



Queens County District Attorney's Office

Local Law 12 of 2023

Proposed Five-Year Accessibility Plan

2024-2028

# Contents

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- Contents ..... 2
- Local Law 12 of 2023 5-Year Accessibility Plan..... 3
- General ..... 4
- Mission and Background of Agency..... 5
- Executive Summary..... 5
- Accessibility Statement..... 6
- Agency Plan ..... 6
  - Physical Access ..... 6
  - Digital Access ..... 7
  - Programmatic Access..... 7
  - Effective Communications..... 8
  - Workplace Inclusion..... 9
- Methodology ..... 10
- Appendix 1 QDA Website Accessibility Statement ..... 11
  - Conformance Status ..... 11
  - Feedback ..... 11
- Appendix 2 Disability Access Page..... 12
  - Notice of Rights ..... 12
  - Effective Communication ..... 12
  - Modifications to Policies and Procedures ..... 13
  - Grievance Procedure ..... 13

# Local Law 12 of 2023

## 5-Year Accessibility Plan

Local Law 12 of 2023 (“Local Law 12”), codified as section 23-1004 of the NYC Administrative Code, requires agencies to prepare and publish 5-year accessibility plans (The Plan) in consultation with the Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD).

The plan must include at minimum:

1. The steps the agency is currently taking and will be taking over the next 5 years to ensure that the agency’s workplace, services, programs, and activities are accessible to and accommodating and inclusive of persons with disabilities; and
2. Information regarding ongoing projects and projects planned over the next 5 years that are related to improving physical, digital, and programmatic access, and effective communications for persons with disabilities, including, but not limited to:
  - a. any alterations or structural changes to facilities or premises that are owned and operated by the agency or contracted for use by the agency or otherwise under the agency’s jurisdiction;
  - b. any planned upgrades or investments in technology or tools that will improve accessibility within the agency or access to such agency’s services and programs; and,
  - c. any other steps the agency is taking or plans to take to make its programs and services more accessible to and inclusive of persons with disabilities. Budgetary information and timelines relating to such projects shall be included where practicable.

## General

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Under [Local Law 27 of 2016](#), City agencies are required to appoint a Disability Service Facilitator. The Disability Service Facilitator or "DSF" at each agency coordinates agency efforts to comply with and carry out the agency's responsibilities under the ADA and other federal, state, and local laws and regulations concerning access to agency programs and services by persons with disabilities.

These individuals are liaisons to New Yorkers with disabilities, connecting people with disabilities to City government.

Anyone who requires an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures to participate in a program, service, or activity of QDA should contact the Disability Service Facilitator listed below by mail, email, or telephone as soon as possible but no later than three (3) business days before the scheduled event or activity.

Tyear K. Middleton, Esq.  
Disability Service Facilitator  
Queens County District Attorney's Office  
80-02 Kew Gardens Rd.  
Kew Gardens, NY 11415  
[dsf@queensda.org](mailto:dsf@queensda.org)  
Voice Phone: 718-286-6508 (New York Relay: 711)

Other Resources:

- [Disability Access Form](#)
- [Website Accessibility Statement](#)
- [Notice of Rights and Grievance Procedure](#)

QDA's Chief Diversity/EEO Officer is responsible for preparing and updating QDA's Accessibility Plan. QDA's accessibility plan is publicly posted on the 5- Year Accessibility page of the [Queens DA's website](#).

Individuals may request a copy of this document in an accessible alternative format by contacting the DSF at [dsf@queensda.org](mailto:dsf@queensda.org) or 718-286-6000.

## Mission and Background of Agency

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QDA serves the second most populous county of the five New York City boroughs. District Attorney Melinda Katz has focused squarely on keeping the communities of Queens County safe while creating a more equitable criminal justice system. The office remains steadfast in efforts to investigate and prosecute those who commit crimes in our county while working with communities to ensure public safety. Under the leadership of DA Katz the office continues to advance the mission to create the safest and fairest borough in the city.

## Executive Summary

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QDA is committed in equity with both our workforce and community to ensure that QDA has a plan in place to remove barriers to accessing QDA's services while positioning our workforce to better serve Queens County. This plan will address the following areas:

1. Physical Access
2. Digital Access
3. Programmatic Access
4. Communications
5. Workplace Inclusion

The intention of the plan is to identify readily achievable barrier removals<sup>1</sup> to provide goods, services, programs, and activities sponsored by QDA to people with disabilities on an equal basis with the rest of the public. QDA looks forward to public comment on this proposed plan to assess feedback and implement changes, as needed.

A more thorough assessment will be required to identify effective long-term solutions and implementation strategies.<sup>2</sup> As such, this plan is iterative and will evolve to keep pace with accessibility standards and requirements.

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<sup>1</sup> Easily accomplishable and able to be carried out without much difficulty or expense.

<sup>2</sup> Barrier removal that is difficult now may be readily achievable in the future as finances and technology change.

# Accessibility Statement

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QDA is prepared to achieve greater accessibility throughout our office by evaluating our programs, policies, and procedures as we pursue our commitment to full inclusion.

## Agency Plan

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### Physical Access

QDA operates out of the following buildings:

#### DCAS Buildings

125-01 Queens Boulevard  
Kew Gardens, NY 11415

120-55 Queens Boulevard  
Kew Gardens, NY 11424

Family Justice Center  
126-02 82nd Avenue  
Kew Gardens, NY 11415

#### Leased Spaces

80-02 Kew Gardens Road  
Kew Gardens, NY 11415

126-06 Queens Boulevard  
Kew Gardens, NY 11415

DCAS is responsible for common areas in the City-owned buildings listed above. QDA is responsible to assess common areas in the leased spaces listed above and will work with landlords to address the findings of those assessments. QDA Operations Division is responsible for the agency-demised areas (the offices themselves).

QDA will do a self-assessment accessibility survey for our demised areas as well as any plans with respect to leased spaces. QDA will utilize this self-assessment to address access issues, including, where applicable, alterations or structural changes to facilities or premises, planned upgrades or investments in technology.

Please see DCAS's proposed plan for information on the common areas of the City-owned buildings.

**Access Issues:** All QDA locations follow the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) to ensure accessibility and physical access to our facilities. However, if you have had difficulty accessing QDA facilities, please contact our Disability Service Facilitator at [dsf@queensda.org](mailto:dsf@queensda.org)

## Actions:

- QDA will continue to work with service providers, community partners, and the public in identifying, developing, and sustaining inclusive opportunities for people with disabilities. (2024 - 2028)
- QDA plans to install additional induction loop and assistive listening systems throughout the office. (2024-2025)
- QDA plans to include additional braille signage where there is directional signage. (2024-2025)
- Operations Division, Community Partnerships, and the Disability Service Facilitator will share the responsibility to ensure the physical environment supports inclusive environments in our day-to-day operations and track progress on intended outcomes.

## Digital Access

**Access Issues:** QDA assesses the accessibility of its digital content through self-evaluation. QDA is dedicated to ensuring that our digital content is accessible to and usable by everyone. If you have suggesting for enhancing access to our digital content, please contact [dsf@queensda.org](mailto:dsf@queensda.org).

## Actions:

- QDA's website accessibility statement can be found on [our website](#).<sup>3</sup> We will continue to meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 Level AA for our web content. (2024 - 2028)
- QDA recently completed a wireless upgrade that includes supplementary Wi-Fi and a Guest Wireless network. (2024 - 2028)
- Information Technology Bureau and the Disability Service Facilitator will share the responsibility to ensure there are no barriers that prevent the interaction with or access to digital content by people with disabilities, or those with socio-economic restrictions on bandwidth and speed. Collectively, they will determine and track intended outcomes.

## Programmatic Access

**Access Issues:** QDA works diligently to ensure that our programs are held at spaces or conducted on virtual platforms that support accessibility for people that have mobility, vision, hearing, or cognitive impairments.

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<sup>3</sup> [Local Law 12 of 2023](#)

## Actions:

- Make accessibility guidance available to all staff to ensure they follow best practices when choosing a platform, fulfilling reasonable accommodation requests for ASL interpretation, Captioning, and obtaining documents in accessible formats. (2024-2028)
- Ensuring that all advertisements for virtual QDA programs include at least two methods to join the meeting. (2024-2028)
- Accessibility information on advertisements includes Information about the accessibility of the platform being used, accommodations that are being provided (ASL, Captioning, etc.), a point of contact to request accommodations including both a phone number and email address and a deadline to request accommodations, typically 72 hours before the meeting. (2024-2028)
- Community Partnerships, and the Disability Service Facilitator will share the responsibility of ensuring that advertising and other materials pertaining to public events include information regarding accessibility for people with disabilities<sup>4</sup>.

## Effective Communications

**Access Issues:** QDA recognizes that the population eligible for services includes individuals who are Limited English Proficient (LEP) and Deaf or Hard of Hearing (HOH). It is the goal of QDA to ensure meaningful access to our services for LEP and Deaf/HOH individuals. QDA adopts the following policy to ensure that LEP and Deaf/HOH persons can gain equal access to QDA services and communicate effectively with our office. QDA, upon request will provide appropriate aids and services leading to effective communication for qualified persons with disabilities so they can participate equally in QDA programs, services, and activities, including qualified sign language interpreters, documents in Braille, and other ways of making information and communications accessible to people who have speech, hearing, or vision disabilities.

## Actions:

- QDA has prepared a Language Access Plan (LAP) that explains how QDA provides services to the public with LEP and to individuals who are Deaf/HOH, now and in the future. Please access and download the [QDA Language Access Plan](#). (2024-2028)
- QDA tracks LEP or Deaf/HOH person 's language and need for interpreters in Case Tracking
- QDA follows the LAP protocol that if the individual is Deaf or Hard of Hearing, communicate with that individual using TTY or the VRS (Video Relay System). These modes of communication are for initial contact and other basic communication. In person

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<sup>4</sup> [Local Law 28 of 2016](#)



meeting with the LEP or Deaf/HOH person and an appropriate sign language interpreter is necessary for in depth conversations and extended service. (2024-2028)

- QDA's Language Access Coordinator is: Tyear K. Middleton, Chief Diversity/EEO Officer, [LAC@queensda.org](mailto:LAC@queensda.org). The Language Access Coordinator serves as the primary point of contact for implementing New York State Executive Law Section 202-a<sup>5</sup> and Local Law 30 of 2017<sup>6</sup>. Additionally, the LAP will be updated at least once every three years, be included in the QDA emergency preparedness response, and incorporated into all public communications. (2026)

## Workplace Inclusion

**Access Issues:** QDA wholeheartedly support and enforce the rights and protections afforded by the New York City EEO Policy, the City and State Human Rights Law, and all other relevant laws for all employees, applicants for employment, external contractors, consultants and agency partners, and members of the public served by our Agency.

### Actions:

- QDA observes all EEO mandates and works with dedication to support diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives.
- Managers, supervisors, and human resources personnel are required to report to the EEO Office any reasonable accommodation requests and needs that are received, observed, learned about, or suspected, so that the EEO Office may facilitate discussions, research appropriate accommodations, and assist with the resolution of the matter. (2024 -2028)
- Employees are provided with information on how to request workplace accommodations and access facilities, including access for individuals with disabilities. (2024 -2028)
- All staff participate in annual workplace harassment training. (2024 - 2028)
- All staff participate in training on Every Body Matters: EEO and Diversity & Inclusion, LGBTQIA+ Diversity & Inclusion training every two years. (2025, 2027)
- Managers/Supervisors participate in training on Structured Interview Training and Unconscious Bias training every two years. (2025, 2027)
- All Staff are scheduled to participate in Disability Awareness & Etiquette training. (2024, 2026)
- The Chief Diversity/EEO Officer supports inclusive environments in our day-to-day operations and tracks intended outcomes through the completion and Annual and Quarterly Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and EEO Reports.

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<sup>5</sup> [New York State Executive Law Section 202-a](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Local Law 30 of 2017](#)

## Methodology

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QDA will make every effort to comply with the Americans with Disability Act, Rehabilitation Act, the New York State Human Rights Law, and the New York City Human Rights Law that prohibit discrimination against people with disabilities in access to services. It is our goal to make all QDA environments accessible across people, routines, and activities.

QDA has identified the following goals to remove and prevent accessibility barriers in our efforts to achieve full accessibility.

1. Complete all Self-Assessment Surveys (Physical Access, Digital Access, Programmatic Access, Communications, and Workplace Inclusion) and review accessibility policies and procedures and update, where necessary.
2. Review public comments concerning this proposed plan and review and assess feedback to address the concerns from members of the public.
3. Solicit suggestions from employees on enhancing physical and digital accessibility for people with mobility, vision, hearing or cognitive impairments.

# Appendix 1

## QDA Website Accessibility Statement

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Queens County District Attorney's Office is dedicated to ensuring that their digital content is accessible to and usable by all New Yorkers. If you have come across an issue, please use the form below to tell us about it.

### Conformance Status

The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) defines requirements for designers and developers to improve accessibility for people with disabilities. It defines three levels of conformance: Level A, Level AA, and Level AAA. Our digital content is partially conformant with WCAG 2.1 level AA. Partially conformant means that some parts of the content do not fully conform to this accessibility standard.

### Feedback

We welcome your feedback on the accessibility of our digital content. Please let us know if you encounter accessibility issues by using the Website Accessibility Feedback Form below.

If you require reasonable accommodation accessing a particular program or service, please reach out to the QDA's Disability Services Facilitator at 718-286-6000 or [DSF@Queensda.Org](mailto:DSF@Queensda.Org).

## Appendix 2

### Disability Access Page

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Under [Local Law 27 of 2016](#), City agencies are required to appoint a Disability Service Facilitator. The Disability Service Facilitator or "DSF" at each agency coordinates agency efforts to comply with and carry out the agency's responsibilities under the ADA and other federal, state and local laws and regulations concerning access to agency programs and services by persons with disabilities.

These individuals are liaisons to New Yorkers with disabilities, connecting people with disabilities to City government.

Anyone who requires an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures to participate in a program, service, or activity of QDA should contact the Disability Service Facilitator listed below by mail, email or telephone as soon as possible but no later than three (3) business days before the scheduled event or activity.

Tyear K. Middleton  
Disability Service Facilitator  
Queens County District Attorney's Office  
80-02 Kew Gardens Rd.  
Kew Gardens, NY 11415  
[dsf@queensda.org](mailto:dsf@queensda.org)  
Voice Phone: 718-286-6508 (New York Relay: 711)

[Disability Access Form](#)

### Notice of Rights

The Queens County District Attorney's Office (QDA) does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the operation of its programs, services or activities and is committed to ensuring equal access for people with disabilities. Pursuant to the American with Disabilities Act and the New York State and New York City Human Rights Laws, individuals with disabilities are entitled to reasonable accommodations to enable them to participate in programs, services and activities.

### Effective Communication

QDA, upon request will provide appropriate aids and services leading to effective communication for qualified persons with disabilities so they can participate equally in QDA programs, services, and activities, including qualified sign language interpreters, documents in

Braille, and other ways of making information and communications accessible to people who have speech, hearing, or vision disabilities.

### **Modifications to Policies and Procedures**

QDA will make reasonable modifications to policies and procedures to ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to all programs, services, and activities of QDA. For example, individuals with service animals are welcome in all QDA offices open to the public, even where pets are generally prohibited.

The ADA does not require QDA to take any action that would fundamentally alter the nature of its programs or services or that would impose on it an undue financial or administrative burden. The QDA will not impose a surcharge to cover the cost of providing auxiliary aids/services or reasonable modifications of policy, for example retrieving items from locations that are open to the public but are not accessible to persons who use wheelchairs.

Questions, concerns, or requests for additional information may be directed to the Disability Service Facilitator listed above.

If you believe that you have been denied an auxiliary aid or service or a reasonable modification of policies or procedures in order to participate in programs, services or activities provided by QDA, please see QDA's Grievance Procedure below.

### **Grievance Procedure**

This grievance procedure may be used by any member of the public who wishes to file a grievance alleging discrimination on the basis of disability by QDA (not related to employment). Employment related complaints for employees and applicants for employment seeking a reasonable accommodation are covered under the [City of New York's Equal Employment Opportunity \(EEO\) Policy](#).

The grievance should be in writing and contain information about the alleged discrimination such as the name, address, and telephone number of the grievant, as well as the location, date, and description of the complaint or alleged violation of the ADA or other anti-discrimination law. Examples of discrimination include but are not limited to refusal to provide an American Sign Language interpreter, large print or Braille documents and real time captioning (also known as CART) when requested within a reasonable timeframe or failing to provide adequate information regarding accessibility for people with disabilities at public events.

Alternative means of filing grievances, such as in-person interviews or an audio recording of the grievance, may be made available, as needed, to persons with disabilities upon request.

The grievance should be submitted as soon as possible but no later than sixty (60) calendar days after the date of the alleged violation to:

Tyear K. Middleton  
Disability Service Facilitator  
Queens County District Attorney's Office  
80-02 Kew Gardens Rd.  
Kew Gardens, NY 11415  
Voice Phone: 718-286-6508 (New York Relay: 711)

### Grievance Procedure Form

Within thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of the grievance, the disability service facilitator will contact the grievant to discuss the grievance and any possible resolutions.

Within fifteen (15) calendar days of this contact with the grievant, the disability service facilitator will respond to the grievance in writing or, where appropriate, in a format accessible to the grievant, such as large print, Braille, or audio recording. This response will explain QDA's position and offer options for substantive resolution of the grievance, where applicable.

The grievant or the grievant's designee may appeal the decision by the disability service facilitator within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the response by mail or email to:

Queens County District Attorney  
125-01 Queens Blvd.  
Kew Gardens, NY 11415

### Appeal DSF Decision Form

The appeal should be submitted in writing. Alternative means of filing an appeal, such as an in-person interview or an audio recording of the grievance, may be made available for persons with disabilities upon request.

The QDA's response to the appeal will be provided to the grievant within sixty (60) days following receipt of the request for the appeal. All responses by QDA will be in writing or, where appropriate, in a format accessible to the grievant. All written grievances, appeals, and responses received in connection with a grievance made to QDA will be retained for at least three (3) years. This document is available in alternative formats, including large print, audio recording, and Braille, from the disability service facilitator upon request.