

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 PAVA - Protection and Advocacy for Voting Access. The PAVA program allows DRWV to ensure that individuals with disabilities can access full participation in the election process.

Title II of the 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.

From May 7-8, 2018, DRWV completed exterior accessibility monitoring of all 28 polling sites in Ohio County. The exteriors of many of these sites are accessible or easily made temporarily accessible by modifying the polling site entrance, designating accessible parking, and hanging appropriate signage. The sites of most concern are:

- **Bridge Street Middle**
- **Clearview Fire House**
- **Madison Elementary**
- **New Life United Methodist**
- **Poplar Avenue Fire Station**
- **Short Creek United Methodist**

The table on the following pages lists the ADA standards, if applicable, for each area we surveyed, the issues noted at each site, if any, and suggestions for meeting ADA compliance on election days.

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Bethlehem Elementary: 3 Issues.	
Issue 1	<p>Accessible parking is not on the shortest route to voter entry.</p> <p>According to the secretary, voters enter the main entrance.</p> <p>There is one designated accessible parking space at the right side of the building, but there are closer spaces to the main entrance.</p>
2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements	208.3.1 Parking spaces complying with 502 that serve a particular building or facility shall be located on the shortest accessible route from parking to an entrance complying with 206.4.
Suggestions for ADA Compliance	Designate accessible parking spaces adjacent to main entrance on Election Day. If only one space is designated, it must be a van accessible space with aisle.
Issue 2	<p>Route to voter entry is uneven.</p> <p>The route from parking to sidewalk path has a 1" to 2" rise in height depending on where the sidewalk is accessed.</p>
2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements	303.4 Changes in level greater than ½ inch (13 mm) high shall be ramped and shall comply with 405 or 406.
Suggestions for ADA Compliance	A curb ramp or an angled entry mat could be used to make the curb accessible.

Issue 3	Door hardware is inaccessible. Main entrance has a door handle that requires tight grasping.
2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements	<p>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.</p> <p>404.2.7 Handles, pulls, latches, locks, and other operable parts on doors and gates shall comply with 309.4. Operable parts of such hardware shall be 34 inches (865 mm) minimum and 48 inches (1220 mm) maximum above the finish floor or ground. Where sliding doors are in the fully open position, operating hardware shall be exposed and usable from both sides.</p>
Suggestions for ADA Compliance	Have the door propped open during polling; use a temporary doorbell or ballot call alert system; or have a poll worker stationed at the door.

Booker T. Washington Plaza: No exterior issues. Voters use the main front entrance; this site was monitored on Primary Election Day.

Bridge Street Middle: Inaccessible.

Issue	Route to voter entry is uneven and inaccessible. Per school secretary, the main entrance of the school is the only entrance made available to voters. This entrance has 6 steps, totaling 39” in rise; no ramp, lift, or elevator are provided.
2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements	303.4 Changes in level greater than ½ inch (13 mm) high shall be ramped and shall comply with 405 or 406.
Suggestions for ADA Compliance	Without extensive construction, this entrance cannot be made accessible. Voter entry must be moved to an accessible entrance. On the left end of the building there are a ramp and two doors (numbered 15 and 16) that may be accessible entry options.

Christ United Methodist: No Exterior Issues. Per the secretary, voters enter the main front entry doors and back door on the left end of the building where voting occurs.

City County Building: No exterior issues. Voters can enter multiple entrances on building; this site was monitored on Primary Election Day.

Clearview Fire House: 1 issue.

Issue	Clear width of route is too narrow. Voters entered through a firetruck garage door that had a truck and multiple obstacles in the path to the back of the building where voting occurred; this site was monitored on Primary Election Day.
2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements	403.5.1 The clear width of walking surfaces shall be 36" (915mm) minimum.
Suggestions for ADA Compliance	Truck needs to be parked outside on Election Day so that voters have a clear path to the back of the building.

Elm Grove Civic Building: No exterior issues with main entrance.

Per Cathy Smith, president of the Elm Grove Civic Association, voters will use the main entry, and she can open the designated accessible entrance on the left side of the building. Main entrance is the most accessible entry; accessible entrance has a ramp without a landing, which is an access issue.

Elm Grove Elementary: 1 issue.	
Issue	Route to voter entry is uneven. Per the principal, voters enter door 6 on the right side of the building. There is a ¾" rise from the sidewalk path to the door stoop.
2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements	303.4 Changes in level greater than ½ inch (13 mm) high shall be ramped and shall comply with 405 or 406.
Suggestions for ADA Compliance	A threshold mat or angled entry mat could be used to make this pathway accessible.

Lawrencefield Chapel: No exterior issues. Voters enter the main door of chapel; this site was monitored on Primary Election Day.

Luau Manor: No exterior issues. Voters enter main front door; this site was monitored on Primary Election Day.

Madison Elementary: 1 issue.	
Issue	Route to voter entry is uneven and inaccessible. Voters enter the right side of the building. There are 9 steps, totaling more than 54" in rise, to cross before reaching this door; no lift, ramp, or elevator are provided. This site was monitored on Primary Election Day.
2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements	303.4 Changes in level greater than ½ inch (13 mm) high shall be ramped and shall comply with 405 or 406.
Suggestions for ADA Compliance	Without substantial construction this entrance cannot be made accessible. An accessible entrance on this building must be used or these precincts must be moved to a new, accessible location. There is an entrance and an elevator door adjacent to the parking lot at the back of the building, which may be accessible options. When this site was monitored on Primary Election Day, these options were not available.

New Life United Methodist: 3 issues.

Issue 1	<p>Ramp is too steep. Voters enter basement door on the right side of the building. The slope of the ramp that leads to the voter entrance has a grade of 14.6%. This site was monitored on Primary Election Day.</p>
2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements	<p>405.2 Ramp runs shall have a running slope not steeper than 1:12 (8.3%).</p>
Suggestions for ADA Compliance	<p>Without substantial construction this entrance cannot be made accessible. A multi-level ramp is needed to meet ADA Design Guidelines with a grade not exceeding 8.3%.</p> <p>An accessible entrance must be used. The only accessible entrance on this building leads directly to the sanctuary. If this entrance cannot be used and the ramp to the current entrance is not reconstructed, a new polling site with accessible entrances must be found.</p>

Issue 2	Route to voter entry is uneven and inaccessible. At the bottom of the steep ramp there is a makeshift, plywood ramp with a 1" rise.
2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements	303.4 Changes in level greater than ½ inch (13 mm) high shall be ramped and shall comply with 405 or 406.
Suggestions for ADA Compliance	While this does create a ramp to meet the 3 ¼" threshold rise, it is dangerous to have a ramp on a ramp (particularly a ramp with such a steep grade). This ramp needs to be rebuilt to meet ADA Design Standards or the entrance must be switched to one that is accessible.

Issue 3	<p>Clear width of doorway is too narrow. Though there are double doors at the voting entrance, on Primary Election Day only one was being used. Each of these doors is only 31” wide, closed (likely narrower when open).</p>
2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements	<p>404.2.3 Clear Width. Door openings shall provide a clear width of 32 inches (815 mm) minimum. Clear openings of doorways with swinging doors shall be measured between the face of the door and the stop, with the door open 90 degrees. Openings more than 24 inches (610 mm) deep shall provide a clear opening of 36 inches (915 mm) minimum. There shall be no projections into the required clear opening width lower than 34 inches (865 mm) above the finish floor or ground. Projections into the clear opening width between 34 inches (865 mm) and 80 inches (2030 mm) above the finish floor or ground shall not exceed 4 inches (100 mm).</p>
Suggestions for ADA Compliance	<p>If this entrance is made accessible with a compliant ramp, both doors need to be opened on Election Day. Have the doors propped open during polling; use a temporary doorbell or ballot call alert system; or have poll worker stationed at the door.</p>

North Park Headstart: 1 issue.

Issue	Route to voter entry is uneven. Voters use front, main entrance which has a concrete stoop with a rise of 1½". This site was monitored on Primary Election Day.
2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements	303.4 Changes in level greater than ½ inch (13 mm) high shall be ramped and shall comply with 405 or 406.
Suggestions for ADA Compliance	A threshold plate could be installed, or a threshold mat may be used if it is fixed and stable. Concrete construction could also be used to level the stoop with the sidewalk.

Pine Room, Oglebay Park: No exterior issues. Voters entered double doors directly to Pine Room or could use accessible door to the right of main entry. This location was a substitute for Par 3 Oglebay voting location; signs were posted at Par 3. This site was monitored on Primary Election Day.

Poplar Avenue Fire Station: 3 issues.

<p>Issue 1</p>	<p>Route to voter entry is uneven with openings in pavement. Voters enter front, right door of fire station. The route from parking to voter entry has blacktop in need of repair, particularly around the metal ground covering in front of the door. There are holes and breaks 2" deep around the metal covering. This site was monitored on Primary Election Day.</p>
<p>2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements</p>	<p>302.3 Openings. Openings in floor or ground surfaces shall not allow passage of a sphere more than ½ inch (13 mm) diameter except as allowed in 407.4.3, 409.4.3, 410.4, 810.5.3 and 810.10. Elongated openings shall be placed so that the long dimension is perpendicular to the dominant direction of travel.</p>
<p>Suggestions for ADA Compliance</p>	<p>Areas of broken blacktop need to be repaired to create a level surface.</p> <p>Alternatively, it may be possible to use the middle fire house garage door as the voter entrance; the surface leading to it is stable and there is no threshold rise.</p>

Issue 2	The area in front of the door is not level. The blacktop is sloped to the door and has a grade of 8.9%. A level landing is required for accessibility to allow independent maneuvering and opening of the door.
2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements	404.2.4.4 Floor or Ground Surface. Floor or ground surface within required maneuvering clearances shall comply with 302. Changes in level are not permitted. 405.7.1 Slope. Landings shall comply with 302. Changes in level are not permitted.
Suggestions for ADA Compliance	It may be possible to create a compliant slope with a threshold mat or portable ramp. Otherwise construction is needed to create a level surface at the door, or voter door needs to be moved to an accessible entrance.
Issue 3	Threshold rise is too high. Threshold at voter entry has a 4" rise.
2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements	404.2.5 Thresholds, if provided at doorways, shall be ½ inch (13 mm) high maximum. Raised thresholds and changes in level at doorways shall comply with 302 and 303.
Suggestions for ADA Compliance	A portable ramp, angled entry mat/threshold mat could be used to make entry accessible.

Ritchie Elementary: 1 issue.

Issue 1	Directional signs needed to accessible entrance. When this site was monitored on Primary Election Day, all signs for voting were at the front entrance of the building which is inaccessible. It took quite a bit of searching to find a door on the right side of the building that had a sign with the International Symbol of Accessibility taped to it. There were not any voting signs or further signage directing voters to the accessible entrance.
2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements	216.6 Where not all entrances comply with 404, 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.
Suggestions for ADA Compliance	Accessibility signs are needed on the front and side of the building to direct voters to the side accessible entry. After entering that door, further signs are needed to guide voters to polling booths.

Riverview Towers: No exterior issues. Voters enter the bottom door on right side of the building; this site was monitored on Primary Election Day.

Russell Nesbit Services: No exterior issues. Voters enter the main front entrance; this site was monitored on Primary Election Day.

Short Creek United Methodist: Not Accessible.

Issue 1	Parking is on unstable surface. Parking area is uneven gravel and grass.
2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements	302.1 Floor and ground surfaces shall be stable, firm, and slip resistant and shall comply with 302. 502.4 Parking spaces and access aisles serving them shall comply with 302. Access aisles shall be at the same level as the parking spaces they serve. Changes in level are not permitted.
Suggestions for ADA Compliance	A core-gravel system, pavers, or other material ½” thick or less could be used to create a stable surface from route to entrance.
Issue 2	Route to voter entry is uneven and inaccessible. Voters use the front, main entrance which appears to be the only entrance to the church. There are 5 steps, totaling a rise over 41”, to climb before reaching the door, and once inside, the voting booths were located in a room with descending steps. No ramps, lifts, or elevators are provided. This site was monitored on Primary Election Day.
2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements	303.4 Changes in level greater than ½ inch (13 mm) high shall be ramped and shall comply with 405 or 406.
Suggestions for ADA Compliance	Without extensive construction this site is inaccessible. A new polling site is required.

St. John’s Episcopal Rooms: 4 issues.

Issue 1	Parking is on unstable surface. Parking area is uneven gravel and grass.
2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements	302.1 Floor and ground surfaces shall be stable, firm, and slip resistant and shall comply with 302. 502.4 Parking spaces and access aisles serving them shall comply with 302. Access aisles shall be at the same level as the parking spaces they serve. Changes in level are not permitted.
Suggestions for ADA Compliance	A core-gravel system, pavers, or other material ½” thick or less could be used to create a stable surface from route to entrance.
Issue 2	Route to voter entry is uneven. There is a 3½” rise from the parking area to the sidewalk path.
2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements	303.4 Changes in level greater than ½ inch (13 mm) high shall be ramped and shall comply with 405 or 406.
Suggestions for ADA Compliance	A portable ramp or an angled entry mat could be used to make this pathway accessible.

Issue 3	Clear width of entry route is too narrow. The sidewalk path to the voter entry is narrow: 33”.
2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements	403.5.1 The clear width of walking surfaces shall be 36” (915mm) minimum.
Suggestions for ADA Compliance	A portable ramp or other firm material less than ½” high could be laid flat over this portion of the sidewalk to make it compliant.
Issue 4	Threshold rise is too high. Threshold at voter entry has a 3½” rise.
2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements	404.2.5 Thresholds, if provided at doorways, shall be ½ inch (13 mm) high maximum. Raised thresholds and changes in level at doorways shall comply with 302 and 303.
Suggestions for ADA Compliance	An angled entry mat/threshold mat could be used to make entry accessible.

St. Michael’s Angelus Center: No exterior issues. Voters enter the double doors on left side of the building; this site was monitored on Primary Election Day.

Stone Presbyterian: 1 issue.

Issue	Route to voter entry is uneven. The second level of the ramp leading to the voter entrance has one section of concrete that is raised 1"-1½" at both ends.
2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements	303.4 Changes in level greater than ½ inch (13 mm) high shall be ramped and shall comply with 405 or 406.
Suggestions for ADA Compliance	Threshold plates could be installed, or angled entry mats/threshold mats could be used to make this part of the route accessible. If mats are used, they must be securely fixed to the concrete.

Tridelphia Community Center: No exterior issues. Per a policeman in the area, one of the back doors is used and all of the back doors are accessible.

Tridelphia Middle School: No exterior issues. Per the principal, voters enter door 1.

Valley Grove Community Center: 3 issues.

<p>Issue 1</p>	<p>Designated accessible parking is on a slope. Per secretary, voters enter ramped entrance at the back of the community center. Designated accessible parking near this entrance has a slope grade of 2.5%.</p>
<p>2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements</p>	<p>502.4 Parking spaces and access aisles serving them shall comply with 302. Access aisles shall be at the same level as the parking spaces they serve. Changes in level are not permitted.</p> <p>EXCEPTION: Slopes not steeper than 1:48 (2%) shall be permitted.</p> <p>Advisory 502.4 Floor or Ground Surfaces. Access aisles are required to be nearly level in all directions to provide a surface for wheelchair transfer to and from vehicles. The exception allows sufficient slope for drainage. Built-up curb ramps are not permitted to project into access aisles and parking spaces because they would create slopes greater than 1:48.</p>
<p>Suggestions for ADA Compliance</p>	<p>Parking must be designated on a level surface or a surface with a slope of 2% (1:48) or less.</p>
<p>Issue 2</p>	<p>Route to voter entry is uneven. There is a 2½” drop from the parking area to the sidewalk ramp.</p>
<p>2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements</p>	<p>303.4 Changes in level greater than ½ inch (13 mm) high shall be ramped and shall comply with 405 or 406.</p>
<p>Suggestions for ADA Compliance</p>	<p>An angled mat or threshold plate may be used to make the route accessible, but it would have to be affixed to the sidewalk for stability.</p>

Issue 3	Threshold rise is too high. Threshold at voter entry has a 1" rise.
2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements	404.2.5 Thresholds, if provided at doorways, shall be ½ inch (13 mm) high maximum. Raised thresholds and changes in level at doorways shall comply with 302 and 303.
Suggestions for ADA Compliance	An angled entry mat/threshold mat could be used to make entry accessible.

Warwood Middle School: No exterior issues. Voters use the main entry; this site was monitored on Primary Election Day.

West Liberty Elementary: 1 issue.	
Issue	Door hardware is inaccessible. Door handle requires tight grasping.
2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements	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.
Suggestions for ADA Compliance	Have the door propped open during polling; use a temporary doorbell or ballot call alert system; or have poll worker stationed at the door.

Woodsdale Elementary: 1 issue.

Issue	<p>Directional signs needed to guide voters to accessible entrance.</p> <p>There is an accessible entrance at the back of the school; however, there were no signs guiding people to this entrance for accessibility. The international sign of accessibility for parking was placed at the curbside parking area at the Bethany Pike Street entrance. On this side of the school, voters used the main entrance which is inaccessible due to a 7" stoop. This site was monitored on Primary Election Day.</p>
2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design Requirements	<p>216.6 Where not all entrances comply with 404, entrances complying with 404 shall be identified by the International Symbol of Accessibility complying with 703.7.2.1.</p> <p>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.</p>
Suggestions for ADA Compliance	<p>Signs with the International Symbol of Accessibility on them are needed at the Bethany Pike Street entrance and around the block, directing voters to the accessible entry at the back of the school.</p> <p>Alternatively, an accessible entrance on the Bethany Pike Street entrance needs to be open on Election Day.</p>

Several temporary solutions have been offered for making polling sites across Ohio 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 pickup and drop-off of the ramps are required. Enclosed is a brochure with information for contacting WVATS.

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

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.