



Local Law 12: Five-Year Accessibility Plan

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Introduction

This Five-Year Accessibility Plan describes the steps the New York City Department of Veterans' Services (DVS) is currently taking and will take over the next five years to ensure that its **workplace, services, programs, and activities** are accessible to, accommodating of, and inclusive of people with disabilities, in accordance with Local Law 12 of 2023.

DVS serves Veterans, Service Members, caregivers, survivors, and family members across New York City. Many individuals served by DVS live with service-connected disabilities, chronic health conditions, or other physical, sensory, cognitive, or invisible disabilities. Accessibility is therefore central to DVS's mission to **connect, mobilize, and empower** the Veteran community and is embedded in how the agency designs and delivers services.

Mission and Background

DVS is the nation's only stand-alone municipal agency dedicated exclusively to serving Veterans and their families. The Department works to connect Veterans to benefits and services, mobilize communities and partners, and empower Veterans to thrive in civilian life.

DVS delivers services through a combination of:

- Direct assistance provided by DVS staff
- Veteran Resource Centers located throughout the five boroughs
- Partnerships with City, State, federal, and community-based organizations
- Public outreach, events, and hybrid programming

Ensuring accessibility across these service models is critical to equitable service delivery and trust with the Veteran community.

Accessibility Statement

DVS is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities have full and equal access to its facilities, programs, services, and activities. The Department does not discriminate on the basis of disability and provides reasonable accommodations to enable participation in agency services.



Language interpretation, captioning, assistive technologies, and other accommodations are available upon request.

Disability Services Facilitator (DSF)

The Department has designated a Disability Services Facilitator to coordinate accessibility efforts and respond to accommodation requests related to programs, services, and digital content.

- **Phone:** [\(212\) 416-5250](tel:(212)416-5250)
- **Email:** connect@veterans.nyc.gov

The DSF also serves as the primary point of contact for accessibility feedback and coordination with the **Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities**.

Accessibility Plan

Physical Access

DVS's primary administrative office is located at **1 Centre Street, New York, NY 10007**, in a City-owned building managed by **New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS)**. DCAS is responsible for building-wide physical infrastructure and accessibility compliance.

As a tenant agency, DVS coordinates with DCAS to identify and address accessibility needs to the extent feasible. DVS will conduct annual walkthroughs of its occupied and public-facing spaces and will document and communicate identified accessibility issues to DCAS.

DVS also operates **Veteran Resource Centers (VRCs)** throughout New York City. These centers are located within City, State, and federal facilities, including borough halls, City Council district offices, and Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers. Because these sites are owned and managed by partner entities, DVS works collaboratively with host facilities to support accessibility and adjusts service delivery methods when physical barriers are identified.

Veterans may request alternative service arrangements if a physical accessibility barrier is encountered.



Digital Access and Effective Communication

DVS is committed to ensuring that its digital content is accessible to and usable by people with disabilities. The Department continually works to improve the user experience and applies relevant accessibility standards.

DVS's digital content is **partially conformant with WCAG 2.1 Level AA**. Accessibility is assessed through **self-evaluation**, and feedback from the public is encouraged through the [Website Accessibility Feedback Form](#).

DVS uses its website and social media platforms to communicate with Veterans and the public. When feasible, the Department strives to incorporate accessibility best practices into digital communications, including the use of alternative text for images, captions for video content, and clear, plain language. DVS encourages feedback on the accessibility of its digital content and will use that feedback to inform ongoing improvements.

If assistance is needed to access a program or service, individuals may contact the DVS Disability Services Facilitator at [\(212\) 416-5250](tel:2124165250) or connect@veterans.nyc.gov.

Website: [NYC Department of Veterans' Services Digital Accessibility Statement](#)

Programmatic Access

DVS delivers a significant portion of its direct services through **Veteran Resource Centers**, which function as satellite offices staffed by DVS employees. Walk-ins are welcome, and Veterans may also access services by phone, email, or alternative arrangements when accommodations are needed.

Services available at Veteran Resource Centers include:

- Disabilities Support
- Education and Employment Assistance
- Food and Income Support
- Legal Support
- LGBTQ+ Veteran Services
- Money Management
- Senior Veteran Services
- Social Enrichment and Recreation
- Substance Use Support
- Transportation Assistance
- Women Veterans' Services



DVS is committed to ensuring that Veterans with disabilities can access these services equitably. Programmatic accessibility considerations are incorporated when launching new initiatives, modifying service delivery, or hosting public events.

Veterans seeking information about services or requesting accommodations may contact DVS at connect@veterans.nyc.gov or [\(212\) 416-5250](tel:2124165250).

Programmatic Access — Action Table

Access Issue	Action Steps	Lead	Timeline
Inconsistent accessibility considerations across programs	Develop a programmatic accessibility checklist to be used when launching or modifying services	DSF and Program Leads	Year 1
Limited standardized guidance for outreach and events	Create accessibility language and templates for outreach materials and public events	Communications and DSF	Year 1
Accessibility varies across Veteran Resource Center locations	Establish a process for documenting accessibility concerns at VRC sites and coordinating with host facilities	Operations and DSF	Year 2
Need for increased training	Ensure staff participate in Disability Etiquette and Awareness Training offered by the Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities	DSF	Year 2
Need for continuous improvement	Conduct periodic self-evaluations of programmatic access and incorporate Veteran feedback	Program Staff and DSF	Ongoing



Workplace Inclusion

DVS is committed to fostering an inclusive workplace for employees with disabilities. The Department coordinates with Citywide Equal Employment Opportunity and reasonable accommodation processes to ensure compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws.

DVS will:

- Ensure employees are informed of how to request reasonable accommodations
- Review internal policies and practices to support accessibility
- Coordinate with City partners as needed to address accommodation requests in a timely manner

Training

Training is an important component of accessibility. DVS will work to:

- Promote disability awareness and etiquette among staff
- Incorporate accessibility considerations into staff guidance and operations
- Leverage Citywide training opportunities related to accessibility and inclusion

Methodology and Assessment

This Five-Year Accessibility Plan was developed by DVS leadership in consultation with staff and informed by agency operations, service delivery models, and feedback mechanisms. DVS will use guidance from the **Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities** and self-evaluation tools to assess progress.

The plan will be reviewed periodically and updated as programs, technology, and community needs evolve. DVS welcomes feedback from Veterans and the public to inform continuous improvement.