



# Webinar – June 2026: Festival and Event Accessibility



Addressing  
Accessibility  
Through  
Partnership

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Empowerment starts with YOU!



# **Webinar Series:** **Wisconsin ADA Coordinators Association**

## **Disclaimer**

This webinar hosted by the Wisconsin ADA Coordinators Association is not meant to be legal advice. Although we may refer to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or similar state and local laws, this presentation is provided as an educational resource. Our goal is to give public entities a framework for accessibility and providing accommodations or modifications. We encourage attendees to seek guidance about their obligations from their own legal counsel.



# About Your Presenter



## **Jason Beloungy**

Executive Director, Access to Independence

President, National Council on Independent Living

Chair, Beyond Compliance Subcommittee, Downtown Madison Inc

# About Access to Independence



Access to Independence, Inc. is a disability-led and run organization that provides advocacy, resources, and services to people of any age, any disability, and any identity in Columbia, Dane, Dodge and Green counties in south-central Wisconsin.



## Services Include

- Information and Referral
- Advocacy (individual and systemic)
- Peer Support
- Skills Training
- Institutional Transition and Diversion
- Post-Secondary Youth Transition
- Youth Services
- Assistive Technology
- Home Accessibility Assessments
- Community Impact
  - Education
  - Collaboration
  - Technical Assistance

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# Building accessible and inclusive communities

Good accessibility is good business! Our services build effective strategies to promote accessibility in community settings. More people with disabilities are living in the community than ever before, and populations are growing older every day. It's important to address accessibility and inclusion of people with disabilities, to avoid losing customers and a segment of the workforce, or facing legal repercussions. Oh, and it's the right thing to do.



## Website Accessibility

A website accessibility evaluation and report will identify barriers and recommend accessibility solutions.



## Accessibility Evaluation

We provide evaluations and recommendations for accessibility in built environments as well as designs and blueprints.



## Event Accessibility

Evaluations of small-to-large events to identify barriers in digital spaces, and the physical spaces in and around the events. Support is also available for event planners.



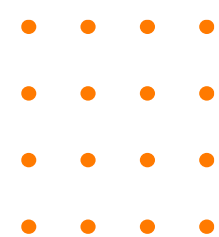
## Accessibility/Inclusion Training

Virtual and on-site training for management and employees, ensuring disability-friendly policies and practices, leading to an inclusive environment.

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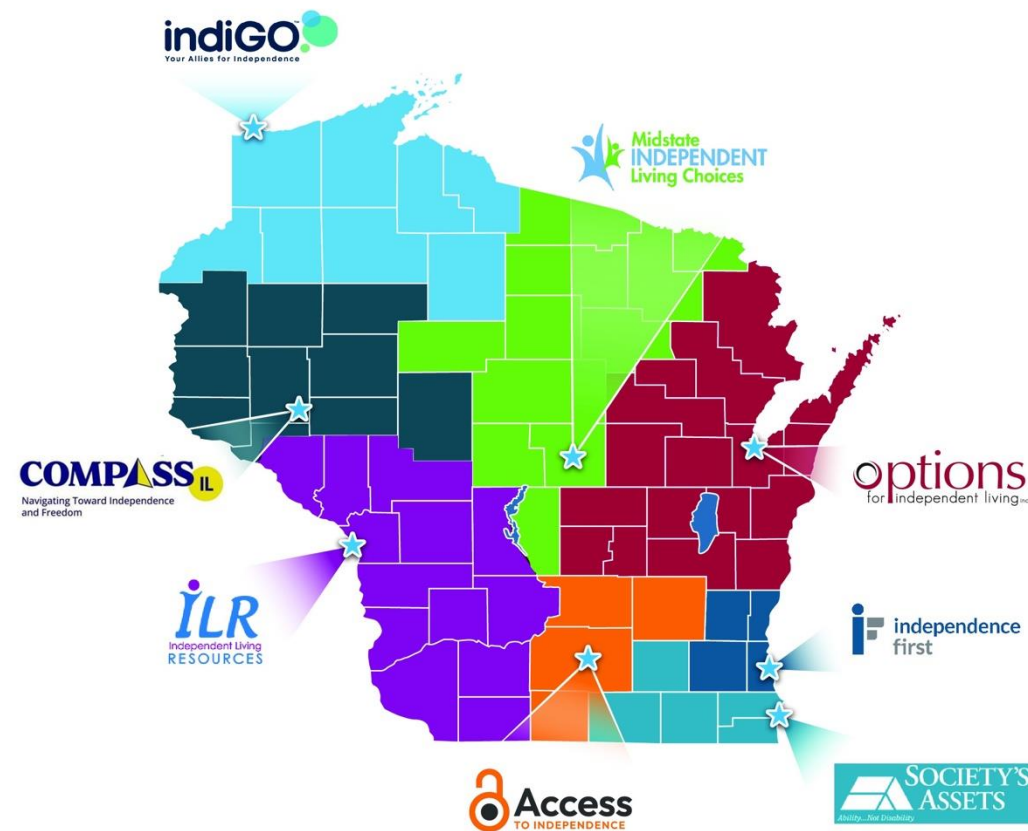
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# WI Independent Living Network



There are 8 Independent Living Centers in Wisconsin

- Access to Independence (Madison)
- Compass IL (Menomonie)
- Independence First (Milwaukee)
- Independent Living Resources (La Crosse)
- IndiGO (Superior)
- Options for Independent Living (Green Bay)
- Society's Assets (Racine)





# About Downtown Madison Inc



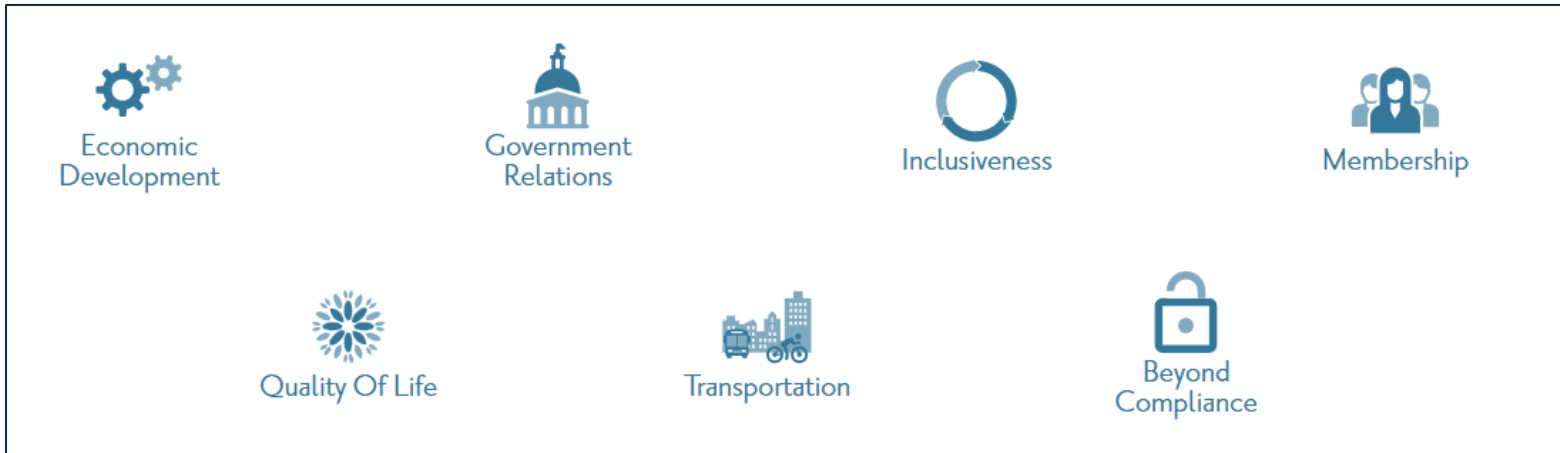
Downtown Madison, Inc. (DMI) is an advocacy organization that exists for and because of its over 570 members. DMI represents the interests of businesses, residents, and employees to ensure that downtown Madison is a great place to live, work, play, and visit.

# DMI's Work and Impact



DMI's civic work is accomplished through its standing committees. DMI committees tackle local policy issues and projects in an effort to strengthen and advance the health and vitality of downtown Madison.

## DMI Committees

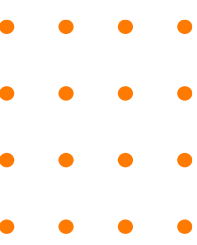




# Beyond Compliance Subcommittee

- In 2018, DMI created a taskforce as part of its Inclusiveness Committee to address concerns with accessibility in downtown Madison.
- The Goal?  
A fully accessible and inclusive downtown for people of any type of disability, of all ages.
- The taskforce brought together private businesses, nonprofits, and members of local government – as well as people with disabilities, to work toward the goal.
- In 2024, DMI's Board of Directors elevated the taskforce to a regular subcommittee, giving it more stability and support.
- Each year, the Subcommittee addresses accessibility through a project.

# Accessibility Report



- To understand the need, the taskforce's first project was a disability community survey to identify the most prevalent barriers to downtown Madison.
- In 2018, nearly 100 people responded to the survey, and the data was analyzed and released in 2019 through the Downtown Madison Accessibility Report.



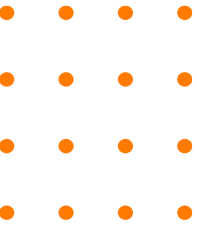
## **Downtown Madison Accessibility Report**

Downtown Madison Inc. (DMI) - Beyond Compliance Task Force



**February 2019**

# Accessible Outdoor Dining



- The City of Madison created its outdoor dining program, referred to as the Streatery program, in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- The taskforce determined that local businesses needed more guidance on accessibility.
- A guide was produced in 2020, followed by a series of social media videos in 2024.



## ACCESSIBILITY *IS* HOSPITALITY

### YOUR STREATERY INCLUSIVENESS QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Good access is good business. Increase your customer base when setting up your streatery space while providing access for all! Guests with disabilities, and those who dine with them, will greatly appreciate the attention to detail when creating an enjoyable, inclusive dining experience. Use this ADA-inspired best practices guide for quick reference when designing space and serving customers.

#### SIGNAGE

- Is your directional signage to the entrance, accessible pathways, restrooms, etc., printed in high contrast and large print?

#### ENTRANCE

- Can any customer get into your streatery?
- Is the entrance at least 36" wide?
- Is the host stand or check-in in a logical and accessible location?

#### PATHS OF TRAVEL

- Getting in and around your streatery is important. Are paths of travel around self-serve stations, ordering & pick-up counters, and seating areas at least 36" wide?
- Is there 36" between tables, especially when chairs are pulled out and occupied?
- Are pathways clear of sandwich boards, planters, loose power cords, and other tripping hazards, no matter how minimal they may seem?
- For outdoor dining at street level, is there a curb cut or ramp nearby?
- Is the slope of the ramp no more than 1" high for every foot of length?
- Do paths of travel have appropriate signage, hazard markings, and proper lighting?

#### CASHIERS, COUNTERS AND HOSTS

- Is there a portion of the main counter that is no greater than 36" high?
- If there is a food-ordering counter, is it no more than 36" high?
- Is there space at the side for passing items to customers who have difficulty reaching?
- Does the host stand obstruct the path of travel?

#### TABLES AND SEATING

- Are at least 5% of your seating/tables accessible?
- Are table-top surfaces 28-34" above the floor with clear space underneath of at least 27" from the floor to the underside of the table? Can a wheelchair roll under with ease?
- Is there room for a service dog? (oh, they like water too)
- Some guests don't remain in their mobility device (scooter, walker, etc.). Is there a safe place to keep it nearby?
- Are accessible tables positioned near outlets?
- Can street barriers be removed for easy entrance and exit?

#### SELF-SERVE ITEMS

- When offering a self-serve station for condiments or other items, are the tops of the tables or counters no more than 36" above the floor?
- Food service items are often placed at the back of a table or counter, or on risers or racks above the counter surface. Are these items easily reached by a guest using a wheelchair or short in stature?
- Are items marked clearly for guests with low vision?
- Can assistance be provided by restaurant staff?

#### RESTROOMS

- Is there an accessible restroom for your streatery, especially if your indoor space is not accessible?
- Is the accessible path to the nearest accessible restroom clearly indicated?

# Accessibility Design Forum



- In 2022, the taskforce determined that addressing accessibility needed to be more proactive, and that meant addressing it in the design phase.
- DMI hosted a day-long Accessibility Design Forum, which was made up of three panels – each of which included a professional and a person with a disability to identify best practices.





# Festival and Event Accessibility

- In 2021, as COVID-19 restrictions eased, the first community activities to return were outdoor festivals and events.
- Also that year, the City of Madison Parks Department began requiring festival applicants to include an accessibility plan with their permit application.
- The Subcommittee determined that there was no easy-to-use resource for local organizers to ensure their festivals and events were accessible to a variety of attendees.



# Festival and Event Accessibility Guide (1 of 2)

- The Subcommittee developed and released the Guide, and held a 2-hour online training for event organizers to ask questions and learn how to apply the guide to their events.
- The Guide is intended to assist festival and event organizers with completing and implementing a comprehensive accessibility plan for their event.
- The Guide outlines both ADA standards and best practices, as minimum compliance should never be the goal.

# Festival and Event Accessibility Guide (2 of 2)



The Guide addresses ADA standards and best practices in the following sections:

- Transportation
- Parking
- Paths of Travel
- Signage, Maps and Wayfinding
- Stages and Seating
- Concessions, Sales and Related Seating
- Restrooms and Toilets
- Promotion and Communication
- Additional Best Practices



# Transportation Highlights

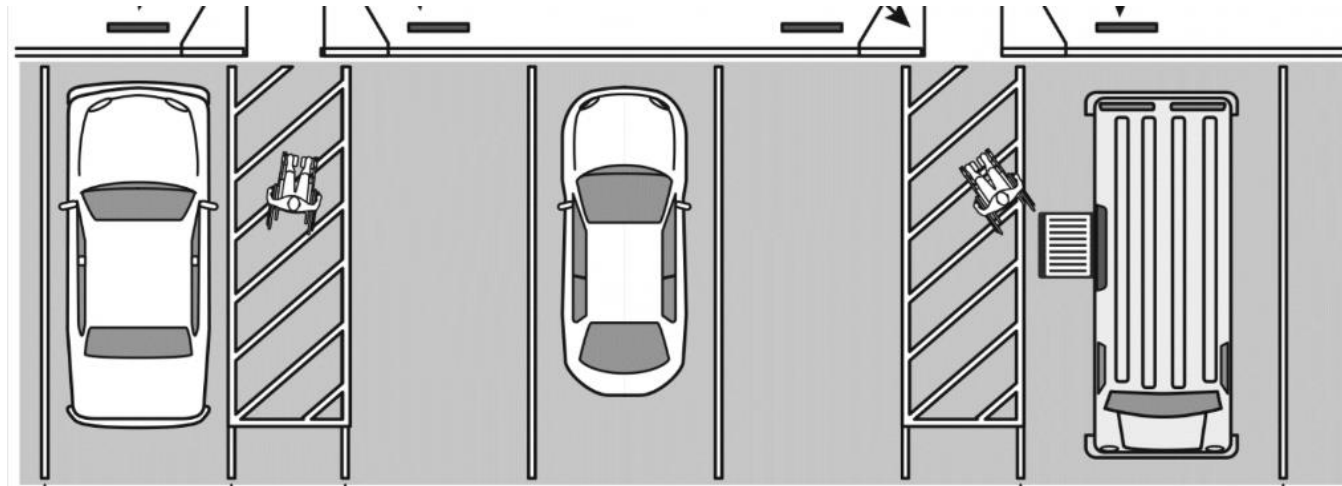


- Designated passenger loading and unloading
- Temporary loading zones
- Directional signage
- Public transportation information and routes to stops
- Event-specific transportation



# Parking Highlights

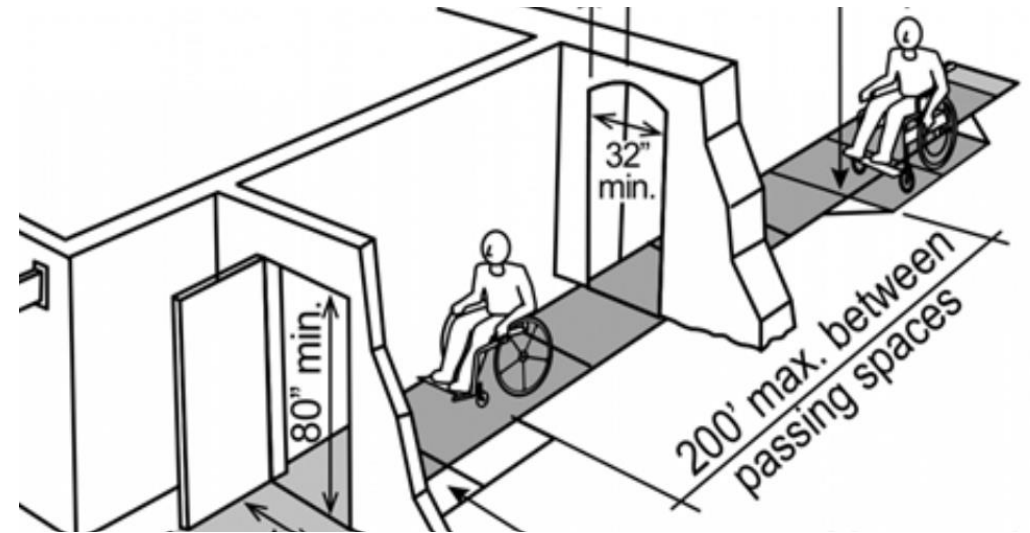
- Sufficient accessible parking spaces, including van accessible spaces
- Proximity of accessible spaces to accessible entrances/exits
- Paths of travel between parking and entrances and exits



# Path of Travel Highlights



- Connecting arrival points with event activities
- Create routes usable by everyone
- Identify routes with signage
- No abrupt vertical changes
- No protruding objects
- No cables or wires on paths without accessible protectors

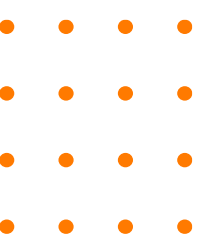


# Signage, Maps and Wayfinding Highlights



- Directions to parking, entrances, amenities and activities
- Signage font size and color contrast
- Signage height and placement
- Wayfinding for health and safety as well as general enjoyment
- Information centers
- Brochures and event programs

# Stage and Seating Highlights



- Access to the stage
- Seating for everyone
- Fixed seating
- Temporary seating
- Not just one “ADA Area”
- Seating for a flexible number of companions





# Concessions and Sales Highlights

- Cashiers and counters
- Tables and seating
- Clearly marked items
- Placement of food items, condiments and utensils
- Accommodations provided by staff or volunteers



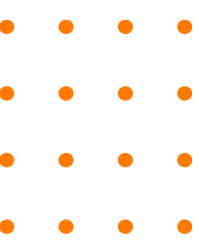


# Restrooms and Toilets Highlights

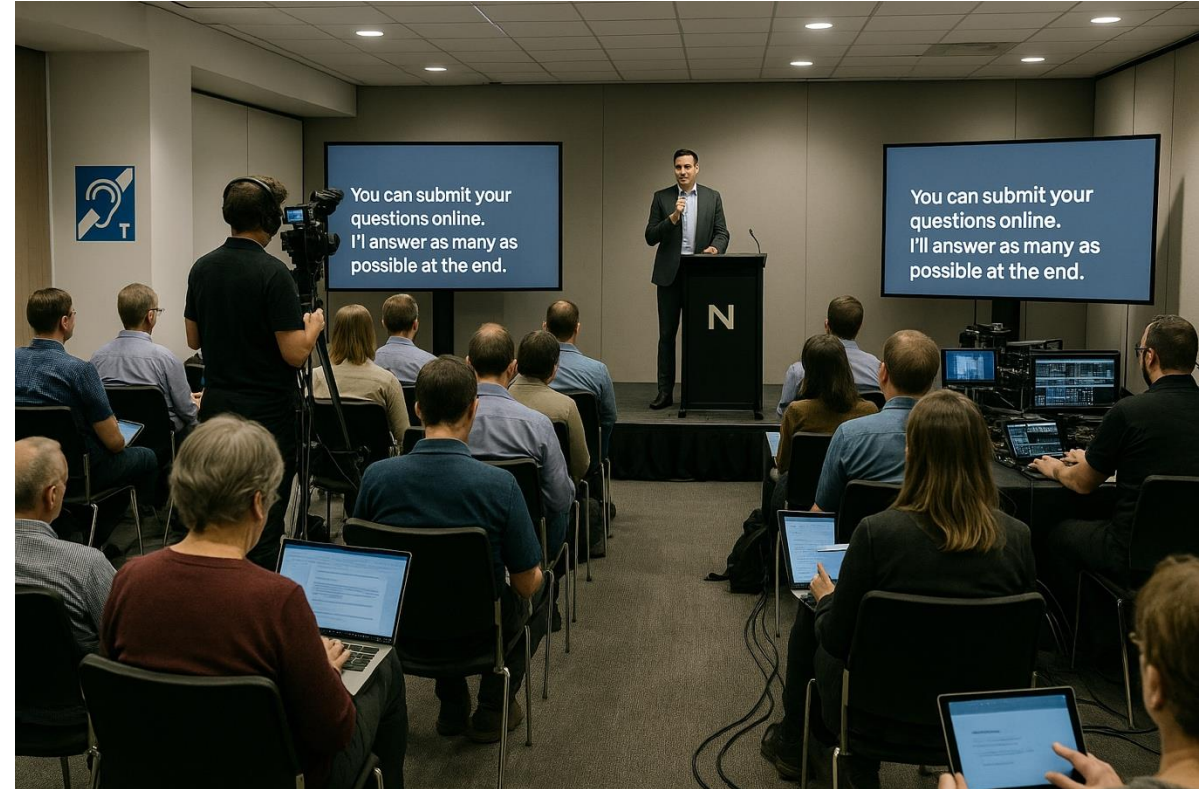


- Exceeding the minimum number of accessible toilets is a good thing
- Disperse accessible toilets at different accessible locations
- Portable toilet access:
  - Doors (width, threshold)
  - Grab bars
  - Toilet paper, hand sanitizer and feminine hygiene placement

# Promotion and Communication Highlights



- Statements about accessibility and accommodations in promotional materials
- Accessibility information on event website AND make sure the website is accessible
- Engage local disability organizations for advice and assistance with promotion
- Promotional content should be accessible, such as captions in videos
- Communication access in the event such as captions and sign language interpreters





# Best Practice Highlights

- Quiet spaces
- Rest areas and seating
- Temperature considerations
- Service and emotional support animals
- Staff and volunteer training and support
- Vendor training and preparations
- Accessible equipment and supplies, including DME
- Accessibility information areas
- Seeking feedback before, during and after

# Contact

**Address:**

3810 Milwaukee Street

Madison, WI

**Phone:**

608-242-8484

**Email:**

[info@accesstoind.org](mailto:info@accesstoind.org)



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# Great Lakes ADA Center



**Phone (voice/TTY):** 800-949-4232 or 312-413-1407



**Text Message (SMS):** 872- 298-1019



**Web:** [ADAGreatLakes.org](http://ADAGreatLakes.org)

## Connect & Follow



**Instagram** [@GreatLakesADA](https://www.instagram.com/GreatLakesADA)



**LinkedIn** [@great-lakes-ada-center](https://www.linkedin.com/company/great-lakes-ada-center)



**Facebook** [@ADAGreatLakes](https://www.facebook.com/ADAGreatLakes)



**YouTube** [@ADAGreatLakes](https://www.youtube.com/ADAGreatLakes)



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# ADA National Network (ADANN)

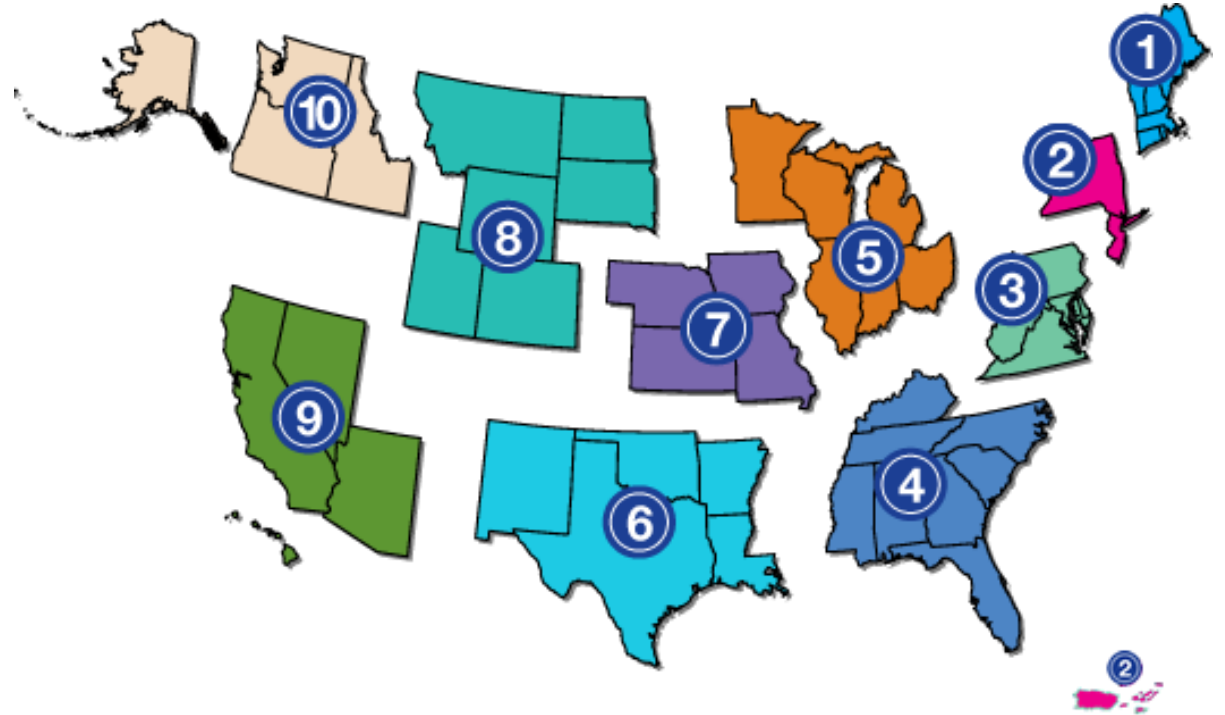
The ADANN has 10 Regional ADA Centers.



**Phone:** 800-949-4232



**Web:** [adaTA.org](http://adaTA.org)



Funded by the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR).

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