

**Commission for Accessibility
Meeting Agenda
Monday, December 8, 2025 5:00PM**

Via Zoom (access information below). Should someone need a special accommodation in order to participate in this meeting please contact Tony Phillips, Town ADA Coordinator at 203 807-4524.

Policy: Commission for Accessibility meetings will be conducted under Roberts Rules of Order and all participants are expected to conduct themselves with dignity and treat all those present with respect, empathy and civility.

Commission for Accessibility Chairman, Don Ciota, is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting hosted by Tony Philips, Town ADA Coordinator.

FOR THE PUBLIC

You are invited to register for a Zoom webinar!

When: Dec 8, 2025 05:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Topic: Commission for Accessibility 12/8/2025

Register in advance for this webinar:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_tTpbQhh7SaKsJsw7zzhevw

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

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5:00 PM. Call to Order

Public Comments

Approval of Minutes: November 10, 2025

Compendium of 2025 Commission Topics

2026 Meeting Dates:

Jan 12

Feb 9

March 9

April 13

May 11

June 8

July ---

Aug ---

Sept 14

Oct 19

Nov 9

Dec 7

Adjourn

Minutes prepared by Don Ciota

**Commission for Accessibility
Meeting Minutes
Monday, January 13, 2025**

**Artificial Intelligence enhancing Education and Accessibility
for individuals with Disabilities**

- 1. AI Assistive Technologies:**
- 2. Real-Time Captioning and Transcription:**
- 3. Personalized Learning:**
- 4. Environmental Control:**
- 5. Communication Aids:**
- 6. Content Accessibility:**

February 10, 2025

Robert's Rules of Order & ADA-Accessible Voting.

March 10, 2025

**Ridgefield Public Schools 2nd Transition Fair, March 13.
Jessica DiValentino, RPS Transition Coordinator**

April 7, 2025

Review of ADA requirements for local governments.

Guide to Disability Rights Laws

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

ADA Title I: Employment

ADA Title II: State and Local Government Activities

ADA Title II: Public Transportation

ADA Title III: Public Accommodations

ADA Title IV: Telecommunications Relay Services

Telecommunications Act

Fair Housing Act

Air Carrier Access Act

Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

Rehabilitation Act

May 12, 2025

Mechanical Chemical Sensitivity – Public-Health Aspects

U.S. Agencies: ADA, HUD, OSHA

MCS: “Seeds of Health”

Self-Identification for Persons with Disabilities

NYS ID

Hidden Disabilities Sunflower

Memorial Day Parade

June 9, 2025

Memorial Day Parade

Yellow Bill Envelope

ADA Employment - Enforcement

September 8, 2025

ADA AND EMERGING LEGAL LANDSCAPE

GOAL: TO EXPLAIN HOW DISABILITY LAW IS ADAPTING TO AI CHALLENGES.

**Title I –
Employment**

Employers must ensure
AI hiring tools do not
screen out qualified

A company uses AI to scan video interviews. The
AI favors candidates with steady eye contact and
animated facial expressions, **disadvantaging**

	individuals with disabilities.	neurodivergent applicants (e.g., individuals with autism).
Title II – State & Local Governments	AI systems used by governments must be accessible and non-discriminatory.	A city implements an AI chatbot to handle public service requests. It does not support screen readers , blocking blind residents from accessing essential services.
Title III – Public Accommodations	Businesses offering goods/services online must ensure AI-powered platforms are accessible.	A bank uses an AI-driven mobile app for loan applications, but voice navigation doesn't work for blind users , violating Title III obligations.

2. Recent Federal Guidance

Agencies are clarifying how existing disability laws apply to AI.

Agency	Guidance	Example in Practice
EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission)	<i>2022 Guidance:</i> Employers must ensure AI tools used in hiring and evaluation don't unlawfully screen out individuals with disabilities .	A tech company uses an AI résumé screener that automatically rejects applicants with gaps in employment history , penalizing people who took time off for a disability or medical treatment.
DOJ (Department of Justice)	<i>2022 Statement:</i> Digital tools and algorithms used by public services must comply with ADA standards.	A state unemployment benefits portal relies on an AI identity verification system that cannot verify people with speech disabilities who use communication devices.
HHS (Health and Human Services)	Warned that AI in healthcare must comply with Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act and disability laws.	An AI-based triage tool assigns lower priority for organ transplants to people with intellectual disabilities , resulting in discriminatory care decisions.

3. Section 508 & Rehabilitation Act Updates

Federal agencies and contractors are legally required to provide accessible technology, including AI systems.

Scenario	Example
Federal agency deploys AI-driven service.	The Department of Veterans Affairs launches an AI scheduling system for telehealth appointments. The interface is not compatible with

Scenario	Example
Contractor providing AI technology to the government.	screen readers , preventing blind veterans from booking services independently. A contractor develops a smart benefits application platform for Social Security. Under Section 508, they must ensure WCAG 2.1 AA compliance, including full accessibility for people with mobility or vision disabilities.

4. Pending and Proposed Legislation

Lawmakers are considering **new rules** to regulate AI specifically.

Proposed Law / State Action	Example of Impact
Algorithmic Accountability Act (Federal, pending reintroduction)	Would require companies to audit AI systems for bias, including disability discrimination. <i>Example:</i> An e-learning company using AI to determine student performance would need to test for bias against neurodivergent students .
NYC Local Law 144 (Enacted 2023)	Requires bias audits of automated hiring tools used by NYC employers. <i>Example:</i> A Manhattan law firm must test its AI résumé screener to ensure it does not disproportionately reject applicants with disabilities , such as those with speech-related disorders flagged by automated phone screenings.
California AI Regulation Proposal	Would impose transparency rules on companies developing AI, including disclosure of accessibility features. <i>Example:</i> An AI mental health app would need to publicly explain how it accommodates users with visual impairments .

Sept 8, 2025

Public Comment

ADA and Disability Law in a Time of Fiscal Uncertainty

Core Principles

- **ADA Protections:** Employment (Title I), Government Services (Title II), Public Accommodations (Title III).
 - **Non-Negotiable:** Fiscal constraints do not erase ADA obligations—access and nondiscrimination remain required.
 - **Undue Burden/Readily Achievable:** Only limited flexibility; courts rarely accept “budget limits” as an excuse.
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Fiscal Pressures

- **Public Sector:** Shrinking budgets slow infrastructure upgrades and accessible transit.
 - **Private Sector:** Small businesses struggle to balance survival with compliance.
 - **Nonprofits/Schools:** Staff shortages and service reductions affect disability support.
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Opportunities in Constraint

- **Technology & Innovation:** AI, telehealth, and hybrid participation reduce barriers at lower cost.
 - **Universal Design:** Builds inclusion upfront, lowering future costs.
 - **Collaboration:** Public-private partnerships, disability community engagement.
 - **Incentives:** Federal tax credits and grants support accessibility projects.
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Risks of Backsliding

- **Cuts Hit Hardest:** Persons with disabilities lose critical supports first.
 - **Legal Liability:** Noncompliance lawsuits may increase.
 - **Reputation & Ethics:** Organizations risk being seen as regressive or exclusionary.
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Strategies for Moving Forward

- Prioritize high-impact, low-cost measures.
 - Use phased compliance and digital solutions.
 - Engage disability communities in planning.
 - Advocate to keep accessibility central in budget decisions.
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Bottom Line

Fiscal uncertainty **does not suspend disability rights**. It is an opportunity to innovate, collaborate, and ensure equity remains at the center of decision-making.

November 10, 2025

**Letter Preparation to Elected Officials
Board of Selectman
The Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

CT Consent Decrees