

2023 Polling Site Accessibility Report: Monroe County, WV

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 October 2 and 3, 2023, a DRWV Advocate completed exterior accessibility monitoring of all precincts in Monroe County and this report contains our findings. The following ADA codes referenced below are the most common issues noted in this county.

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.

302.1 Floor and ground surfaces shall be stable, firm, and slip resistant and shall comply with 302. Access aisles shall be at the same level as the parking spaces they serve. Changes in level are not permitted. EXCEPTION: Slopes not steeper than 1:48 shall be permitted.

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 whereas 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

Four other valuable resources have been included for your reference:

- ADA Checklist for Polling Places <https://www.ada.gov/votingck.htm>
- The Americans with Disabilities Act and Other Federal Laws Protecting the Rights of Voters with Disabilities
https://www.ada.gov/ada_voting/ada_voting_ta.htm
- Solutions for Five Common ADA Access Problems at Polling Places
https://www.ada.gov/ada_voting/voting_solutions_ta/polling_place_solutions.htm
- ADA Quick Tips Tax Incentives <https://adata.org/factsheet/quicktips-tax>

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.

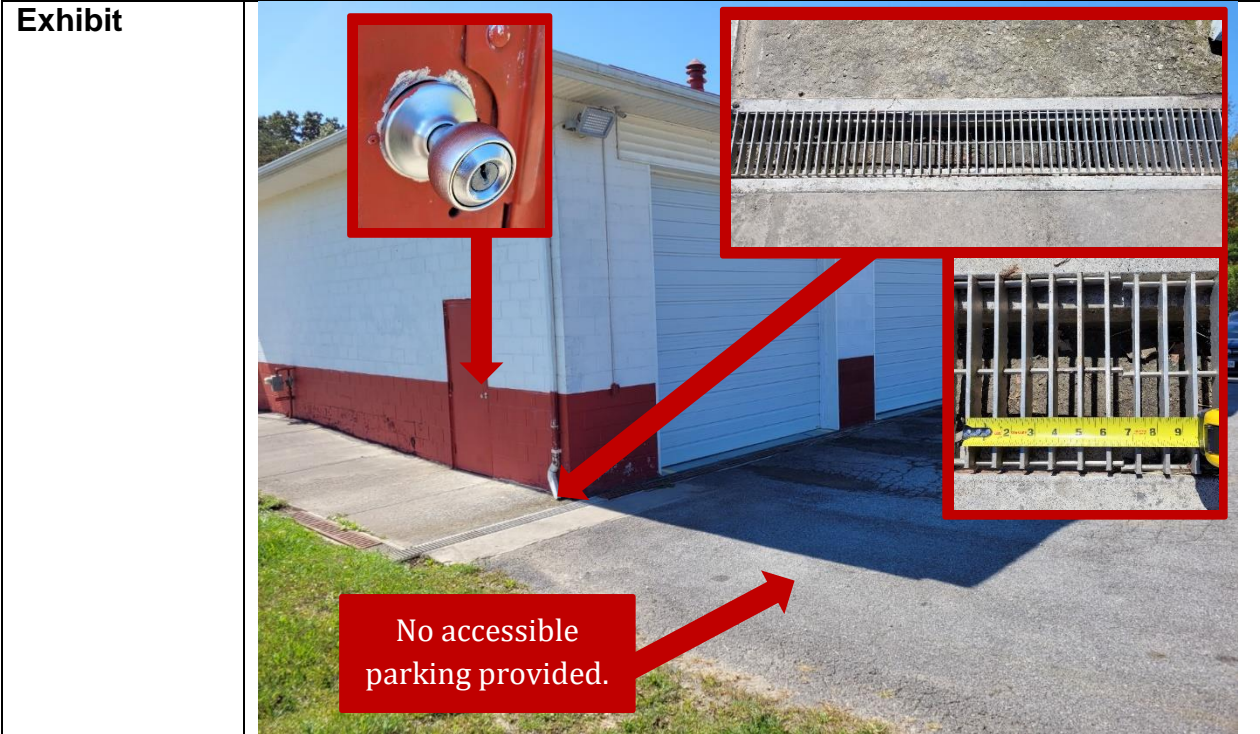
The tables on the following pages list the ADA Standards and ADA Title II regulations, if applicable, for each area we monitored, the issues noted at each site, if any, and suggestions for meeting ADA compliance on election days. Please note that the following is a condensed version of the full accessibility report that was provided to Monroe County Election Officials.

Alderson Town Hall	
Issue(s)	No accessible parking is provided (502.2). There is a 1-inch lipped edge at the door (303.4). There is debris on the access route, causing an obstruction to entry (302.1, 402.1.)
Exhibit	<p>Obstructions on access route.</p> <p>The church's parking lot is used for the town hall building, but there is no accessible route connecting the two facilities nor are there accessible parking spaces in the lot.</p>
Suggestions for ADA Compliance	Install at least one van accessible parking space on the shortest accessible route to entry with appropriate signage. Address the 1-

	inch lipped edge at the door by utilizing a wedge or alternative means to ensure a firm, stable, and non-slip surface.
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Ballard VFD	
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Issue(s)	No accessible parking is provided (502.2). The door hardware is inaccessible (309.4). There is a drain grate with roughly 1-inch openings, causing an unstable access route (302.1, 402.2).
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Suggestions for ADA Compliance	<p>Replace the drain grate or utilize a sturdy mat to ensure a stable, firm, and non-slip surface. Install at least one van accessible parking space with an access aisle and signage displayed at the proper height. Replace the inaccessible door hardware with a loop, push, or pull hardware.</p> <p>Note: I spoke with a volunteer fireman while surveying this location. He informed me that the VFD has plans to repave the walkway and remove the drain grate altogether in late October. He also stated that they install temporary accessible parking and prop the doors open during voting. This may be worth following up on to ensure their methods are implemented properly.</p>
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Gap Mills Substation Building	
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Issue(s)	The parking facility is unstable due to the loose gravel, and it is located on a slope (502.4). There is no accessible parking provided (502.2).
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<p>Exhibit</p>	
<p>Suggestions for ADA Compliance</p>	<p>Install at least one van accessible parking space with appropriate signage, ensuring it is located on the closest accessible route to entrance and in an area that is level in all directions.</p>

<p>James Monroe High School</p>	
<p>Issue(s)</p>	<p>No accessible parking signage is displayed (502.6). The slope of the curb ramp and flared sides exceeds ADA Standards (405.2, 406.3).</p>
<p>Exhibit</p>	

Suggestions for ADA Compliance	Install van accessible signage at the appropriate height. Adjust the curb ramp to comply with ADA slope requirements.
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Monroe County Board of Education

Issue(s)	The parking facility is unstable (502.4). There is a drain grate located within the accessible parking space, with large openings making it hazardous and unstable (502.4). The existing parking signage is not displayed at the proper height (502.6).
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Suggestions for ADA Compliance	Install a paved area for the accessible parking space and access aisle that connects with the access route to ensure a level, stable, firm, and non-slip surface. Replace the existing signage with van accessible signage displayed at the proper height (60"). Relocate or replace the drain grate so it does not pose a hazard and is compliant with ADA Standards.
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Peterstown Middle School

Issue(s)	There is no parking signage displayed (502.6). There are several areas of overgrown grass and weeds in the pavement, causing the access route to be unstable (302.1, 402.2).
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<p>Exhibit</p>	
<p>Suggestions for ADA Compliance</p>	<p>Install accessible parking signage at the appropriate height. Remove debris from the access route to ensure a stable, firm, and non-slip surface.</p>

<p>Second Creek Pent. Holiness Church</p>	
<p>Issue(s)</p>	<p>The parking facility is unstable and located on a slope (502.4). There is no accessible parking provided (502.2). The access route is unstable (302.1, 402.2). The slope of the ramp exceeds ADA Standards (405.2). There is no edge protection provided on the ramp (405.9). The door hardware is inaccessible (309.4).</p>

<p>Exhibit</p>	
<p>Suggestions for ADA Compliance</p>	<p>Address the issues identified, utilize another entrance that better complies with ADA Standards, or relocate this polling site.</p>

<p>Sweet Springs Community Building</p>	
<p>Issue(s)</p>	<p>The accessible parking space is not clearly defined (502.2). The accessible parking signage is not displayed at the proper height (502.6).</p>

<p>Exhibit</p>	
<p>Suggestions for ADA Compliance</p>	<p>Clearly define the accessible parking space and access aisle, with appropriate van accessible signage displayed at the proper height.</p> <p>Note: While there, I measured the paved area to ensure there is enough space for a parking space (96") and access aisle (60"). It would be best to place the access aisle on the left side and parking space on the right, to avoid interfering with entry to the building.</p>

<p>Waiteville Community Building</p>	
<p>Issue(s)</p>	<p>There is no ramp provided (303.4). The parking facility is unstable and located on a slope (502.4). There is no accessible parking provided (502.2).</p>

<p>Exhibit</p>	
<p>Suggestions for ADA Compliance</p>	<p>Relocation may be the best option for this polling site, unless the issues identified are addressed.</p>

Disability Rights of WV strives to ensure all polling sites in West Virginia are accessible for voters with disabilities. If you have accessibility concerns about your polling site or would like your polling site to be evaluated for accessibility, please contact our office via email pava@drowv.org or by calling 304-346-0847.