

# **Local Committee on People with Disabilities Formation Handbook**



**Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities**

*November 2025*

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## Executive Summary

The *Local Committee on People with Disabilities Formation Handbook* provides municipal governments with a roadmap to establish and strengthen disability advisory committees that promote inclusion, accessibility, and civic engagement across Texas communities. The Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities (GCPD) developed this guide to share best practices drawn from successful local initiatives statewide.

### Purpose

Local Committees (LCs) on People with Disabilities serve as advisory bodies that help mayors, county judges, and local officials better understand and respond to the needs of residents with disabilities. These committees offer informed recommendations on policy, infrastructure, employment, and access, helping local governments create environments where all residents can fully participate in community life.

### Goals of the Handbook

- Provide practical tools for forming or strengthening a local committee, including sample resolutions, bylaws, and meeting templates.
- Highlight policy areas that most affect people with disabilities—such as transportation, housing, emergency management, and digital accessibility.
- Promote collaboration among local, state, and national partners to advance accessibility and inclusion.
- Encourage awareness and leadership by offering ideas for proclamations, public events, and disability observances throughout the year.

### Why Local Committees Matter

People with disabilities represent one in four Texans. Their lived experience and expertise are critical to shaping equitable, accessible public policy. Local committees help cities and counties:

- identify and remove barriers before they become compliance issues,
- improve customer service and public trust,
- foster creative, inclusive solutions to community challenges, and
- build stronger connections with state and national resources.

### How GCPD Supports Local Committees

The Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities partners with local committees through:

- technical assistance and training on ADA and accessibility topics,

- sharing best practices and resources from other Texas communities, and
- recognizing and promoting local success stories and connecting LCs to national networks.

### A Call to Action

Forming or revitalizing a local committee is an investment in your community's future. By engaging residents with disabilities as partners in planning and policy, local governments can build more inclusive, resilient, and innovative communities where every Texan can thrive.

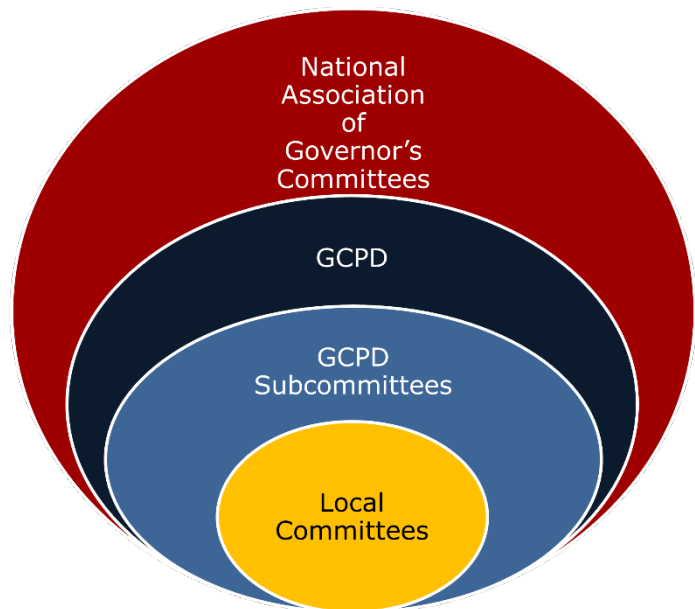
## Introduction

The *Local Committee on People with Disabilities Formation Handbook* is designed to guide communities in creating and sustaining local committees that advance accessibility and inclusion. This handbook is built on the belief that when communities listen to and include people with disabilities, everyone benefits. It offers practical advice, examples, and encouragement designed to help you establish, support, and grow a local disability advisory board or commission that addresses the unique needs of your city, county, or local transit authority.

The Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities (GCPD) supports the development and sustainment of these committees. It aims to strengthen the local committee network by focusing on shared interests, such as promoting accessibility, advancing disability employment opportunities, encouraging civic engagement, supporting community education and awareness, and fostering collaboration among local stakeholders. GCPD disseminates information about LCs and their activities, primarily based on LC reports provided at quarterly meetings. For more details, please visit the GCPD website at <http://gov.texas.gov/disabilities/>.

## Understanding Mayor and County Committees on People with Disabilities

Local disability committees, whether called boards, commissions, or councils (to simplify the language in this handbook, we will refer to these committees as local committees or LCs), are comprised of appointed individuals who provide input and recommendations to local government officials. These committees serve as a bridge between the community and city or county leadership on issues that affect people with disabilities. Additionally, LCs and the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities (GCPD) are part of a broader national network that includes the



National Association of Governors' Committees on People with Disabilities (NAGC). This affiliation connects Texas to national initiatives, resources, and best practices that strengthen efforts to advance disability inclusion at every level of government.

The first local committee was formed in Houston in the late 1940s and was known as the "Committee on Employment of the Handicapped." In the 1980s, many more mayor's committees on people with disabilities were formed with the encouragement of the former President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. This agency was later replaced by the federal Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP).

Each local committee is shaped by the needs and strengths of its community. Some participate in an advisory role on public infrastructure, while others review policy or lead awareness events within their communities. What they all share is a mission to ensure people with disabilities have a voice at the table.

### Key Characteristics of a Committee on People with Disabilities

- Typically established by city councils or county commissioners.
- Composed of residents who have either lived experience or professional expertise regarding disabilities.
- Supported by staff liaisons. Common liaisons are the city or county ADA Coordinator or a representative from a local office focused on compliance with federal and state laws for disability or civil rights.
- Advisory in nature. They usually do not have rule-making authority, but they can still be influential.

### Why Disability Inclusion Matters

People with disabilities are a large and growing part of every community, including rural and urban, large or small. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), approximately one in four U.S. adults live with some form of disability<sup>1</sup>.

Disability can affect mobility, vision, hearing, cognition, mental health, or the ability to live independently. Disabilities may be visible or hidden and can be either temporary or long-term. People with disabilities span every age group, race,

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<sup>1</sup> Okoro CA, Hollis ND, Cyrus AC, Griffin-Blake S. Prevalence of Disabilities and Health Care Access by Disability Status and Type Among Adults — United States, 2016. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2018; 67:882–887. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6732a3>

ethnicity, and economic background. You may learn about your community's specific disability population at the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey Report at: <https://www.census.gov/topics/health/disability.html>.

- Because disability can occur at any age, building accessible communities allows residents to age in place and fully participate in community life.
- Policy decisions like transportation, emergency management, public health, and education impact people with disabilities in unique ways.
- Understanding who is affected helps prioritize accessibility and inclusion in policy and planning.
- Data strengthens your committee's ability to make the case for resources and improvements.

Local committees serve as proactive partners to identify accessibility barriers, recommend policy improvements, and promote best practices before issues become compliance concerns. They may serve as a key stakeholder for updating your community's [ADA Transition Plan](#), a required Federal document. By maintaining open communication with city officials and the community, LCs help ensure that public programs, services, and facilities are inclusive and accessible to all residents.

## Partners in Policy: Shifting the Mindset

Too often, people with disabilities are viewed through a lens of limitation. But in truth, they bring critical perspectives, talents, and insights that can transform local planning, policy, and problem-solving.

When people with disabilities are treated as partners rather than only recipients of services, communities become stronger, more creative, and more equitable.

- *From "What do they need?"*  
→ To "What can we learn together?"
- *From charity or compliance*  
→ To collaboration and innovation

Local committee members can help drive improvements in:

- Civic engagement
- Public safety
- Inclusive recreation
- Accessible technology



- Universal design

Inclusion isn't about lowering expectations but about unlocking potential and accessibility for all.

## Addressing Key Policy Areas that Affect People with Disabilities

Affordable housing, transportation, emergency management, public safety, and workforce development are some community challenges that touch the lives of people with disabilities. That means LCs are uniquely positioned to offer cross-cutting solutions that benefit everyone.

Rather than being siloed, disability-related efforts can amplify your progress within the community toward big-picture goals. Disability touches every part of public life, from how we design sidewalks to how we prepare for natural disasters. A local committee can bring meaningful input to a wide range of local issues that directly affect people with disabilities.

Below is a list of some of the most impactful policy areas where committees can engage.

### High-Impact Policy Areas

- Transportation and Infrastructure: sidewalks, crosswalks, transit access, paratransit systems
- Emergency Management: inclusive planning for evacuations, alerts, and shelters
- Housing: accessible and affordable options, visitability standards
- Employment: workforce development, inclusive hiring, reasonable accommodations, and municipal hiring practices
- Access to health and human services: accessibility of clinics, mental health support, and disability-focused programs
- Access to parks and recreation programs and facilities: school partnerships, accessible playgrounds, and adaptive sports

Local committees can use these areas as a framework to guide their annual goals and recommendations to local leadership.

## Benefits of Forming a Local Committee

Communities thrive when everyone is included, and that is the core mission of a local committee. These committees are not only about compliance and risk

mitigation; they are about creating a stronger, more accessible community for all residents.

Regardless of whether your community is large or small, urban or rural, establishing a local committee can help ensure that often-overlooked voices are included in decision-making processes that impact everyone's daily lives.

### Stronger Community Input

People with disabilities are experts about their accessibility needs. Without their expert input in civic planning, local governments become less accessible to residents and visitors. LCs help bring those voices directly into public policy and planning discussions, offering firsthand perspectives on issues like public access, safety, education, and more.

*Examples:* LCs can collect public feedback on prioritizing proposed sidewalk or transit changes and ensure routes are navigable for wheelchair users or people who are blind or have low vision. They could also review emergency communication systems for accessibility and share with the local community about their availability for use. Additionally, LCs may evaluate municipal websites, online forms, and digital applications to guide compliance with accessibility standards. This helps municipalities ensure that people can access information and services independently without requiring additional accommodations.

### Improved Customer Service and Reduced Risk

Inclusive policies often lead to fewer complaints, improved public experiences, and increased trust.

*Examples:* A local committee might provide input on new building plans for a city facility to ensure compliance with ADA and Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS) before construction begins, preventing later costly retrofits. They can also advise on accessible website design and communication formats so that public information is usable by all residents. LCs can provide input on park and facility renovations, ensuring inclusive features such as accessible restrooms, ramps, and playground equipment.

All communities are challenged to fully fund needs for public works and transportation projects. Working collaboratively with your LC can help build trust through a more transparent and open planning process that reflects the needs and priorities of the disability community, considering available resource limitations.

### Creative Problem Solving

LCs often help tackle broader community challenges, such as transportation gaps,

emergency response planning, or workforce development, by bringing innovative and adaptive thinking to the table.

*Examples:* A LC might work with a city's transportation department to improve paratransit scheduling or advocate for accessible pedestrian infrastructure. In emergency management, LCs can collaborate with local officials to ensure that shelters, alerts, and evacuation plans include people with disabilities. Similarly, in workforce development, LCs can partner with chambers of commerce or workforce boards to promote inclusive hiring practices and accessible job training programs.

In San Antonio, the LC helped design inclusive parks and playgrounds, which led to higher participation and positive feedback from residents. This same LC was instrumental in guiding the development of a new airport terminal in San Antonio, regarded as a universal design model airport for the rest of the nation.

By approaching community challenges through a disability-inclusive lens, LCs help create solutions that benefit all residents.

### State and National Connections

By forming an LC, your city or county becomes part of a wider network of advisory boards supported by GCPD and national partners. This connection brings valuable resources, ideas, and recognition to local efforts.

*Examples:* LCs can access toolkits, training webinars, and best-practice guides from GCPD and NAGC, which can help implement innovative programs locally. They may also collaborate with other LCs to develop cost-saving regional initiatives.

Participation in statewide or national conferences allows local members to showcase successful projects, learn from peers, and bring back strategies that have been effective elsewhere.

You may be focused on local impact, but you are never doing this work alone. GCPD and our ex officio members from Texas state agencies can provide answers to questions regarding the TAS and the ADA.

### Examples of How GCPD Can Help

- Survey results
- Trending webinars
- In-person training presentations
- A comprehensive list of resources and links on the GCPD website

## How to Get Started

- Initiate a conversation with city or county leadership about the value of a local committee.
- Use the sample ordinance and bylaw templates provided in this handbook.
- Reach out to GCPD for examples of successful committees across the state.
- Identify local disability advocates, service providers, or organizations that could partner in committee formation.

When you form a local committee, you are not only improving access in your city or county but also contributing to broader community efforts by joining a network of advocates and policy experts working together across Texas and the nation.

Local committees can serve as advisors helping local governments:

- identify barriers before they become legal issues,
- train frontline staff on disability awareness and best practices,
- improve responsiveness to community needs,
- support compliance with federal, state, and local accessibility laws, and
- help government use limited resources more effectively to create long-term community impact.

Engaging people with disabilities in decision-making ensures services and programs meet real community needs, improving overall satisfaction. Once your community decides to form a committee, structure and organization will determine its long-term success.

## Organizing an Effective Local Committee

Every successful LC starts with a clear mission and an inclusive approach. While your structure can be flexible, certain practices consistently lead to a more effective and lasting impact.

### Best Practices in Action

- Include individuals on the committee with a range of disabilities, experiences, and diverse backgrounds.
- Define leadership roles, term lengths, meeting procedures, and decision-making processes to ensure roles are clear and concise.
- Maintain a positive and durable relationship with local government officials.

- Host a listening session, town hall meeting, or take a survey to hear directly from residents with disabilities.
- Host meetings/ townhalls in locations that are accessible to people with disabilities and are located close to public transportation. To create an inclusive environment for all, consider having American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters present, allowing everyone to participate.
- Ensure committee meeting announcements and communications are accessible in multiple communication formats, including email, web, and when appropriate, ASL video. You may wish to include a meeting accommodation statement with your announcement. The following statement is an example only:  
*Notice of Assistance at Public Meetings-* The Committee will provide Communication Access Real-time Translation (CART) and American Sign Language Interpretation for this meeting. Persons with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and who may need assistance, such as materials in an alternate format, contact [insert contact] at least five (5) business days prior to the meeting.
- Commit to transparency and consistency by following open meeting guidelines and having regularly scheduled meetings. Consider webcasting your meetings or broadcasting them on your public access television station. If you do this, be sure to include real-time captioning and/or ASL interpreters in the camera shot.
- Collaborate with local nonprofits, businesses, schools, and faith communities to expand your reach and create partnerships within the community.

## Building a Strong and Balanced Committee

Appointing the right people to serve on your committee is essential. Look for individuals who are passionate about access, have lived experience with a disability, or bring professional expertise in relevant fields. Not all committees have their members appointed—some LCs require formal applications and government approval, while others select members independently.

Your local government's staff liaison or ADA coordinator can explain compliance with local procedures. In some communities, this may be a city clerk, a mayor's office representative, or a county staff member who manages board and

commission appointments. These individuals can help explain your LC's specific requirements, application procedures, and approval steps.

"Ex officio" members, defined as those who serve by virtue of their position, such as local public or non-profit agency representatives, can also offer valuable insights and help ensure alignment between government operations and committee goals. They can provide continuity and institutional knowledge even when appointed members change. While ex officio members usually do not vote, their subject matter expertise and connections can be invaluable to the committee's work. To add an ex officio member to your LC, reach out to a representative from the relevant agency or organization and formally request their participation.

Consider the following when looking for members to serve on your local committee:

- Appoint people with different disabilities (i.e., person who is blind, deaf, has mental-illness, autism or intellectual developmental disabilities self-advocate, physical or mobility) by prioritizing the appointment of people with disabilities as voting members. Ensure you have appointees from various areas of your community, including individuals with professional disability backgrounds. Your enabling ordinance or committee bylaws may specify if a majority of the members must be individuals with a disability.
- Include key stakeholders by considering representatives from aging services, healthcare, public transportation, emergency management, community rehabilitation providers, architects and engineers, the business community, and education.
- Clarify roles by making sure appointed and ex officio members understand expectations and responsibilities.
- Foster a culture of respect by encouraging collaboration, equal participation, and ongoing learning.

### Recommended Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities for Local Committee Members

When identifying potential LC members, remember that having the most qualified members will make your committee more effective in the long run. Below are examples of competencies that can help your LC succeed.

- Ability to lead small groups to help committees reach goals collaboratively
- Good oral and written communication skills, including public speaking skills
- Understanding of Robert's Rules of Parliamentary Procedure
- Ability to develop goals, plans, and objectives to meet the needs of your residents with disabilities

- Ability to identify, develop, and maintain effective partnerships with disability stakeholder organizations
- Knowledge of state and federal disability laws
- Knowledge of State of Texas agencies, programs, and services for Texans with disabilities

GCPD recommends that strong consideration be given to the appointment of interested disability professionals as members or ex officios who have a leadership role in local disability services or stakeholder organizations. These representatives can help leverage their organizations' resources to work more effectively towards your LC's goals and objectives. A partial list of examples of established organizations includes:

- [American Council of the Blind of Texas](#)
- [The Arc of Texas](#) local chapter
- [Education Service Centers and Special Education experts](#)
- [Your local Center for Independent Living](#)
- A professional or self-advocate from your county Intellectual / Developmental Disability Authority (LIDDA)
- [Your local mental health authority](#)
- [Easter Seals](#)
- [Goodwill Industries](#)
- [Hearing Loss Association of America - Texas Chapters](#)
- [National Federation of the Blind of Texas \(NFBT\)](#)
- [Texas Association of the Deaf](#)
- [Texas Association of Parents and Educators of the Deaf](#)
- A parent representative from [Texas Parent to Parent](#)
- [Disabled veterans service organizations](#) like the Texas Paralyzed Veterans
- [Vocational Rehabilitation Program](#) (TWC)

## Committee Staff Liaisons: Leveraging Expertise on Title II of the ADA

Behind every effective LC is a thoughtful partnership with city or county staff. Whether it is a designated ADA Coordinator, assistant city clerk, or a staff liaison assigned to the committee, these professionals play a vital role in turning recommendations into results.

Their support helps bridge the gap between the committee's work and day-to-day government operations.

### How Staff Liaisons Add Value

- Providing policy insight to help the committee understand the context of city/county processes and timelines

- Ensuring follow-through by assisting with documenting recommendations, sharing updates, and tracking progress
- Connecting with departments to facilitate communication between the committee and city offices (planning, transportation, parks, etc.)
- Supporting meeting logistics by handling agendas, public notices, virtual access, and ADA compliance for committee meetings

When committees and staff liaisons work as partners, local governments become more inclusive, responsive, and effective.

## Promoting Disability Awareness in Your Community

Committees can serve as educators and advocates within their communities, helping raise visibility and promote inclusion year-round. Awareness is the foundation of change. Your committee can play a key role in helping your community understand disability, not just as a legal category, but as a part of human diversity.

Use this platform to shift mindsets, challenge stereotypes, and celebrate the contributions of people with disabilities.

### Ideas for Raising Awareness

- **Employee training:** Your city or county committee members may serve as a resource to train city or county employees on how to provide better customer service to people with disabilities. This can be part of new employee orientation or a department-level training on accessibility and disability awareness. Committees can assist by developing training modules, facilitating guest speakers with lived experience, or creating practical guides for frontline staff to ensure policies are applied consistently.
- **Awards and recognition programs:** Use these to acknowledge local employers for their leadership in recruiting, hiring, and retaining people with disabilities. Many local committees plan and hold employment awards programs during National Disability Employment Awareness Month in October. These celebrations can be either a short agenda item that occurs during a city council meeting when the mayor issues proclamations and other ceremonial observances, or a public awards program at a conference center or other public venue. City press releases highlighting success stories in local media or at public events reinforces the value of inclusive employment practices and encourages other organizations to follow suit.
- **Public Service Announcements (PSAs):** Identify opportunities for your city or county public information office to create PSAs addressing community-wide challenges, such as accessible parking, transit options, or emergency preparedness. LCs can provide guidance on messaging that resonates with



people with disabilities. When creating disability PSAs ensure accessibility features like captioning, ASL interpretation, and plain language are included.

- **Effective communication:** Work with city leadership to model effective communication with people with disabilities, including advocating for ASL interpreters during meetings and ensuring all broadcasts include captioning. LCs can provide practical recommendations for meeting protocols, assistive technology, and outreach methods to reach diverse disability communities.
  - **Public hearings:** Use your city or county board to host a public hearing on updating your municipal ADA transition plan. Engaging residents in this process helps ensure that updates reflect real community needs and fosters transparency in decision-making
  - **Budget allocation guidance:** Use your LC to guide your government body on preparing your annual budget and how to best allocate limited funds to maximize accessibility for public facilities like parks, libraries, and other public infrastructure. LCs can prioritize projects based on community input, accessibility audits, and cost-effectiveness, ensuring that resources are invested where they will create the most meaningful improvements.
- Disability proclamations and ceremonies:** Public recognition sends a powerful message that people with disabilities are a valued part of our community.

## Common Opportunities for Recognition

Your local committee can plan observances around national and state disability awareness events throughout the year. Use these occasions to highlight local inclusion efforts and issue proclamations. Refer to the Disability Awareness Calendar in Appendix B for ideas and timing.

## Ways to Get Involved

- Draft and present a city or county proclamation at the city council or county commissioner's court meeting or at another appropriate public event related to the proclamation. Identify local disability stakeholders to receive the proclamation, including the chair or members of your local committee.
- Host events to bring people with disabilities together
- Organize a recognition ceremony for local disability advocates or employers
- Include disability perspectives in broader civic celebrations

Public celebrations help create more understanding of disabilities, break stigmas, and inspire future leaders. Using the prestige of the mayor's office to highlight the significant contributions of people with disabilities in your community can create positive change in areas of employment, education, and community access. LCs can help draft proclamation language, suggest honorees, or organize community

events to coincide with these observances, increasing public engagement and visibility. (A calendar of the most common disability awareness month observances can be found in the appendix.)

As your committee grows in confidence and experience, it can move from community awareness efforts to shaping broader policy goals.

## Providing Strategic Direction: Turning Vision into Action

Local committees can do more than respond to issues. They can help set the direction for a more accessible future. By offering input on strategic plans, capital improvements, policy updates, and program design, your LC becomes a valued thought partner in community development.

The goal is to integrate disability inclusion into long-term planning and not treat it as an afterthought.

### How to Provide Strategic Input

- Request to review city or county strategic plans
- Offer comments on bond packages or infrastructure priorities
- Recommend accessibility goals or performance measures
- Share community feedback from residents with disabilities
- Track emerging issues that intersect with disability, such as aging populations, mental health, and workforce participation
- Schedule an annual meeting between the disability advisory commission and your mayor, city manager, county judge, or county administrator to provide better alignment and strategic direction for the LC.

Even one well-timed recommendation can shift a project toward greater accessibility and inclusion. Additionally, the LC should hold an annual work session outside of its regular meeting to review their past year's accomplishments, which can then be provided in an annual report to the city council. This working session can also help set strategic goals for the upcoming year.

## Closing Message

Congratulations on taking steps to build a more accessible and responsive local government. This handbook is only the beginning, and the real work starts with the people, partnerships, and passion your LC brings to the table.

Progress doesn't require perfection; it only needs persistence and purpose. For questions or technical assistance, contact GCPD at [gcpd@gov.texas.gov](mailto:gcpd@gov.texas.gov) or visit [www.gov.texas.gov/disabilities](http://www.gov.texas.gov/disabilities).

## Appendix A: Templates

To help you get started, GCPD has provided templates to help you with your LC needs. They offer a starting point and should be developed and implemented with your local elected officials and city or county clerk or secretary as appropriate.

*Note to users: These templates are provided as customizable examples. Local governments should review them with your legal or administrative staff before adoption.*

### Committee Formation Resolution Template

[City/County Name] Resolution No. [X]

A RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH A LOCAL COMMITTEE ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

WHEREAS people with disabilities are valued members of our community whose perspectives and needs must be considered in all areas of public life;

WHEREAS the [City/County Name] recognizes the importance of advancing equity, accessibility, and inclusion in government planning programs and services;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the [City/County Name] hereby establishes the [Official Committee Name] to advise elected officials and staff on policies, programs, and practices affecting people with disabilities.

The Committee shall:

- Meet at least [monthly]
- Provide written recommendations and reports to [City Council/County Commissioners]
- Include up to [X] appointed voting members and [Y] ex officio members
- Be supported by a staff liaison appointed by [Mayor/City Manager/County Administrator]

ADOPTED this [Date] by the [City Council/County Commissioners Court].

## Member Application Template

### Local Committee on People with Disabilities: Application for Appointment

The [City of/County of] does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, or disability in the appointment of committee members.

Full Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

1. Do you have a disability as defined under the ADA that significantly limits one or more major life abilities?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Prefer not to say

2. Briefly describe why you are interested in serving on this committee.

3. What knowledge, skills, and abilities would you bring to your appointment to this committee, including specific knowledge of disability policy?

4. Are you available to attend [monthly] meetings at the XX meeting time on the XX date of the month until XX-XX?

5. What, if any, accommodations would you require to participate in these meetings?

(You may include your resume and professional references to support your application to this committee.)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

For questions or assistance with completing this application, contact your city/county's clerk office.

## Bylaws Template

### ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this committee shall be the [City/County Name] Committee on People with Disabilities (hereinafter referred to as “the Committee”).

### ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

The purpose of the Committee is to advise [ the City Council/County Commissioners Court] on policies, programs, and practices that promote accessibility, inclusion, and further opportunities for people with disabilities to lead full and equal lives of independence, productivity, and self-determination in [City/County Name].

### ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

#### Section 1. Composition

The Committee shall consist of up to [X] appointed members, the majority of whom shall be individuals with disabilities or immediate family members. The Committee may also include non-voting ex officio members who represent key departments or agencies, and nonprofit organizations that substantially serve people with disabilities in the community.

#### Section 2. Appointment and Terms

Members shall be appointed by the [Mayor/County Judge] or by the city council/county commissioner for each single-member district (alternatively, members may be appointed at large throughout the community), and confirmed by [Council/Commissioners], serving staggered [2- or 3-year] terms. Members may serve no more than [two/three] consecutive terms. There shall be no term limit for ex officio members.

#### Section 3. Resignation and Removal

A member may resign in writing. The Committee may recommend removal for members who miss more than [3] meetings in a calendar year without notice and an approved absence.

### ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS

#### Section 1. Officers

Officers shall include a Chair and Vice Chair, elected annually by majority vote of the Committee or appointed by the mayor/county judge.

## Section 2. Duties

- **\*\*Chair\*\***: Presides at meetings, sets agendas with staff, and input from committee members.
- **\*\*Vice Chair\*\***: Assists the Chair and serves in their absence.

## ARTICLE V – MEETINGS

### Section 1. Schedule

The Committee shall meet at least monthly and may hold special meetings/work sessions as needed. All meetings shall comply with the [Open Meetings Act](#).

### Section 2. Quorum

A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of appointed members.

### Section 3. Public Access

All meetings shall be open to the public and comply with [Open Meetings Act or local law]. Reasonable accommodations will be provided upon request (municipality should develop its own ADA reasonable accommodation statement for public meeting notifications).

## ARTICLE VI – COMMITTEES

The Committee may establish subcommittees or working groups as needed, with membership open to non-Committee participants where appropriate.

## ARTICLE VII – AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of members present at a regular meeting, provided written notice of the proposed changes is given at least [10] days in advance.

## ARTICLE VIII – STAFF SUPPORT

The [City Council/County Commissioners Court] shall provide staff support, including scheduling, communications, and maintaining records of meetings and actions (the city's ADA coordinator may be the most ideal staff member for this role).

## ARTICLE IX – NONDISCRIMINATION

The Committee shall operate in a manner free from discrimination based on disability, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, or any other protected class.

These bylaws shall be filed and retained with the city clerk/county clerk's office.



## Meeting Agenda Template

[Committee Name]

Regular Meeting Agenda

[Date], [Time]

[Location or Zoom Link]

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call / Introductions
3. Approval of Minutes
4. Approval of Committee Member Absences
5. Public Comments (limit: 3 minutes per speaker)
6. Staff Liaison Report
7. Old Business
8. New Business
  - [Topic 1]
  - [Topic 2]
9. Ex Officio Reports
10. Committee Member Open Forum / Announcements
11. Adjournment

Next Meeting: [Date & Time]

To request an ADA accommodation, contact [ Staff Name, Title, Phone, Email]  
within (XX) days before the meeting.

## Proclamation Template

### Proclamation

WHEREAS, people with disabilities are vital members of the [City/County Name] community, contributing to every area of public life; and

WHEREAS, October is recognized nationally as Disability Employment Awareness Month, honoring the achievements of workers with disabilities, past and present; and

WHEREAS, the [City Council/Mayor's Office/County Commissioners Court] reaffirms its commitment to policies that support equity, opportunity, and full inclusion;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, [Mayor/County Judge Name], do hereby proclaim the month of October as:

Disability Employment Awareness Month

in [City/County Name] and encourage all residents to recognize the value of inclusive workplaces and the talents of people with disabilities.

Signed this [Date].

[Mayor or County Judge's Name]

[Title]

## Appendix B: Disability Awareness Calendar

Use this calendar to plan events and proclamations throughout the year that align with national and state observances. For ideas on proclamation language, visit our website at <https://gov.texas.gov/organization/disabilities/disability-proclamations>.

### **January**

National Braille Literacy Month

### **February**

International Epilepsy Day

### **March**

Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

Brain Injury Awareness Month

### **April**

Autism Acceptance Month

Fair Housing Month

Limb Loss and Limb Difference Awareness Month

### **May**

Global Accessibility Awareness Day

Mental Health Awareness Month

ALS Awareness Month

### **June**

National ALS Awareness Month

National PTSD Awareness Month

Deafblind Awareness Week

### **July**

Disability Pride Month

Americans with Disabilities Act Anniversary

### **August**

International Assistance Dog Week

### **September**

National Rehabilitation Awareness Week

Deaf Awareness Week and Month

National Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month

**October**

National Disability Employment Awareness Month

Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Day

National Down Syndrome Awareness Month

White Cane Day

Disability History Awareness Month

**November**

National Epilepsy Awareness Month

National Family Caregivers Month

**December**

International Day of Persons with Disabilities

For examples of proclamation language, see GCPD's proclamation page.

## Appendix C: Statewide Disability Resources

See the GCPD website for additional disability resources at <https://gov.texas.gov/organization/disabilities/resources>.

Resource	Contact Information	Notes
Southwest ADA Center	(800) 949-4232 or (713) 797-7171 <a href="mailto:adainfo@swadacenter.org">adainfo@swadacenter.org</a>	Regional ADA technical assistance & training (Region 6 – TX)
Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation — Elimination of Architectural Barriers / Technical Assistance	(800) 803-9202 or (512) 463-6599 <a href="mailto:techinfo@tdlr.texas.gov">techinfo@tdlr.texas.gov</a>	ADA/TAS plan reviews, technical assistance
Texas Parks & Wildlife Department Accessibility Coordinator	(512) 389-4800 or (800) 792-1112 <a href="mailto:accessibility@tpwd.texas.gov">accessibility@tpwd.texas.gov</a>	General accessibility and park accommodation inquiries
Office of Court Administration	(512) 463-1625 <a href="mailto:courtaccess@txcourts.gov">courtaccess@txcourts.gov</a>	ADA accommodations and policy support for Texas courts
Texas Secretary of State — Elections / Accessible Voting	(800) 252-VOTE (8683); (512) 463-5650 <a href="mailto:elections@sos.texas.gov">elections@sos.texas.gov</a>	Information on accessible polling and mail ballots
Texas Department of Transportation Guidance — Pedestrian Right of Way/ ADA	(512) 416-3000 <a href="mailto:CST_ADA_INSP@txdot.gov">CST_ADA_INSP@txdot.gov</a>	Guidance on accessible pedestrian infrastructure
Department of Information Resources	<a href="mailto:statewideaccessibility@dir.texas.gov">statewideaccessibility@dir.texas.gov</a> Website: <a href="https://dir.texas.gov/">https://dir.texas.gov/</a>	Digital accessibility standards and policy guidance
U.S. Department of Justice — ADA Information Line	(800) 514-0301 (Voice) / (833) 610-1264 (TTY) Website: <a href="http://www.ada.gov">www.ada.gov</a>	Federal ADA technical assistance
Texas State Independent Living Council	(512) 371-7353 <a href="mailto:info@txsilc.org">info@txsilc.org</a> Website: <a href="https://www.txsilc.org">https://www.txsilc.org</a>	Coordinates statewide independent living planning

Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities	512-437-5432 <a href="mailto:tcdd@tcdd.texas.gov">tcdd@tcdd.texas.gov</a>  Website: <a href="https://tcdd.texas.gov">https://tcdd.texas.gov</a>	Grant funding and advocacy for people with developmental disabilities
Texas Department of Public Safety	512-424-2600 <a href="mailto:driver.improvement@dps.texas.gov">driver.improvement@dps.texas.gov</a>	Adaptive driver licensing and vehicle modification info
Texas Division of Emergency Management – Disability Integration	512-424-2208 <a href="mailto:disability.integration@tdem.texas.gov">disability.integration@tdem.texas.gov</a>	Inclusive emergency planning and disaster response