

Running a small business? Is it accessible?
Get more customers and avoid violations!

Making Your Small Business Accessible

Be
Accessible



Check Your
Website



Welcome
All Customers

Protect Against
Lawsuits



Know
the Rules

Making Your Small Business Accessible

Is your small business accessible?

Get more customers and avoid violations!

Accessibility regulations, like the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), protect the rights of people with disabilities to do everyday activities, like shopping at a store or going to a restaurant.

All new and existing small businesses in New York City are required to follow accessibility rules.

Check out five tips for existing small businesses. →→→

Want to learn more?

For more information and resources, contact:

Your local Business Improvement District
www1.nyc.gov/site/sbs/neighborhoods/bid-directory.page

NYC Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities
www.nyc.gov/site/mopd/index.page

NYC Department of Small Business Services
www1.nyc.gov/site/sbs/index.page

ADA Business Info
www.ada.gov/business.htm

1. Understand the value of making your small business accessible.

More than 1 million New Yorkers live with a disability. Access laws protect people's rights, and they can be good for business. When you do the decent, legal thing for disabled neighbors, you also help all customers, including elderly citizens and people with strollers and temporary injuries.

2. Comply with city, state, and federal accessibility requirements.

Each level of government has different rules—and all apply to you. If NYC Dept. of Buildings rejects your architectural plans over accessibility, you can ask NYC Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD) for a waiver that exempts you from the NYC Building Code. But there is no waiver process for city, state, or federal accessibility civil rights laws such as the NYC Human Rights Law, the New York State Human Rights Law, or the ADA.

3. Understand the risk of ADA lawsuits.

Even if you follow city rules, you can be sued under state or federal laws for common issues such as inaccessible storefronts and ramp violations. It can cost \$50,000+ in legal fees to fight a federal ADA lawsuit. Many businesses settle lawsuits for \$5,000 to \$15,000 to avoid court costs. Settling doesn't protect you from being sued again.

4. Get help making your business location(s) more accessible.

You can hire an accessibility consultant to tell you what needs to be fixed. Federal tax credits (up to \$5,000) and tax deductions (up to \$15,000) can help cover alteration expenses.

5. Make sure that your website is accessible, too.

Many NYC businesses have been sued over website accessibility. Check that your website meets the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0 AA) to make your web content more accessible for a wider range of people with disabilities. Ask your web developer or test your site for compliance using free online screening tools.



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