlet has been instrumental in identifying barriers and shaping our planning for future improvements. Feedback gathered during walk-throughs with MOPD has informed planned facility upgrades. Employee suggestions have led to adjustments in internal training and communication practices. Accordingly, we will continue to create opportunities for engagement through surveys, consultation sessions, and

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<sup>1</sup> Trainings provided to vendor staff as well.



accessible feedback channels. This ongoing dialogue is essential to shaping our accessibility goals and ensuring that our services remain responsive to the diverse needs of our city.

## Conclusion

SBS is committed to fostering inclusion for people with disabilities across all aspects of our programs and services. We are continuously striving to make meaningful progress that reflects our dedication to accessibility and our efforts to identify and remove barriers. We welcome and value all feedback, which we thoughtfully consider when planning upgrades or modifications. We recognize each disability can be unique and addressing all disabilities requires ongoing assessment of our programs and services. That is why we maintain an open communication policy with the public to ensure our approach remains responsive, inclusive, and effective.