

# Aging, Disability, and the Americans with Disabilities Act



## **Aging, Disability and the ADA**

Though not everyone will become disabled with age, we are more likely to experience impairments and disabilities as we get older. According to the [U.S. Census Bureau's 2017 American Community Survey](#), 25 percent of Americans over age 65 have some kind of disability and nearly 50 percent of those over age 75. Ranging from difficulties seeing and hearing to walking and thinking, age-related changes may make it more difficult to get around at home, participate in the community, or go to work.

The **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** is a federal civil rights law designed to make sure that people with disabilities have equal access to public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and places that are open to the general public.

To help protect people with disabilities from discrimination and enable them to remain active in the community and continue working, the ADA includes a variety of provisions.

- Covered employers must provide “reasonable accommodations” in the workplace, such as adjusting work schedules or providing assistive devices.

- State and local government agencies, as well as businesses open to the public – like doctors’ offices, restaurants, and retail stores – must make their programs, goods, and services accessible to individuals with disabilities. This includes:
  - Taking steps necessary to communicate effectively with customers who have vision, hearing, and speech disabilities;
  - Making "reasonable modifications" to their usual ways of doing things to accommodate people with disabilities;
  - Ensuring access to public bus and rail services, as well as private transportation services such as taxicabs, airport shuttles, and intercity buses; and
  - Complying with minimum design standards for accessible parking spaces, ramps, and other features in newly constructed or renovated buildings; and in many cases improving accessibility in older buildings as well.

## **Mid-Atlantic ADA Center**

The **Mid-Atlantic ADA Center**, a project of TransCen, Inc., is one of ten regional ADA Centers in the **ADA National Network**. The Network is funded by the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR), Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

The ADA Centers are not enforcement or advocacy agencies, but helpful sources of information and personalized guidance on the requirements of the ADA. **The Mid-Atlantic ADA Center** serves **Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia**, providing:

- Information and guidance from an ADA Specialist through a toll-free call line or email;
- Free or low-cost training programs, in-person and online, to help employers, service providers, businesses, and individuals with disabilities understand their rights and responsibilities under the law; and
- A comprehensive website that includes information and links to resources on all aspects of the ADA, including our [Aging and Disability](#) page.

## **Contact the Mid-Atlantic ADA Center**

### **Phone**

1-800-949-4232 (DC, DE, MD, PA, VA, WV)

301-217-0124

**Email**

[ADAinfo@transcen.org](mailto:ADAinfo@transcen.org)

**Websites**

[Mid-Atlantic ADA Center](#)

[ADA National Network](#)

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