

Disability Rights of West Virginia (DRWV) is the federally mandated protection and advocacy system for people with disabilities in West Virginia. One of DRWV's grants is Protection and Advocacy for Voting Access (PAVA). The PAVA grant program allows DRWV to ensure that individuals with disabilities can access full participation in the election process.

Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires state and local governments (public entities) to ensure that people with disabilities have a full and equal opportunity to vote. The ADA's provisions apply to all aspects of voting, including polling places. People with disabilities must have the opportunity to be full participants in an integrated civic event.

On January 29, 2020, we completed exterior accessibility monitoring of all precincts in Calhoun County. The majority of the polling sites in the county are accessible or can easily be made temporarily accessible designating accessible parking, hanging appropriate signage, and/or keeping doors opened. As such, the following ADA codes have been referenced below.

**206.2.1** Site Arrival Points. At least one accessible route shall be provided within the site from accessible parking spaces and accessible passenger loading zones; public streets and sidewalks; and public transportation stops to the accessible building or facility entrance they serve.

**216.6** Where not all entrances comply with 404 (Doors, Doorways, and Gates), entrances complying with 404 shall be identified by the International Symbol of Accessibility complying

with 703.7.2.1. Directional signs complying with 703.5 that indicate the location of the nearest entrance complying with 404 shall be provided at entrances that do not comply with 404.

**309.4** Operable parts shall be operable with one hand and shall not require tight grasping, pinching, or twisting of the wrist. The force required to activate operable parts shall be 5 pounds (22.2 N) maximum.

**502.2** Vehicle Spaces. Car parking spaces shall be 96 inches (2440 mm) wide minimum and van parking spaces shall be 132 inches (3350 mm) wide minimum, shall be marked to define the width, and shall have an adjacent access aisle complying with 502.3. EXCEPTION: Van parking spaces shall be permitted to be 96 inches (2440 mm) wide minimum where the access aisle is 96 inches (2440 mm) wide minimum.

**502.6** Identification. Parking space identification signs shall include the International Symbol of Accessibility complying with 703.7.2.1. Signs identifying van parking spaces shall contain the designation “van accessible.” Signs shall be 60 inches (1525 mm) minimum above the finish floor or ground surface measured to the bottom of the sign.

The **2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Designs** referenced in this report can be found online at:

[https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/2010ADAStandards/2010ADAStandards\\_prt.pdf](https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/2010ADAStandards/2010ADAStandards_prt.pdf)

Before further review, please take time to browse the Standards to gain a better understanding of the issues addressed. The tables on the following pages list the ADA Standards and ADA Title II regulations, if applicable, for each area we monitored, the issues noted at each site, if any, and suggestions for meeting ADA compliance on election days.

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<b>Calhoun Senior Center</b>	
<b>Issue</b>	No access aisle connects from designated accessible street parking to curb ramp, creating potentially inaccessible entrance route if vehicles are parked directly in front of curb ramp.
<b>2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements</b>	<p><b>502.3 Access Aisle.</b> Access aisles serving parking spaces shall comply with 502.3. Access aisles shall adjoin an accessible route. Two parking spaces shall be permitted to share a common access aisle.</p> <p>502.3.1 Width. Access aisles serving car and van parking spaces shall be 60 inches (1525 mm) wide minimum.</p> <p>502.3.2 Length. Access aisles shall extend the full length of the parking spaces they serve.</p> <p>502.3.3 Marking. Access aisles shall be marked so as to discourage parking in them.</p> <p><b>Advisory 502.3 Access Aisle.</b> Accessible routes must connect parking spaces to accessible entrances. In parking facilities where the accessible route must cross vehicular traffic lanes, marked crossings enhance pedestrian safety, particularly for people using wheelchairs and other mobility aids. Where possible, it is preferable that the accessible route not pass behind parked vehicles.</p>
<b>Suggestions for ADA Compliance</b>	Accessible street parking should be designated so that an access aisle is located between them, directly in front of curb ramp, as not to block primary accessible entrance.

<b>Calhoun County Courthouse</b>	
<b>Issue</b>	Deteriorated pavement on entrance route and debris therein create unstable entrance route.
<b>2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements</b>	<b>302.1</b> Floor and ground surfaces shall be stable, firm, and slip resistant and shall comply with 302. <b>Advisory 302.1</b> General. A stable surface is one that remains unchanged by contaminants or applied force, so that when the contaminant or force is removed, the surface returns to its original condition. A firm surface resists deformation by either indentations or particles moving on its surface. A slip-resistant surface provides sufficient frictional counterforce to the forces exerted in walking to permit safe ambulation.
<b>Suggestions for ADA Compliance</b>	Debris, including grass, should be removed from pavement, and entrance route should be patched or repaved to create stable surface. If circular area near door requires a cover or grate due to drainage or other purpose, that cover or grate must also be in ADA compliance.

<b>Upper West Fork Park</b>	
<b>Issue</b>	Debris between parking facility and entrance route makes route potentially inaccessible.
<b>2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements</b>	<b>302.1</b> Floor and ground surfaces shall be stable, firm, and slip resistant and shall comply with 302. <b>Advisory 302.1</b> General. A stable surface is one that remains unchanged by contaminants or applied force, so that when the contaminant or force is removed, the surface returns to its original condition. A firm surface resists deformation by either indentations or particles moving on its surface. A slip-resistant surface provides sufficient frictional counterforce to the forces exerted in walking to permit safe ambulation.
<b>Suggestions for ADA Compliance</b>	Grass and mud/dirt between parking facility and entrance route should be cleared and paved over. Otherwise, mobility mat should be placed over debris to connect parking facility to entrance route.

Several temporary solutions have been offered for making polling sites across Calhoun County accessible, and many of these solutions can easily be found online or at your local hardware store. An additional resource is West Virginia University's Center for Excellence in Disabilities WVATS (West Virginia Assistive Technology System) program. This program has portable ramps to loan for free, although pick-up and drop-off of the ramps are required. Enclosed is a brochure with information for contacting WVATS.

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[https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/2010ADAStandards/2010ADAStandards\\_prt.pdf](https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/2010ADAStandards/2010ADAStandards_prt.pdf)

Four other valuable resources have been included for your reference:

- ADA Checklist for Polling Places
- The Americans with Disabilities Act and Other Federal Laws Protecting the Rights of Voters with Disabilities
- Solutions for Five Common ADA Access Problems at Polling Places
- ADA Quick Tips Tax Incentives

The ADA requires that public entities ensure that people with disabilities can access and use all voting facilities. Because a mix of public and private facilities are used as polling places, public entities may ensure Election Day accessibility of a polling place by using low-cost, temporary measures, such as portable ramps or door stops, rather than making permanent modifications to a building. If temporary measures will not fix a barrier, and public entities are unable to make a permanent modification to fix the barrier, then the public entity must look for an alternative, accessible polling place.