



U.S. Access Board  
Washington, D.C.

FISCAL YEAR 2027  
BUDGET JUSTIFICATION  
&  
AGENCY PERFORMANCE PLAN

Submitted to:

United States House  
Appropriations Committee

Subcommittee on Transportation,  
Housing and Urban Development,  
and Related Agencies

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## **ACCESS BOARD**

### **FISCAL YEAR 2027 BUDGET JUSTIFICATION**

This document presents the U.S. Access Board’s budget justification for fiscal year (FY) 2027. The Board is requesting a total budget authority of \$9,955,000 (see Appendix A), the same as the 2026 Enacted level.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Access Board (hereinafter “the Board”) was established in 1973 under Section 502 of the Rehabilitation Act and is the only federal agency whose primary mission is accessibility for people with disabilities. Broadly stated, the Board has three main functions: (1) to create accessibility guidelines and standards for the built environment, transit systems, information and communication technology, and medical diagnostic equipment; (2) to provide technical assistance and training to the public on these accessibility guidelines and standards; and (3) to enforce the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, which is the law that requires federal buildings and facilities be accessible to persons with disabilities.

With respect to the development of technical specifications for physical and digital accessibility, the Board is responsible for developing guidelines under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (ABA), and the Communications Act for ensuring that buildings and facilities, transportation vehicles, and telecommunications equipment covered by these laws are readily accessible to and usable by people with disabilities. The Board is also responsible for developing standards under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 for accessible information and communication technology developed, procured, maintained, or used by federal agencies and establishing standards for accessible medical diagnostic equipment. In addition, Congress has directed the Access Board to develop standards for universal changing tables under the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024.

The second main function of the Board is to regularly provide technical assistance on these guidelines and standards. The Board responds to technical inquiries daily through its helpline and by email. It also issues guides, manuals, and animations to clarify provisions in the guidelines and standards and other aspects of accessible design. The Board provides training on these guidelines and standards upon request and conducts two free webinar series on physical and digital accessibility. Additionally, it manages a program that develops technical assistance materials and provides information and data needed for rulemaking.

The Board’s third main function is ensuring that federal buildings and facilities are accessible to people with disabilities by enforcing the ABA. The Board investigates complaints regarding accessibility barriers encountered in federal spaces and works collaboratively with the appropriate federal agencies to ensure that violations of the ABA are remediated.

The Board’s services and programs advance accessibility in buildings and facilities, transportation vehicles, medical diagnostic equipment, telecommunications equipment, and information and communication technology across the country and, ultimately, the full economic

and social integration of people with disabilities into society. However, achievement of these results depends not only on the Board's activities, but also on the level of commitment and action taken by other federal agencies, state and local governments, and businesses that are required to comply with or enforce the various laws that guarantee the civil rights of people with disabilities.

#### *Other Duties*

In addition to developing technical specifications under the ADA and ABA, the Board also completes other duties as assigned by Congress. Under the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), two Board Members serve on the Election Assistance Commission's (EAC) Board of Advisors and Technical Guidelines Development Committee, which assist the EAC in developing voluntary guidelines for voting systems, including accessibility for people with disabilities. In addition, under the Food and Drug Administration Safety and Innovation Act, the Board developed best practices on providing accessible information on prescription drug container labels for individuals who are blind or have low vision.

#### *FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan*

The Board's FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan includes four goals and a stewardship objective:

- Establish technical specifications for accessible design
- Provide education and information on the importance and implementation of accessible design
- Improve the accessibility of the federal government
- Promote accessibility throughout society
- Improve agency systems and modernize operations

The Board established long- and short-range goals and annual objectives that describe the strategies it will implement to achieve the goals.

## **ESTABLISH TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS FOR ACCESSIBLE DESIGN**

The Board will continue to develop and update accessibility guidelines and standards and work cooperatively with organizations that develop codes and standards affecting accessibility. It has developed the following objectives for this program area:

- Develop and update technical specifications to achieve accessibility standards that will be enforceable under the ABA as to the ABA standard-setting agencies – The United States Postal Service (USPS), the General Services Administration (GSA), the Department of Defense (DOD), and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and – that adopts them.
- Coordinate with standards and codes organizations to build effective industry accessibility standards
- Engage with the public to provide information about the development of accessible design
- Address accessibility of emerging technologies and design trends

- Collaborate with organizations to encourage research on accessibility

## **FY 2025 Results: Rulemaking**

### *Self-Service Transaction Machines*

In September 2022, the Board issued an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) to address access to SSTMs. The ANPRM sought feedback from the public on the planned approach to supplementing the ADA and ABA Accessibility Standards to include scoping and technical requirements for these devices so that they are fully accessible to all users with disabilities. This regulatory initiative would provide technical specifications for the accessibility of point-of-sale machines, self-checkout machines, check-in kiosks, and other SSTMs and scoping for built-in self-service transaction machines that fall under the Board's regulatory jurisdiction. A draft NPRM, a preliminary regulatory impact analysis (PRIA), and an initial regulatory impact analysis (IRIA) were submitted to OMB for coordination under E.O. 12866 but were withdrawn shortly after the beginning of the current administration.

### *Electric Vehicle Charging Stations*

On September 3, 2024, the Board published an NPRM setting forth proposed guidelines for the accessibility of electric vehicle charging stations. The proposed guidelines include specifications for the size of the spaces, for operable parts and communication features of chargers, for accessible routes from charging spaces to facilities at which they are located, and scoping provisions that prescribe the number of accessible charging spaces that must be provided.

In early November 2024, the comment period on the proposed rule closed. The Board received and evaluated approximately 140 public comments on the proposed rule from individuals, organizations of and for people with disabilities, state and local government entities, manufacturers of electric vehicles and electric vehicle chargers, and industry groups representing entities that operate places of public accommodation (e.g., the hospitality industry). The Board placed this rulemaking in inactive status shortly after the beginning of the current administration.

### *ADA Accessibility Guidelines for Transportation Vehicles*

This rulemaking would revise requirements for rail vehicles in the ADA Accessibility Guidelines for Transportation Vehicles. These requirements have not been modified or updated since they were issued in 1991. In February 2020, the Board published an ANPRM to initiate the regulatory process for potentially updating its accessibility guidelines for rail vehicles. The Board received over 200 public comments in response to this notice. The Board began developing an NPRM in FY 2024 and Board staff drafted much of the proposed rule's language in FY 2024 and early FY 2025. The Board placed this rulemaking in inactive status shortly after the beginning of the current administration.

## **FY 2026 Planned Activities: Rulemaking**

The Board plans to propose the following regulatory actions that it considers required by statute or outside the scope of E.O. 14192:

### *Guidelines for Universal (or Adult) Changing Tables*

The FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 requires that mid-sized and large airports seeking certain federal funds, beginning in 2030, provide at least one universal changing table in each terminal building. The legislation directs the Access Board to issue comprehensive accessible design standards for universal changing tables, as well as standards addressing their privacy, accessibility, and sanitation, by May 2026. The Access Board intends to seek approval to publish an ANPRM seeking public input on the guidelines early in FY 2026.

The Board also proposes to issue direct final rules that would (1) update the agency's procedures under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act with respect to non-discrimination on the basis of disability in its federally-conducted programs and activities, and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, requiring that all information and communication technology procured, developed, maintained, or used by the Board be readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities; and (2) update its regulations for handling requests under the Freedom of Information Act. As these regulations govern only agency organization, management, or personnel, they are not subject to the deregulatory requirements of E.O. 14192. During FY 2026, staff will draft these rules, at least one of which may be completed by the end of the fiscal year.

### **FY 2027 Objectives: Rulemaking**

In FY 2027, the Board aims to publish the following rulemaking documents, if approved:

- Proposed standards for universal changing tables at airports subject to certain requirements in the FAA Reauthorization Act, and perhaps a final rule that would establish the standards.
- A direct final rule setting forth Access Board obligations and procedures under Section 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act if this has not been published in FY 2026.
- A direct final rule on processing requests under the Freedom of Information Act if this rule has not been published in FY 2026.

### **FY 2025 Results: Codes and Standards**

#### *Adoption of Board Guidelines as Enforceable Standards*

For the Board's accessibility guidelines to become enforceable, other federal agencies must generally complete rulemaking to adopt the guidelines as standards. HUD, DOD, GSA, and the USPS use the Board's guidelines to develop enforceable standards under the ABA. The Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Department of Transportation (DOT) use the Board's guidelines to develop enforceable standards under the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. USPS, GSA, DOD, DOJ, and DOT have adopted the Board's guidelines as enforceable standards. Most recently, on July 3, 2024, GSA adopted, as enforceable standards under the ABA, the Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) that the Board published on August 8, 2023.

#### *Voluntary Consensus Standards*

The Board's long-range goal is to take a leadership role in the development of codes and standards for accessibility. The Board works with model codes organizations and voluntary consensus standards groups that develop and periodically revise codes and standards affecting

accessibility. The Board has voting membership in several codes and standards organizations and monitors or is actively involved in the development or revision of dozens of other codes and standards affecting accessibility.

The Board believes this goal enhances its credibility as a knowledgeable source of information regarding technical aspects of accessibility. Additionally, by working cooperatively with model codes organizations and voluntary consensus standards groups, federal and private codes and standards will become more similar, or harmonized, and the Board will be more alert to non-federal influences affecting its constituencies. Harmonization between federal and private requirements will make it more likely that buildings and facilities will be accessible, thus reducing the necessity for complaints and litigation.

*International Code Council (ICC) and The American National Standards Institute (ANSI)*  
Exemplifying the Board's collaboration with voluntary consensus standards groups, is its membership in the ICC A117.1 Standard for Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities Committee. The ICC A117.1 Standard, which is a key counterpart to the Board's ADA and ABA Accessibility Guidelines, is referenced by the International Building Code (IBC).

In FY 2025, a Board staff member was appointed to the A118 Acoustics Accessibility Committee (IS-ABEC) by the ICC Board of Directors. This is a joint effort between ICC and Accessibility Standards Canada to develop new standards related to the built environment acoustics accessibility. Several Board staff serve as committee members of the Rehabilitation Engineering Society of North America (RESNA) to collaborate and promote consensus with accessibility requirements. Committee memberships include Cognitive Accessibility ISO/TC 173/SC/WG10, Inclusive Fitness, Assistive Technology for Air Travel (ATAT), and Wheelchairs and Transportation.

Two Board Members serve in statutorily defined roles with the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC)'s Technical Guidelines Development Committee (TGDC) and the Board of Advisors. These committees provide security and accessibility recommendations to the EAC in the development of Voluntary Voting System Guidelines (VVSG) for voting systems. States which adopt the VVSG ensure equal opportunities for individuals with disabilities to vote privately and independently.

#### *Harmonization of International Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Accessibility Standards*

The Board continues working with three European accessibility standardization organizations: European Telecommunications Standards Institute, European Committee for Standardization, and the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization. Although the first accessibility specifications for public ICT procurements, [EN 301 549](#), were largely harmonized with the Board's January 2017 final rule that updated the Board's ICT Standards and Guidelines, Europe has now surpassed the U.S. requirements. Subsequent publications by the European Joint Working Group on eAccessibility adopted the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1. The Board will continue working to further harmonize the U.S. and European standards during FY 2025 through participation in EU meetings as the EU revises EN 301 549 in accordance with the [European Accessibility Act](#).

### *Codes and Standards Work*

The Board participates in the following list of codes and standards groups:

- International Code Council (ICC) Consensus Committee on Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities, ICC (ASC A117)
- International Code Council in collaboration with Accessibility Standards Canada on Acoustics Accessibility Committee (IS-ABEC) A118
- American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) A18 Platform Lift and Stairway Chair Lift Committee
- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), Disability Access Review Advisory Committee
- National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard
- World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative Accessibility Guidelines Working Group (AG WG)
- ASTM (formerly known as American Society for Testing and Materials) Committee on Sports Equipment, Playing Surfaces, and Facilities
- Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA) Standards Committees on Inclusive Fitness, Cognitive Accessibility, Assistive Technology for Air Travel, and Wheelchairs and Transportation
- Transportation Research Board's National Cooperative Highway Research Project (NCHRP)
- Standing Committee on Innovative Public Transportation Services and Technologies, and the Transportation Cooperative Research Project (TCRP)
- Multimodal Accessible Transportation Standard Coordinating Committee
- National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices
- Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Ex Facto Member
- Federal Chief Information Officers Council's Accessibility Community of Practice
- Telecommunications Industry Association
- National Institutes of Standards and Technology (NIST)'s Interagency Committee on Standards Policy
- National Collaboration on Bicycle, Pedestrian and Accessibility Infrastructure Data
- National Institutes of Standards and Technology Artificial Intelligence Standards Coordination Working Group (AISCWG)

### **FY 2026 Planned Activities: Codes and Standards**

The Board will continue to work with the aforementioned private sector codes and standards organizations, and interagency work groups to harmonize the Board's guidelines with model codes and standards domestically and internationally.

### **FY 2027 Objectives: Codes and Standards**

The Board will continue to develop and update accessibility guidelines and standards and work cooperatively with organizations that develop codes and standards affecting accessibility.

## **PROVIDE EDUCATION AND INFORMATION ON THE IMPORTANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ACCESSIBLE DESIGN**

The Board provides training and technical assistance on accessibility guidelines and standards to a wide variety of individuals in addition to both public and private entities, including architects, builders, designers, technology companies, manufacturers, people with disabilities, disabled veterans, state and local governments, and federal agencies. The Board's long-range goal is to be known as a leading source of information on accessible design.

The Board maintains the following objectives to provide education and information on the importance and implementation of accessible design:

- Provide training on accessible design and the Board's guidelines and standards
- Provide technical assistance on the implementation of accessibility guidelines and standards
- Create guides, manuals, and animations to promote understanding of accessible design
- Use stakeholders' feedback to improve information services
- Conduct and sponsor research on accessible design and technical innovations

The Board's technical assistance program comprises five components:

1. **Responding to technical inquiries.** The Board responds to approximately 4,000 – 5,000 inquiries each year via the agency's technical assistance helpline and email accounts. Customers request accurate, reliable, and timely advice, and the Board's Accessibility Specialists dedicate extensive time providing responses in real time and engaging with stakeholders.
2. **Developing and disseminating guides, manuals, and other publications.** The Board maintains numerous publications on accessibility issues. These publications provide a range of resources to address the needs of novice to expert level laymen and professionals. Examples include printed manuals on the Board's guidelines and standards to online guides and animations on the ADA and ABA Accessibility Standards.
3. **Providing training.** The Board conducts training on its guidelines and standards, in-person and virtually. In addition, the Board conducts free webinars via two series: the monthly *Accessibility Online* series focuses on the built environment and transportation access; and the bi-monthly *Section 508 Best Practices* series, that provides education on accessible information and communication technology. Attendees of these sessions are eligible to earn continuing education credits (CEUs).
4. **Hosting an updated, dynamic website.** The Board's website ([www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov)) hosts a wide range of valuable information resources for the public. Customers can view and download Board publications, including the accessibility guidelines and standards, free of charge. Additional animations provide in-depth understanding of accessibility features and users can view archived webinars on demand.

5. **USAB’s YouTube channel.** The Board posts playlists of descriptive animations and trainings via the [Access Board YouTube Channel](#) by topic. Leveraging this technology enables live streaming of Board meetings and posting more robust training content.

The Board maintains informal partnerships with organizations such as the National Association of ADA Coordinators and The ADA National Network to further market and distribute Board guidance and standards throughout the nation. The Board provides regular, reoccurring training updates and high-level technical assistance to these and other entities to leverage cost efficiencies and to further expand its reach to broader audiences.

## **FY 2025 Results**

The Board hosts monthly accessibility webinars and provides a wide range of training at local and national conferences for specific audiences throughout the year. In FY 2025, the training plan focused on making changes to the implementation of webinars and trainings to include data gleaned from audience post-webinar survey feedback. While the Board’s webinars consistently receive positive feedback overall, this strategy further incorporated audience suggestions to enhance meeting the needs of all learners and maximizing access to the webinar delivery. An analysis of the audience feedback data was completed and reviewed with the Board staff. The result of this review has been reflected in the webinar series by: (1) increasing use of real-world examples, case studies, and actual technical assistance scenarios received by the Board; (2) increasing collaboration with external speakers, and; (3) initiating a change in presentation format for optimal content delivery (e.g., panel presentation, breaking webinar content into two parts, etc.) to maximize audience engagement. The FY 2025 training strategy also included alignment of the webinar content with Board priorities.

In FY 2025, through a partnership with the ADA National Network, the Board presented 10 of the scheduled 12 built environment webinars and 5 of the 6 scheduled 508 best practices webinars. One webinar was cancelled due to the observance of former President Jimmy Carter’s funeral service, and two webinars were canceled due to policy changes impacting the external Federal agency speaker’s participation. Overall, the number of training and webinars completed (66) decreased by 33% compared to FY 2024 and subsequently, webinar participants (over 14,500) also decreased by 42% this year over FY 2024. The cancelled webinars combined with a pause in government travel at the beginning of the fiscal year influenced the overall training numbers.

Each 90-minute webinar provides opportunities for participants to earn continuing education units for a fee, but general attendance is free. In FY 2025, the Board conducted the following webinars:

### Accessibility Online (built environment webinar series)

- Alterations: A review of requirements in the ADA and ABA Standards
- Spa resorts—An Experience for Everyone
- Accessible Bus and Van Transportation

- Accessible Means of Egress
- Exhibition Design and Accessibility for Visitors with Disabilities
- Accessibility of Outdoor Dining, Retail and Community Spaces
- Accessibility in Historic Buildings and Facilities
- From Standards to Support: Understanding the Access Board’s Role in Accessibility
- Your Voice, Your Vote: Accessible Polling Places and Election Supporting Technology
- Rocking Your Rentals: ABA Accessibility and Leased Facilities

#### Section 508 Best Practices Webinar Series (ICT)

- Essential Strategies for Creating Accessible Social Media Content
- Highlights from the FY24 Government-wide Section 508 Annual Assessment
- The NPS.gov Media Player: An Accessible Option for All Government
- That Doesn’t Need to be a PDF
- A Journey through Global Accessibility Laws

In FY 2025, the Board responded to nearly 5,000 technical assistance requests to the public through the telephone helpline and via email.

The Board’s website continues to provide a robust volume of information and resources on accessibility guidelines, standards, and answers to frequently asked questions. In FY 2025, the site welcomed approximately 108,000 visitors per month and about 1.3 million visitors for the year. These visits included over 3.6 million page views.

The Board’s YouTube channel continues to be a useful resource. During FY 2025, over 41,300 views were tracked. The animations received almost 30,000 views and the Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines training tracked approximately 4,000 views.

### **FY 2026 Planned Activities**

#### *Online Guides, Webinars, and Website*

The Board will continue developing materials for the online guides to the ADA and ABA accessibility standards. Technical guides covering Chapter 7: Communication Elements and Features of the standards are being finalized and will be released in FY 2026. These guides will address fire alarm systems, telephones, detectable warnings, assistive listening systems, ATMs and fare machines, and two-way communication systems. During FY 2026, technical guides covering Chapter 9: Built-In Elements will begin development, which covers drinking surfaces, work surfaces, benches, check-out aisles, and sales and service counters. Future installments to the guides will be released and announced through Board email subscribers as they become available.

In FY 2026, the Board will continue to offer its webinar series for the built environment and information and communication technology, which will reflect updated guides, most recent rulemaking activities, Board priorities, and best practices.

## **FY 2027 Objectives**

The Board will continue to improve its website, continue developing technical guides, and responding to information and training requests from a range of stakeholders (to include business, government, and individual consumers).

## **IMPROVE THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

The Board is committed to improving the accessibility of the federal government and has the following objectives in this program area:

- Improve the accessibility of federal buildings and facilities through enhanced awareness and robust enforcement of the Architectural Barriers Act
- Improve accessibility of federal information and communication technology through collaboration with other federal agencies
- Be a model employer of persons with disabilities

The Board was established in 1973 with the primary purpose of enforcing the ABA. The ABA requires that most buildings designed, constructed, altered, or leased by the federal government, and certain other federally financed facilities be accessible to people with disabilities. The Board enforces the ABA by investigating complaints received from members of the public or federal employees.

Complaints received concern post offices, national parks, military facilities, veterans' hospitals, courthouses, and a variety of other facilities. When the Board has jurisdiction and finds that the applicable accessibility standards were not followed, it helps the responsible agency establish a corrective action plan and monitors the case until the barrier is removed. For covered buildings where corrective action is required, the Board has a 100% compliance rate.

The Board has learned that most violations are not intentional. They usually occur because the people responsible for designing buildings, reviewing plans, and on-site construction were not well-informed of the accessibility standards or how to apply them. As such, the Board takes proactive measures to work with federal agencies, such as conducting training sessions, to ensure that, before starting a new project or executing a new lease, they understand and comply with ABA requirements.

In addition to its statutory mandate to enforce the ABA, the Board also contributes to improving the digital accessibility of the federal government through its statutory role to provide technical accessibility standards for ICT under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. Section 508 requires federal agencies to develop, procure, maintain, and use ICT that is accessible.

## **FY 2025 Results: ABA Enforcement and Awareness**

In FY 2025, the Board received 320 ABA complaints and closed 267.

Of the 267 ABA cases closed in FY 2025, 100 cases (37%) were closed after the federal agency (or other facility owner/leaseholder) took corrective action to remedy building elements or features determined by the Board's investigative findings to be ABA violations under the applicable accessibility standard.

In brief, the 100 ABA complaints closed in FY 2025 on the basis of completed corrective action can be broken down into four broad categories by facility type:

- **Defense-related and Veterans Facilities:** The Board successfully resolved 9 ABA complaints against the DOD and Veterans Affairs (VA), including cases related to Patrick Space Force Base - Manatee Cove Family Campground, Patrick AFB, Florida and Naval Station Mayport - Osprey Cove RV Park, Jacksonville, Florida (installed 3 accessible, ABA-compliant sites for recreational vehicles at each facility, properly dispersed throughout the campground); Joint Base San Antonio Lackland (Chapman Annex), San Antonio, Texas (Installed new accessible women's bathroom; Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam: Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility, Building 1, Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii (performed multiple corrective actions, including installing new entrance ramps and brought other entrance ramps into compliance with the standards, installed an automatic door opener on the entry door to the restroom, and made improvements to the lavatory, dispensers, and stalls to bring the toilet room into compliance).
- **Post Offices:** The Board successfully resolved 84 ABA complaints relating to U.S. Postal Service facilities, with major remedial work completed at post offices in: Lakeside, Arizona (adjusted and repaired the door opening force and closing speed to conform to accessible standards, replaced the door hardware to be compliant and not require tight grasping, pinching or twisting of the wrist, re-striped the accessible parking space and marked and identified accessible signage, provided an accessible service counter in the facility, and changed the signage in the facility to allow for service animals without restriction to those assisting blind or deaf users); Decatur, Illinois (installed 1 van and 4 regular accessible spaces in the employee parking lot); and United States Post Office -- Old Chelsea, New York, New York (corrected threshold at entrance that was too high and repaired an elevator).
- **General Services Administration Facilities:** The Board successfully resolved 4 ABA complaints relating to facilities owned or leased by GSA, including: William Jefferson Clinton Federal Building, Washington, DC (provided an alternative, compliant accessible route that enables postal customers to reach the Benjamin Franklin Post Office until such time as the exterior entrance doors to the post office are repaired and the permanent accessible route is restored; Social Security Administration, Greenfield, Wisconsin (provided a curb ramp that complies with the ABA).
- **Department of the Interior:** The Board successfully resolved an ABA complaint relating to the Shark Valley Visitor Center in Everglades National Park, Miami, Florida. Inaccessible picnic tables were removed from the park and benches were placed on paved pathways for access.

- **Other ABA-Covered Facilities:** In addition, significant corrective action projects were completed at 2 other ABA-covered facilities, including Federal Correctional Institution - Command Center, Texarkana, Texas (the U.S. Bureau of Prisons installed an accessible entrance ramp and brought the accessible toilet room into compliance with ABAAS), and Bitterroot National Forest – Headquarters, Hamilton, Montana (the U.S. Forest Service has undertaken numerous corrective actions, including correcting the clear floor space adjacent to the activation buttons for the automatic doors, adding sufficient compliant accessible parking spaces for visitors, as well as compliant signage, access aisles and ground surfaces).

The balance of ABA cases closed in FY 2025 — 157 out of 267, or 59% were concluded for a range of technical or legal reasons. **12** of our investigations revealed that the Board lacked jurisdiction (for example, the building was built prior to 1968 and was not altered since, and therefore, was not covered by the ABA); **17** of our investigations revealed that the complaint allegations did not constitute an ABA violation (for example, a building inspection revealed that the element at issue did in fact meet the minimum scoping requirements or technical specifications in the ABA standards); **1** where the standard-setting agency (USPS) issued a waiver; and **127** where the Board made a referral since it determined, without an investigation, that the ABA did not apply to the complainant’s concerns but that another disability civil rights law, such as the ADA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, or the Fair Housing Act, did. Appendix C below provides final data for ABA cases closed in FY 2024 and FY 2025 including reasons for case closure, as well as projections for FY 2026 and FY 2027.

The success of the Board’s complaint resolutions, and its ABA enforcement program, is due to close collaboration with other agencies, particularly those the ABA charges with setting accessibility standards based on the minimum guidelines the Board writes: GSA, USPS, DOD, and HUD. The Board engages in regular contact with the individuals at these agencies responsible for facility accessibility to discuss active complaints and to offer technical assistance and training as needed.

Typically, The Board’s compliance and enforcement staff verify whether ABA violations exist and whether corrective action has been taken through documentary evidence, including responses to questionnaires, site plans, and photographs. However, during FY 2025, the Board conducted two site investigations of ABA covered facilities in San Diego (because security concerns prevented the agency from sending us photographs documenting corrective action) and in Bangor, Washington (where an on onsite investigation was necessary to determine the scope of asserted violations).

The Board continues to respond quickly to all new complaints. Most complainants file their complaints through the Board’s website using the Online ABA Complaint Form, while others email complaints to the Board via a dedicated ABA enforcement email address. Some complaints are referred to the Board by the DOJ, with whom individuals may have filed a complaint about a facility they thought was covered by the ADA (enforced by DOJ), but which is covered by the ABA.

Regardless of method of submission, the Board contacts complainants to acknowledge receipt of their complaint and communicates with them regularly thereafter to keep them apprised of the progress in its investigation. In prior years, the Board provided complainants with 15 days' notice of its intention to close an ABA complaint following investigation and any required corrective action. We have discontinued this practice, as it delayed closure of investigations while rarely resulting in information from complainants that would necessitate further action. Complainants who object to the outcome of an investigation may still contact the Board following closure of a complaint, at which point we might re-open the complaint or advise the complainant to file a new complaint, depending on the specific facts alleged. We also instituted a practice in FY 2025 of closing complaints promptly where initial allegations were incomplete or unclear and where efforts to follow-up with complainants were unsuccessful. (Previously, many of these complaints were held open while compliance and enforcement staff attempted to identify the alleged violation by working with the agency.)

As a result of the increased ABA complaints in recent years, the Board has been developing metrics to better evaluate the compliance and enforcement program's efficiency and effectiveness to ensure that it delivers the highest quality service to the public. During FY 2025, we implemented a requirement that complaints that raise possible accessibility concerns but that are not covered by the ABA (e.g., because they relate to non-federal facilities) be closed and complainants be informed of the proper entity to contact for assistance within an average of 15 business days from the date on which we receive such a complaint. We were actually able to accomplish such referrals in an average of five days. This allows the Board to direct its limited resources available for carrying out the ABA compliance and enforcement program to the cases raising the most significant ABA violations at the earliest possible time.

To ensure greater public awareness of its work, the Board posts a list on its website annually describing all the ABA corrective actions taken that year to remediate accessibility barriers in federal buildings and facilities.

### **FY 2026 Planned Activities: ABA Enforcement and Awareness**

The Board will continue to investigate complaints under the ABA. Based on complaint receipts and closures to date in the current fiscal year, it expects to receive 300 new complaints, and close 285. Of the 285, the Board expects to close 100 following investigations resulting in the completion of corrective action, with an additional 15 investigations resulting in determinations that it lacked jurisdiction and 20 that the complaint allegations did not amount to a violation of the standards, as well as a single complaint where we are expecting the agency to issue a waiver. The Board expects to refer complainants to other federal agencies in 140 matters when it is clear—prior to the commencing of an investigation—that the allegations relate to a disability-related or civil rights law other than the ABA.

The Board will continue providing periodic updates to complainants on the status of their complaints. It will continue refining program processes based on performance measures previously developed to better increase efficiency in the operation of the compliance and enforcement program.

In FY 2026, we will consider ways of increasing outreach on the ABA in areas of the country where complaint data suggests a possible lack of awareness (e.g., areas in which there are a significant number of ABA-covered facilities as compared to a relatively low number of complaints). We will also continue the practice of conducting site investigations where appropriate, such as where we do not receive timely or accurate information in response to requests or where circumstances might prevent an agency from providing us with sufficient documentary evidence of violations or corrective action. Subject to any hiring limitations that might exist, we would seek to increase the capacity of the ABA compliance and enforcement program to timely investigate and resolve complaints by adding at least one compliance specialist.

### **FY 2027 Objectives: ABA Enforcement and Awareness**

The Board will continue to provide effective and responsible customer service and increase efficiency in the operation of the compliance and enforcement program. We anticipate a rise in the number of complaints received and resolutions in FY 2027 over our FY 2026 estimate. We estimate the total number of new complaints for FY 2027 to be 335. We expect to close 305 complaints. Closures will include 110 complaints resolved with corrective action; 15 for lack of ABA jurisdiction following an investigation; 20 in which we find there is no violation; one because of a waiver; and 150 referrals without investigation where complaints concern alleged violations of law not covered by the ABA.

We will evaluate existing goals for the program and implement additional metrics, which may include where we have sufficient data, establishing timeframes within which we will acknowledge receipt of complaints, within which we will contact agencies to initiate investigations and goals for the reduction of the number of open complaints; and within which we will make a determination whether ABA violations exist after receiving a complaint.

### **FY 2025 Results: Accessible Federal Information and Communication Technology**

The Board develops and issues Section 508 accessibility standards, provides authoritative interpretations, technical assistance, and training on Section 508 to federal agencies, and supports the development of accessibility tools and best practices. In these roles, the Board collaborates extensively with GSA to develop and post resources to the [www.section508.gov](http://www.section508.gov) website, which serves as the federal government's central repository of accessible Information and Communication Technology (ICT) information and resources.

The Board engages with international accessibility standards development organizations to ensure harmonization of accessibility standards. The Board participates in discussions and reviews proposed requirements.

During FY 2025, the Board provides extensive training to other federal agencies to promote accessible ICT through bi-monthly best practices webinars, individualized agency trainings, presentations at agency accessibility events, and via the annual Interagency Accessibility Forum (IAAF), a conference for federal agencies.

The Board co-leads the development of the ICT Testing Baseline Portfolio, which establishes minimum requirements for test processes to ensure that all Section 508 requirements are evaluated accurately and consistently. Agencies can use the baselines to determine if their test processes and tools produce accurate Section 508 conformance test results. The Portfolio is comprised of ICT Baselines for Web and digital documents, an alignment framework for Web, and reporting tools. In FY 2025, the Board and GSA produced initial drafts of Baselines for Software and Hardware to add to the Portfolio.

The Board supports the University of Maryland Initiative for Digital Accessibility (MIDA) with their research project to develop a hybrid test methodology that aligns with the ICT Testing Baseline for Web. The Board continues to provide subject matter expertise on web accessibility, testing tools, accessibility requirements, and establishing project goals. The Board anticipates the project to be completed in FY 2026 and will provide federal agencies with a documented approach to using the Baseline for Web to improve their Section 508 conformance testing methods.

The Board co-facilitates the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) Accessibility Conformance Testing (ACT) Task Force. This Task Force develops and maintains a repository of test rules, with approximately 35 published to date. These rules promote a unified interpretation of the Web Conformance Accessibility Guideline criteria so different web accessibility test tools and methodologies can check whether they produce results consistent with the ACT results. The Board contributes Trusted Tester implementation results for the ACT rules and ensures harmonization of the ACT test rules and the ICT Baseline for Web.

During FY 2025, the Board worked closely with GSA and OMB to develop self-assessment criteria for the Annual Governmentwide Section 508 Assessment. The Board also tested the survey tool used to collect responses from agencies for both functionality and accessibility and supported the remediation efforts. The Board and GSA provided technical assistance to agencies by hosting office hours and responding to questions about the criteria and the survey tool.

The Board hosts bi-monthly webinars on ICT Accessibility Best Practices. The Board identifies topics to raise awareness of accessibility strategies and successes, coordinates presenters, ensures accessibility of the presentation and materials, and promotes and manages the webinar events.

### **FY 2026 Planned Activities: Accessible Federal Information and Communication Technology**

During FY 2026 the Board will contribute to the FY 2025 Section 508 Governmentwide Assessment Report by providing data analysis and recommendations to improve Section 508 compliance across government. As the assessment is conducted and reported annually, the Board will collaborate with GSA and OMB to develop assessment criteria for the FY 2026 governmentwide assessment. The Board and GSA will assist agencies that must respond to the assessment criteria by addressing their inquiries.

The Board will further leverage its roles in co-chairing two subcommittees of the Federal Chief

Information Officers Council (CIOC) Accessibility Community of Practice. Continuous efforts are underway to identify best practices in Section 508 that can be promoted for use at other agencies. In addition, the Board will provide bi-monthly Section 508 best practices webinars and will co-sponsor the annual Interagency Accessibility Forum (IAAF) that educates federal employees on the latest developments in accessible information and communication technology.

As a leader of the Section 508 ICT Testing Baseline Portfolio and the W3C Accessibility Conformance Testing (ACT) (international), the Board will continue to develop testing baselines for ICT covered by Section 508. To expand the Baseline Portfolio, the Board will continue to collaborate with GSA to further develop the baselines for software and hardware.

The Board will continue the development of Baseline alignment tools, including further development of test cases and the alignment reporting tool. Collaboration with the University of Maryland will continue on the Baseline for Web workshop to develop a hybrid test methodology which combines automated test tools and manual testing to ensure accurate and consistent test results for Section 508 conformance.

The Board plans to continue its contributions to W3C WAI activities, including support of the Accessibility Guidelines Working Group and facilitating the Accessibility Conformance Testing Task Force (ACT TF).

### **FY 2027 Objectives: Accessible Federal Information and Communication Technology**

The Board plans to continue its collaborations with GSA, OMB, and other federal agencies in further promoting ICT accessibility in FY 2027, including the development of annual Section 508 Assessment criteria, and contributing to the annual report.

The Board intends to expand the Section 508 ICT Testing Baseline Portfolio by releasing baselines for software and hardware and the Baseline for Web Alignment Framework. Additionally, the Board will identify test processes that align to the Baseline Portfolio. The collaborative project with the University of Maryland is expected to conclude with the development of a hybrid test methodology for web content. This methodology will combine automated test tools and manual testing to ensure accurate and consistent test results for Section 508 conformance, aligning with the Baseline for Web.

The Board will continue to support any new OMB directives to agencies regarding compliance with the Section 508 accessibility standards and will assist with agency reporting requirements.

### **FY 2025 Results: Model Employer of Persons with Disabilities**

Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act requires the federal government to be a “model employer” of people with disabilities.

In FY 2025, the Board took steps to ensure that leaders at all levels promote the vision for Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO). Agency managers and supervisors received Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) training to ensure they are well-prepared to manage EEO issues effectively.

This training included the laws and policies related to EEO, how to manage employee interactions, and how to support the EEO complaint process. The EEO training will assist managers in making informed decisions about discrimination and accommodation requests and will equip them to manage any potential EEO-related issues that arise in the workplace. By training supervisors in EEO, the Board creates a more inclusive and respectful work environment, which is essential for maintaining a fair and equitable workplace for all employees.

During FY 2025, the Board conducted the annual self-assessment of Section 717 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 programs against the six essential elements for a model EEO program as prescribed by Equal Employment Opportunity Management Directive 715. The agency has analyzed its workforce profiles and conducted barrier analyses aimed at detecting whether any management or personnel policy, procedure, or practice is operating to disadvantage any group based on race, national origin, sex, or disability. In order to facilitate the hiring, placement, and advancement of individuals with disabilities, the Board conducted a disability self-identification initiative which encouraged all employees to self-identify their disability status. Self-identification of disability status is essential for effective data collection and analysis of the agency's hiring efforts.

The Board maintains a file of "Schedule A" applicants that is reviewed prior to the posting of agency vacancies. Schedule A provides a means for agencies to hire qualified people with disabilities outside of the usual process for hiring into the competitive service. Individuals with disabilities may be hired into "excepted service" positions and then converted to the competitive service after having demonstrated successful job performance over a period of time.

### **FY 2026 Planned Activities: Model Employer of Persons with Disabilities**

Consistent with Executive Order 14356, "*Ensuring Continued Accountability in Federal Hiring*", the Board will implement hiring practices that ensure the necessary accommodations are provided for individuals with disabilities. This will allow applicants to have equal opportunities to demonstrate their qualifications during the hiring process, while prioritizing the recruitment of individuals committed to improving the efficiency of the federal government.

In FY 2026, the Board is continuing its efforts to ensure that leaders at all levels promote the vision for a model EEO workplace. The Board will partner with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to conduct a needs assessment to identify areas where managers and employees require training and development. Additionally, the Board is improving the consistency of desired outcomes by strengthening policies and procedures.

### **FY 2027 Objectives: Model Employer of Persons with Disabilities**

The Board plans to continue its efforts and practices for employing people with disabilities in FY 2027. As part of this effort, the agency will develop a high-performing workforce that reflects the various communities the Board serves by optimizing outreach.

The Board continually seeks to improve its ability to prevent and address disability discrimination. Furthermore, the Board is working towards providing workforce training, to include general EEO training for employees and management.

## **PROMOTE ACCESSIBILITY THROUGHOUT SOCIETY**

As noted above, the Board's technical assistance and ABA enforcement program contribute to promoting accessibility in various segments of society. The Board also promotes accessibility in the public sphere in other ways, apprising various audiences about accessible design, disability-related issues, and its programs and services. The Board has two primary objectives in this program area:

- Identify and address inequities in accessibility faced by underserved communities
- Identify and work to address barriers to accessibility beyond those covered by the Board's guidelines and standards

The Board approaches these objectives with four strategies:

1. To sustain and increase public awareness of the Board and its activities
2. To hold events where the Board can hear from members of the public
3. To learn more about communities impacted by accessibility barriers and disability-related concerns
4. To strengthen relationships with Board stakeholders

### **FY 2025 Results**

#### *Access Board Meetings*

Under the agency's bylaws, as revised in November 2022, the Board holds four Board meetings per year, one of which is usually outside the Washington, D.C. area. In general, two of the four meetings are in-person, and the other two are conducted virtually. Board meetings are typically held over two or three days and include both informal (i.e., closed to the public) sessions and formal (i.e., open to the public) sessions. Some of the sessions often serve as opportunities for Board Members and staff to strategize and hold in-person and virtual public events to gather information on accessible design and accessibility barriers and engage with members of the public and organizations.

During FY 2025, the Governing Board met in October 2024 and July 2025. In October, the formal session was open to the public through live web streaming. In July, the Board held a town hall meeting in New Orleans, LA for members of the public to join in person and provide public comments on the state of accessibility in the local community. This meeting was also streamed via the Board's YouTube channel. Archival video recordings of formal sessions of Board meetings are also posted on the Board's YouTube channel and website.

At the end of FY 2024, Board staff began preparation for the July 2025 Board meeting in New Orleans. In September 2024, some staff traveled to New Orleans to meet with a range of stakeholders: local government leaders, the municipal transit agency, disability organizations, and others. During its July Board meeting in the city, the Board held discussions and conducted meetings, with a focus on hearing from residents and the disability community regarding the

state of accessibility in New Orleans. Some of these sessions included: a panel discussion with representatives from the City of New Orleans and the State of Louisiana at Louisiana State University (LSU); an observation of the accessibility of the Canal Streetcar Line; a meeting with leadership from Jean Lafitte National Historical Site and Preserve and New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park; and a general accessibility meeting with local New Orleans residents and representatives from the City of New Orleans and the Split Second Foundation.

The Board held its annual town hall meeting in New Orleans where it heard directly from residents regarding local accessibility concerns, as well as from a nationwide group of individuals who are blind or have low vision. The event was attended by representatives from local and state government, including the Mayor of the City of New Orleans. Over 20 individuals testified during the public comment portion of the town hall. Participants shared a range of accessibility concerns including, among others: public transportation, pedestrian facilities in the public right-of-way, self-service transaction machines, Section 508 enforcement, design for people who are neurodivergent, air travel, voting, maps, and braille signage. The full town hall recording is archived on the Board's YouTube channel. Following the meeting, Board Members made themselves available to speak directly with members of the public regarding accessibility concerns.

At the end of FY 2025, Board staff began preparation for the May 2026 Board meeting in Providence, RI. In September 2025, some Board staff traveled to Providence to meet with a range of stakeholders: disability organizations; residents and tourism advocates; state and local government officials; and veterans' groups. These meetings provided opportunities for the Board to listen to stakeholders and learn more about accessibility barriers, challenges, and accessibility initiatives by the city and state. Targeted training and technical assistance will be provided to Rhode Island organizations in advance and beyond the Board meeting.

## **FY 2025 PUBLIC EVENTS**

### *Staff Presentations*

In FY 2025, Board staff presented at many national, international, regional, and state conferences, forums, and events related to accessibility for people with disabilities. Board staff presented on diverse topics, such as emerging technology and trends, information and communication technology resources, accessibility in the federal workplace, accessible voting and polling places, and the guidelines and standards issued under the ADA, ABA, and Section 508.

### *Communication with the Public*

In addition to the Board's services (technical assistance and training), the Board has several communication channels to engage with and serve the public. The Board has a free e-subscription for the purpose of distributing its news releases. In FY 2025, the Board experienced high subscriber growth: from 83,316 to 95,017 subscribers (an increase of 11,701). This growth resulted in a considerable number of email bulletins being distributed to subscribers in FY 2025, totaling 6,530,537.

The Board continues to use social media platforms to amplify its messages, mission, technical assistance, events, and public engagement. Since 2015, the Board has used X for its primary social media account, but in 2021, the Board expanded its social media channels by creating two new accounts: a Facebook page and a LinkedIn organization page. At the end of FY 2025, the Board's X account had 2,817 followers, the LinkedIn organization page account had 5,787 followers, and the Facebook page had 1,544 followers. These accounts generally saw significant increases in followers and engagement. The Board's YouTube channel provides technical information via its popular animations, videos, and recordings from the Board's public events.

As a micro agency, the Access Board has historically faced challenges related to low visibility among the public and within the federal sector, as well as limited resources such as staffing and time to effectively engage with stakeholders and audiences. To address these issues, the Board has worked to develop strategies that enhance its public profile, expand its reach, and improve its ability to serve stakeholders and audiences. Throughout FY 2025, these efforts supported the Board's mission by fostering meaningful stakeholder engagement and strengthening connections with its audiences. Furthermore, these efforts also aided in addressing the challenges by contributing to and enhancing the Board's efforts to raise its public profile, serve the public with services and programs, and expand to new audiences. For example, as explained above, the Board experienced significant follower growth on several social media platforms in FY 2025. The agency saw a 15.88% increase on LinkedIn (4,994 to 5,787) and a notable 32.53% increase on Facebook (1,165 to 1,544).

The Board also frequently meets and interviews with journalists at media outlets to discuss accessibility guidelines and standards, rulemaking, and best design practices in various areas of the built environment and Section 508.

#### *Executive Orders*

The Board continues to fulfill Executive Order 13175 "Memorandum on Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-to-Nation Relationships." As an agency dedicated to accessible design for people with disabilities, all the agency's activities in some way advance access and remove barriers, including for those who live in Tribal Nations. A critical element of this work includes ensuring that Tribal Nations are informed about and acquire the services of the Access Board. The following actions provide some highlights of accomplishments in FY 2025:

1. Delivered presentations and provided technical assistance to other federal agencies and departments that focus on serving or working with American Indian and Alaska Natives populations, including the Indian Health Service (IHS) and the Administration for Community Living (ACL).
2. Attended and facilitated sessions at national conferences to outreach with Tribal Nations and present on the work of Access Board, including the National Title VI Training & Technical Assistance Conference and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Traditional Healing Summit.
3. Provided technical assistance to the Older Americans Act Title VI grant program at ACL on the accessibility of ceremonial spaces.
4. Conducted outreach to federal agencies regarding prioritization of barrier remediation in federal buildings located in or near underserved communities.

5. Met with non-profit organizations focused on accessibility and people with disabilities.

## **FY 2026 PLANNED ACTIVITIES**

Thus far in FY 2026, the Board continues to promote awareness of its work, programs, and service. The Board also plans to execute the following activities in FY 2026:

1. In May 2026, the Board will host a town hall in Providence, Rhode Island to learn about the state of accessibility in the region directly from residents, as well as to share information about the Board's rulemaking agenda and services. The Board will meet with city and state officials to promote accessibility in government services, as well as provide training directly to staff from all levels of government. The Board will also meet with various representatives from local tourism agencies, tribal communities, and local disability advocates to promote accessibility and increase awareness of the Access Board's technical assistance services.
2. A pre-meeting visit to Nashville, TN to plan and prepare for the April 2027 Board meeting will take place late in FY 2026. Planned meetings will take place with local and federal government leadership, accessibility focused organizations, and residents.
3. The January 2026 Board meeting will be virtual and largely focus on next steps and preparations for the May 2026 out-of-town meeting in Providence, RI.

### *Outreach*

The Board will continue to increase awareness of its work. As part of this effort, the Board finalized its Communication and Outreach Strategy and Plan in FY 2024, which included a particular focus on outreach activities that provide information on services and programs to underserved communities with high rates of disability and professionals serving those communities. Throughout FY 2025, the Board's Public Affairs Program began implementation of the communication plan to help improve the agency's outreach efforts. The Board continues to establish and strengthen relationships with other federal agencies that own or lease federal facilities where in-person services are provided to underserved communities with high rates of disability. As noted above, the Board works with federal agencies to establish ABA compliance strategies aimed at proactively ensuring the accessibility of buildings and facilities in underserved communities through accessibility assessments and the remediation of architectural barriers.

## **FY 2027 OBJECTIVES**

The Board aims to strengthen relationships with existing stakeholders and audiences by continuing to reach out to professional associations, trade groups, federal agencies, and other organizations whose stakeholders can benefit from its services and programs. Additionally, the Board will continue to build relationships with other federal agencies who serve underserved communities, including Tribal Nations. One of the goals of this work is to listen to and learn about accessibility and barriers in Tribal communities through attendance at Tribal conferences and gatherings, presentations to Tribal leadership and officials, and hosting listening sessions.

The Board also aims to acquire new stakeholders and audiences, including those in underserved communities, through outreach, promotional materials development, and more Spanish-translated agency documents. These activities are included in the Board’s Communication and Outreach Strategy and Plan. Moreover, the Access Board developed a new series of one-page fact sheets for distribution at public events. Several fact sheets were developed, with each focusing on a specific subject matter, such as built environment accessibility, the Architectural Barriers Act, and an overview of the U.S. Access Board. Per the Board’s Communication and Outreach Strategy and Plan, the latter fact sheet was translated into Spanish and has been regularly distributed at public events, including the Board’s meeting in New Orleans, LA.

At the April 2025 Board meeting, the Board voted for the 2027 out-of-town meeting and town hall to take place in Nashville, TN. Possible events and meetings include a panel discussion on music venue accessibility; an “accessibility walk” to view accessibility issues and solutions in the public right-of-way; and meetings with city and state officials to understand efforts to improve accessibility in Tennessee. Additionally, the Board will host its annual town hall meeting in Nashville to hear directly from residents regarding the state of accessibility in their community. The 2027 out-of-town meeting and town hall will support the ongoing objectives of the Board.

FY 2027 Board meetings will take place in October 2026, January, April, and July 2027. The October and January meetings will be virtual. The out-of-town meeting in Nashville, TN will take place in April. The July 2027 meeting will be held in-person in Washington, D.C.

## **IMPROVE AGENCY SYSTEMS AND MODERNIZE OPERATIONS**

For FY 2023 through FY 2026, the Board added a stewardship objective to its strategic plan to improve agency systems and modernize operations. The Board has created a multi-year Information Technology Strategic plan and roadmap to guide its current and future IT investments and objectives including software, hardware, data center operations, and the mandated cyber security initiatives. The Board has set the following objectives:

- Use data and technology to modernize and enhance operations and services.
- Use tools and internal systems to consolidate and retain agency knowledge.
- Update agency policies, procedures, and administrative regulations.
- Safeguard Board’s staff, assets, and data against cyber security vulnerabilities.
- Implement automation for improved efficiency and cost savings.
- Modernize the USAB website for ease of use and easy access to important information.
- Creation of in-house applications to assist with on-going USAB staff activities.

The Modernizing Government Technology Act delivers a clear mandate to federal agencies to look for ways to increase efficiency and effectiveness and improve service to the public. The Board has a requirement to employ centralized identity management systems for agency users that can be integrated into applications and common platforms. Information Technology (IT) resources are critical in support of the Board’s strategic objective to improve agency systems and

modernize operations. This objective includes using data and technology to enhance operations and services, using tools and internal systems to consolidate and retain agency knowledge, and updating agency policies, procedures, and administrative regulations. The Board plans to review the possible use of artificial intelligence (AI) to automate recurring tasks for cost savings and improved productivity. To further the goals of creating a safe technical environment, the Board will strenuously work towards improved vulnerability management and staying ahead of the potential cyber security threats. The overall goal of the Board, in accordance with recent and ongoing IT mandates, is to create a common environment for enterprise platform standards, processes, and governance, modernize legacy agency equipment, and secure and enhance the IT infrastructure. The IT appropriation provides resources for IT security enhancement modernization efforts, continued adoption of cloud-based computing solutions, consolidation of infrastructure and networks, and the modernization of legacy IT systems and applications. This funding level will also support the maintenance and enhancement of foundational capabilities that facilitate cloud migration and increase functionality.

## APPENDIX A

### ACCESS BOARD BUDGET

	FY 2025 Request	FY 2026 Request	FY 2027 Request
<b>BUDGET TOTAL</b>	<b>9,955,000</b>	<b>9,955,000</b>	<b>9,955,000</b>
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	<b>6,066,000</b>	<b>5,241,500</b>	<b>6,266,400</b>
Salary	4,583,500	3,966,500	4,691,400
Staff	4,341,600	3,766,500	4,491,400
Board	241,900	200,000	200,000
Benefits	1,560,000	1,275,000	1,575,000
<b>TRAVEL/BOARD MEETINGS/PUBLIC HEARINGS</b>	<b>240,000</b>	<b>300,000</b>	<b>250,000</b>
<b>SPACE MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>763,000</b>	<b>786,000</b>	<b>786,000</b>
<b>TECHNICAL RESEARCH</b>	<b>250,000</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>30,000</b>
<b>ADMIN SUPPORT SERVICES</b>	<b>1,027,200</b>	<b>1,480,000</b>	<b>1,037,200</b>
<b>IT SUPPORT SERVICES</b>	<b>1,460,300</b>	<b>2,000,000</b>	<b>1,465,400</b>
<b>MISC OPERATING EXPENSES</b>	<b>148,500</b>	<b>127,500</b>	<b>120,000</b>
Postage/Courier/Mailing Services	5,000	3,000	3,000
Staff Training	18,000	10,000	18,000
Equipment	5,000	3,000	5,000
Supplies	8,000	5,000	8,000
Audits	36,000	36,000	36,000
Other	76,500	70,500	50,000

COST DISCUSSION

The Board is requesting a total budget authority in FY 2027 of \$9,955,000.

<p>PERSONNEL</p> <p>FY 2026                      \$5,241,500  FY 2027                      \$6,266,400</p>	<p>The Board anticipates funding at its full FTE staffing level in FY 2026. Currently the Board’s staffing level is 23 FTEs with 7 vacancies. This budget line also includes salaries for the current 12 intermittent Public Board Members and 1 vacancy. The Board plans on five days of pay per Public Board Member (Presidentially appointed) for one in-person Board meeting in D.C. and five days for one out-of-town meeting. Two of its regular board meetings will be held virtually, and members will receive three days of pay for each of those meetings.</p> <p>In addition, the Board has included funds for salaries for a total of ten additional days for information meetings where some of its Public Board Members participate in ad-hoc meetings or represent the agency in other meetings (such as meetings of the EAC).</p> <p>The Board has calculated benefits (including the transit subsidy) based on its experience with the benefit packages employees have chosen in the past. Benefits for Public Board Members include only the Social Security and Medicare allotment from the employer.</p> <p>Personnel staff salary line includes a performance award amount equal to approximately 3 percent of GS salaries. This will allow the Board to provide meaningful recognition for annual performance awards and provide for special act awards where warranted.</p>
<p>TRAVEL/BOARD MEETINGS/ PUBLIC HEARINGS</p> <p>FY 2026                      \$300,000  FY 2027                      \$250,000</p>	<p>This budget line includes all costs related to its Board meetings, public hearings, and other agency related travel expenses, except for salaries. For board meetings and public hearings, this includes travel expenses, meeting space rental, Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART), and sign language interpreters for all board and other public meetings.</p>

	<p>In FY 2023, the Board revised its contract requirements, reducing the number of scheduled Board meetings from six per year to four per year. The reduction in the number of meetings resulted in a decreased funding requirement for all future FYs.</p> <p>The Board’s travel budget primarily covers its travel expenses related to attendance at annual trade meetings associated with its mission of accessibility, as well as travel expenses for the purpose of conducting accessibility training, which is a core part of the Board’s mission. The Board also participates in international government consortiums to share information on accessibility policy.</p>
<p>SPACE MANAGEMENT</p> <p>FY 2026                      \$786,000  FY 2027                      \$786,000</p>	<p>The Board’s rent is set by GSA. The Board entered into a new occupancy agreement, effective January 1, 2022. The amount included reflects the estimate provided by GSA. The amount on this line also includes other costs related to its space, such as maintenance and security.</p>
<p>TECHNICAL RESEARCH</p> <p>FY 2026                      \$20,000  FY 2027                      \$30,000</p>	<p>Contracting for research on emerging technologies and innovations in accessibility to inform technical assistance and future updates to existing guidelines. Increased funding in FY 2027 is included for a regulatory assessment for a statutorily required rulemaking on universal changing tables.</p>
<p>ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES</p> <p>FY 2026                      \$1,480,000  FY 2027                      \$1,037,200</p>	<p>The Board has an interagency agreement with the Bureau of the Fiscal Service (BFS) in the Department of the Treasury to provide procurement, financial, payroll, and human resources services. The Board also has agreements with various other federal agencies for administrative support. Approximately \$800,000 of its costs are for services the Board receives from BFS. Additional costs are for support of its webinars, through which most of its training is conducted. The Board also has contracted for records management consulting services, and has another contract for GovDelivery, which supports its public outreach initiative.</p>

<p><b>INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT SERVICES</b></p> <p>FY 2026                      \$2,000,000  FY 2027                      \$1,465,400</p>	<p>This is the yearly cost of the Board’s IT Infrastructure and desktop computing needs, including computers, assistive technology, local area network servers and hardware, software, printers, and maintenance and support services (including website hosting and internet service). A substantial portion of its IT budget goes toward the provision of network security and operational integrity of the Board’s network. This also includes support of the Privacy Program, to include training, contractor support, and automation. These expenditures will help the Board meet the Federal Information Security Management Act, The Modernizing Government Technology Act and provide certification of the Board’s network, required to access other agency networks (e.g., the Bureau of the Fiscal Service’s HR Connect System for personnel services). Funds also will be used to provide annual security network maintenance for the Continuous Diagnostics and Mitigation Cybersecurity program.</p>
<p><b>MISCELLANEOUS OPERATING EXPENSES</b></p> <p>FY 2026                      \$127,500  FY 2027                      \$120,000</p>	<p>Expenditures in this category include postage, overnight shipping, and in-town delivery service. The Board contracts with the Interior Business Center in DOI to provide services for the mandatory drug testing program. Other expenditures are for miscellaneous operating expenses not reflected elsewhere. The yearly financial audit is included along with accessible design materials, staff training, office supplies, equipment purchases, and printing.</p>

## APPENDIX B

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### STATUS OF CURRENT ACCESS BOARD RULEMAKING EFFORTS

#### **ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) for Transportation Vehicles – Update (rail vehicles).**

This rulemaking would update the Board’s existing accessibility guidelines for transportation vehicles that operate on fixed guideway systems (e.g., rapid rail, light rail, commuter rail, and intercity rail) covered by the ADA. The existing rail vehicles guidelines were initially promulgated in 1991, and need an update to, among other things, keep pace with newer accessibility-related technologies, harmonize with recently developed national and international consensus standards, and incorporate recommendations from the Board’s Rail Vehicles Access Advisory Committee’s report. Past and recent efforts related to this regulatory initiative include:

- Notice of intent to establish advisory committee: February 14, 2013
- Notice establishing advisory committee: May 23, 2013
- Full committee meetings: November 13-14, 2013; January 9-10, 2014; April 10-11, 2014; September 11-12, 2014; February 26-27, 2015; April 23-24, 2015; June 4-5, 2015
- Committee presented recommendations to the Board: July 29, 2015
- Advance notice of proposed rulemaking: February 14, 2020
- Notice of public hearing: February 27, 2020
- Notice of extension of comment period: April 10, 2020
- Proposed rule placed on inactive status on September 4, 2025.

#### **Guidelines for Self-Service Transaction Machines and Kiosks.**

SSTMs and self-service kiosks are now a common feature in places of public accommodation, government offices, and other facilities. They allow customers to conduct an expanding range of transactions and functions independently. SSTMs serve as point-of-sales machines for self-checkout in a growing number of retail facilities, grocery stores, and drug stores. SSTMs and self-service kiosks also allow customers to check-in at airports and hotels and to place orders in restaurants and retail facilities.

SSTMs and self-service kiosks have long posed accessibility barriers to people with disabilities, particularly those who are blind or have low vision. Robust speech output is necessary to provide access for users unable to see display screens. SSTMs may also pose barriers for users who are deaf or hard of hearing if lacking captioning and text equivalents for audible information. Further, these devices must be accessible to people with physical impairments, including those who use wheelchairs and other mobility devices, have limited dexterity, or who are of short stature. In FY 2022, the Board published an ANPRM in which it sought information from the public to inform its development of these guidelines. The Board received approximately 80 comments to the September 21, 2022 ANPRM.

- Draft NPRM withdrawn from OMB in January 2025.

### **Electric Vehicle Charging Stations.**

EV charging stations are becoming commonplace with the rising production and use of electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, there are nearly 50,000 public EV charging stations with almost 127,000 charging ports across the country. In July 2022, the Board issued a technical assistance document on the accessibility of EV charging stations and is now developing an NPRM to include accessibility guidelines for EV charging stations as a supplement to the ADA and ABA Accessibility Guidelines. The Board published the NPRM on September 3, 2024.

- Comment period on the NPRM closed on November 4, 2024.
- Rulemaking placed on inactive status on September 4, 2025.

### **Passenger Vessels.**

This rulemaking will address access to ferries, cruise ships, excursion boats, and other vessels. In 1994, the Board and DOT funded a research project to assess the feasibility and impact of providing access to a variety of vessels. This project was completed in July 1996 and provided valuable information for rulemaking. The Board and DOT also held an information meeting with organizations representing people with disabilities and the marine industry to determine the scope and complexity of the rulemaking.

In August 1998, the Board created a 22-member Passenger Vessel Access Advisory Committee to provide recommendations for a proposed rule addressing accessibility guidelines for newly constructed and altered passenger vessels covered by the ADA. The committee presented its report to the Board in November 2000.

The Board held public meetings in New Orleans (August 2003) and Seattle (September 2003) to gather information and input on viable access solutions that will allow persons with disabilities independent access onto and off of large vessels. Over 150 vessel designers and operators, pier operators, persons with disabilities, and others attended the meetings. In advance of the meetings, the Board toured vessels and boarding facilities at area ports. In November 2004, the Board published for public comment an ANPRM on access to and in smaller passenger vessels and a notice of availability releasing draft guidelines on access to and in larger passenger vessels.

In July 2006, the Board made available for public comment revised draft accessibility guidelines for passenger vessels. It received approximately 175 comments on the draft guidelines. Passenger vessel operators, individuals with disabilities, and organizations representing the various interest groups commented that a provision in the draft guidelines, which required emergency alarm systems to comply with “principles of best practice,” was vague and requested additional guidance. The Board agreed that additional guidance would be helpful and in August 2007 created a Passenger Vessel Emergency Alarms Advisory Committee to assist in this matter. The committee’s membership included representatives from disability organizations, the vessel and cruise ship industry and trade groups, and the National Fire Protection Association, among others. The committee presented its report to the Board in October 2008. In June 2008, the Board published revised draft guidelines to collect data necessary for a regulatory assessment. Meetings were held in August 2008 to collect this data.

In June 2013, the Board released for public comment proposed guidelines for passenger vessels. The comment period ended in January 2014. The next step for this rulemaking is a final rule. The Board suspended work on this rule in 2017 in light of the requirements of Executive Order 13777 *Enforcing the Regulatory Reform Agenda*. In Fall 2023, the Board placed this rulemaking on its long-term agenda, and in Spring 2025, consistent with the Administration’s deregulatory priorities, the Board moved the rulemaking to inactive status.

- Information meeting: April 15, 1996
- Notice of intent to establish advisory committee: March 30, 1998
- Notice establishing advisory committee: August 12, 1998
- Full committee meetings: September 24-25, 1998; November 18-21, 1998; February 4-6, 1999; April 21-23, 1999; July 21-23, 1999; October 20-22, 1999; February 9-11, 2000; April 26-28, 2000; September 19-22, 2000
- Committee presented recommendations to the Board: November 17, 2000
- Information meetings: August 20, 2003; September 9, 2003
- Notice of availability of draft guidelines and advance notice of proposed rulemaking: November 26, 2004
- Revised draft guidelines for large vessels, ferries, and tenders: July 7, 2006
- Notice of intent to establish advisory committee: June 25, 2007
- Notice establishing advisory committee: August 13, 2007
- Full committee meetings: September 19-20, 2007; November 28-29, 2007; February 12-13, 2008; August 12-13, 2008
- Committee presented recommendations to the Board: October 14, 2008
- Revised draft guidelines for large vessels, ferries, and tenders: June 26, 2008
- Information meeting: August 11, 2008
- Notice of proposed rulemaking: June 25, 2013
- Rulemaking placed on inactive status on September 4, 2025.

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## COMPLETED ACCESS BOARD RULEMAKINGS

### **ADAAG for Buildings and Facilities (Sections 1-9).**

The ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) initially consisted of nine sections. Sections 1 through 4 include general sections, scoping provisions, and technical specifications applicable to all types of buildings and facilities. The scoping provisions specify which and how many elements and spaces of a building or facility must be accessible (e.g., parking spaces, entrances, toilet rooms). The technical specifications describe how to design the elements and spaces covered by the scoping provisions, so they are accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. Sections 5 through 9 contain additional scoping provisions and technical specifications for the following facilities: restaurants and cafeterias (section 5); medical care facilities (section 6); mercantile establishments (section 7); libraries (section 8); and hotels, motels, and transient lodging (section 9).

- Advance notice of proposed rulemaking: August 31, 1990

- Public hearings: February 11, 1991 through March 7, 1991
- Notice of proposed rulemaking: January 22, 1991
- Final rule: July 26, 1991
- Department of Justice adopted guidelines: July 26, 1991
- Department of Transportation adopted guidelines: September 6, 1991

#### **ADAAG for Transportation Facilities (Section 10).**

This rulemaking added section 10 to ADAAG which contains additional scoping provisions and technical specifications for transportation facilities.

- Supplemental notice of proposed rulemaking: March 20, 1991
- Final rule: September 6, 1991
- Department of Transportation adopted guidelines: September 6, 1991
- Department of Justice adopted guidelines: January 18, 1994

#### **ADAAG for Transportation Vehicles.**

A separate ADAAG was issued for transportation vehicles for the following vehicles and systems: buses and vans, rapid rail vehicles, light rail vehicles, commuter rail cars, intercity rail cars, over-the-road buses, automated guideway transit vehicles, high-speed rail cars, monorails, and trams and similar vehicles.

- Notice of proposed rulemaking: March 20, 1991
- Final rule: September 6, 1991
- Department of Transportation adopted guidelines: September 6, 1991

#### **Automated Teller Machines.**

In response to a petition for rulemaking, on July 15, 1993, the Board issued a joint final rule with DOT amending the reach range requirements for accessible automated teller machines and fare vending machines.

- Notice requesting public comment on petition for rulemaking: May 6, 1992
- Public hearing: May 28, 1992
- Notice of proposed rulemaking: September 8, 1992
- Final rule: July 15, 1993
- Department of Transportation adopted guidelines: July 15, 1993
- Department of Justice adopted guidelines: January 18, 1994

#### **Children's Elements.**

This rulemaking added provisions to ADAAG for building elements designed for children's use. The Board published an ANPRM in February 1993 seeking comment on general issues, such as the scope of the guidelines and the ages or grades that should be covered. Following an analysis of the comments, the Board published a notice of proposed rulemaking in July 1996. The Board published the final rule in January 1998.

- Advance notice of proposed rulemaking: February 3, 1993

- Notice of proposed rulemaking: July 22, 1996
- Final rule: January 13, 1998
- Department of Justice adopted guidelines: July 23, 2010

### **State and Local Government Facilities (Sections 11-12).**

This rulemaking added two special application sections to ADAAG for certain State and local government facilities covered by title II of the ADA. The two sections are 11—Judicial, Legislative, and Regulatory Facilities, and 12—Detention and Correctional Facilities. The rule also covers miscellaneous provisions that apply to state and local government facilities.

The Board published a notice of proposed rulemaking and conducted five public hearings on the proposed rule. Following an analysis of the comments, the Board published an interim final rule asking for additional comments. Provisions regarding accessible residential housing and public rights-of-way were proposed as part of the NPRM and the interim final rule. However, no action was taken on either of these subjects in the final rule. Provisions for accessible residential housing were proposed as part of the Board’s ADAAG Revision and ABA Accessibility Guidelines rulemaking. The Board convened a federal advisory committee to develop recommendations on access to public rights-of-way. It published a final rule in January 1998.

- Notice of proposed rulemaking: December 21, 1992
- Public hearings: February 22, 1993 (two hearings); March 2, 1993; March 9, 1993; March 15, 1993
- Interim final rule: June 20, 1994
- Final rule: January 13, 1998
- Department of Justice adopted guidelines: July 23, 2010

### **Telecommunications Equipment.**

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 required the Board to issue accessibility guidelines in conjunction with FCC for telecommunications equipment and customer premises equipment. The Board has convened a 33-member Telecommunications Access Advisory Committee to assist the Board in fulfilling its mandate to issue the guidelines. The committee presented its report to the Board in January 1997. Based on the committee’s recommendations, the Board published a notice of proposed rulemaking in April 1997 and then a final rule in February 1998.

- Notice of intent to establish advisory committee: March 28, 1996
- Notice establishing advisory committee: May 24, 1996
- Full committee meetings: June 10-12, 1996; August 14-16, 1996; September 25-27, 1996; November 6-8, 1996; December 16-18, 1996; January 13-14, 1997
- Committee presented recommendations to the Board: January 15, 1997
- Notice of proposed rulemaking: April 18, 1997
- Final rule: February 3, 1998
- Federal Communications Commission adopted guidelines: November 19, 1999

### **Over-the-Road Buses.**

The ADA requires the Board and DOT to issue guidelines and regulations for access to over-the-road buses. The Board and DOT co-sponsored an information meeting on over-the-road bus

issues and in March 1998, it published an NPRM to amend the technical provisions for over-the-road buses to include provisions for wheelchair access and other miscellaneous provisions. DOT also published an NPRM on accessible over-the-road bus service. After reviewing the comments received in response to the NPRM, the Board issued final guidelines which include technical provisions for lifts, ramps, wheelchair securement devices, moveable aisle armrests, and revisions to specifications for doors and lighting.

- Information meeting: October 21, 1993
- Notice of proposed rulemaking: March 25, 1998
- Final rule: September 28, 1998
- Department of Transportation adopted guidelines: September 28, 1998

### **Detectable Warnings Temporary Suspension.**

In response to a petition for rulemaking, in 1994 the Board, DOJ, and DOT suspended temporarily until July 1996, the requirements for detectable warnings at curb ramps, hazardous vehicular areas, and reflecting pools so that a research project on this subject could be considered in determining whether any changes in the requirements were warranted.

In March and April 1995, the Board received petitions from two transit agencies and an organization of blind persons to review the requirements for detectable warnings at transit platform edges. The Board's ADAAG Review Advisory Committee also considered the requirements for detectable warnings within the context of the committee's complete review of ADAAG provisions. The committee recommended that the requirements for detectable warnings at curb ramps, hazardous vehicular areas, and reflecting pools that are currently suspended be eliminated. The committee recommended requiring detectable warnings at platform edges in transit stations, and allowing an "equivalent tactile surface," and "equivalent detectability." Since any amendment to the detectable warning requirements will be done as part of the scheduled review and update of ADAAG, in July 1996, the Board, DOJ, and DOT published a final rule to extend the temporary suspension until July 1998 to allow the ADAAG revision process to be completed. Because the ADAAG revision rulemaking was not completed by July 1998, the temporary suspension was continued until July 2001.

- Proposed rule to temporarily suspend the requirements: July 9, 1993
- Final rule to temporarily suspend the requirements: April 12, 1994
- Proposed rule to extend the temporary suspension: April 12, 1996
- Final rule to extend the temporary suspension: July 29, 1996
- Proposed rule to extend the temporary suspension: June 1, 1998
- Final rule to extend the temporary suspension: November 23, 1998

### **Play Areas.**

The Board convened a 27-member advisory committee to make recommendations on issues related to making various recreation areas accessible. The committee met from July 1993 - May 1994. Some issues remained where consensus was needed. This included play areas, playground surfaces, and play equipment.

The Board created a 17-member Play Areas Regulatory Negotiation Committee to achieve consensus requirements for access to play areas. The committee presented its consensus report to the Board in July 1997. At the same meeting, the Board approved an NPRM on access to play areas. The Board published the NPRM in April 1998 and held one public hearing in Denver, Colorado to receive additional feedback during the comment period. The final rule was published in October 2000. In November 2000, the Board published an amended advisory note to the accessibility guidelines which clarified that play components that are attached to a composite play structure and can be approached from a platform or deck are elevated play components. These play components are not considered ground level play components also, and do not count toward meeting the number of ground level play components that must be located on an accessible route.

- Notice of intent to establish regulatory negotiation committee: December 22, 1995
- Notice establishing regulatory negotiation committee: February 14, 1996
- Full committee meetings: March 5-7, 1996; May 8-10, 1996; August 4-6, 1996; October 26-28; January 6-9, 1997; April 2-4, 1997; July 8-9, 1997
- Committee presented report to the Board - July 9, 1997
- Notice of proposed rulemaking: April 30, 1998
- Public hearing: June 3, 1998
- Final rule: October 18, 2000
- Amended advisory note: November 20, 2000
- Department of Justice adopted guidelines: July 23, 2010

### **Electronic and Information Technology.**

In August 1998, the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, which includes the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998, was signed into law. Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments requires that when federal departments or agencies develop, procure, maintain, or use electronic and information technology, they shall ensure that the technology is accessible to people with disabilities, unless an undue burden would be imposed on the department or agency.

Section 508 required the Board to publish standards setting forth a definition of electronic and information technology and the technical and functional performance criteria for such technology. The Board and GSA were required to provide technical assistance to individuals and federal departments and agencies concerning the requirements of Section 508.

In developing its standards, the Board was required to consult with various federal agencies, the electronic and information technology industry, and appropriate public or nonprofit agencies or organizations, including organizations representing individuals with disabilities. The Board convened a 27-member Electronic and Information Technology Access Advisory Committee to assist in developing its standards. The Committee presented its report to the Board in May 1999. The Board issued a notice of proposed rulemaking on access to electronic and information technology in March 2000. A final rule was published in December 2000. In April 2001, the Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council incorporated the Board's standards into revisions to the Federal Acquisition Regulations.

- Notice of intent to establish advisory committee: August 24, 1998

- Notice establishing advisory committee: September 29, 1998
- Full committee meetings: October 15-16, 1998; December 1-2, 1998; January 5-6, 1999; February 8-9, 1999; March 29-30, 1999; May 11-12, 1999
- Committee presented recommendations to the Board: May 12, 1999
- Notice of proposed rulemaking: March 31, 2000
- Final rule: December 21, 2000
- Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council incorporated the Board's standards into revisions to the Federal Acquisition Regulations: April 25, 2001

### **Recreation Facilities.**

This rulemaking addresses recreation facilities including sports facilities, places of amusement, golf, and boating and fishing facilities. The Board convened a 27-member advisory committee to make recommendations on issues related to making these areas accessible. The committee met from July 1993 - May 1994. After receiving the committee's report, the Board published it as an ANPRM. Over 600 comments were received on the report and questions asked in the ANPRM. It also sponsored an information meeting on access to miniature golf facilities in September 1996 to obtain additional information on some issues related to access to miniature golf courses.

The Board published an NPRM for sports facilities, places of amusement, golf, and boating and fishing facilities in July 1999 and held two public hearings to receive feedback during the comment period. The NPRM was based on the recommendations of the advisory committee and public comments received in response to the ANPRM and information meeting. The comment period closed in December 1999. Over 300 comments were received on the proposed rule. The Board also sponsored an information meeting on access to amusement rides in December 1999 to clarify concerns raised by the amusement industry during the public comment period.

To provide more opportunities for input, in July 2000 the Board placed in the docket for review and comment, a summary of recommendations made by an ad hoc committee of the Board for the final recreation facilities guidelines. The summary reflected the ad hoc committee's consideration of comments on the proposed rule and information gathered at meetings sponsored by the committee. The Board held two information meetings in Washington, D.C. and San Francisco, California to discuss the summary. In September 2002, the Board issued a final rule.

- Notice of intent to establish advisory committee: February 3, 1993
- Notice establishing advisory committee: June 10, 1993
- Full committee meetings: July 15-16, 1993; October 23-25, 1993; January 28-30, 1994; March 18-20, 1994; May 20-22, 1994 (numerous
- Subcommittee meetings were also held)
- Committee presented recommendations to the Board: July 13, 1994
- Advance notice of proposed rulemaking: September 21, 1994
- Information meeting on miniature golf facilities: September 16, 1996
- Notice of proposed rulemaking: July 9, 1999
- Information meeting on amusement rides: December 1, 1999
- Public hearing: August 26, 1999; November 17, 1999
- Notice of draft final guidelines summary and informational meetings: July 21, 2000

- Information meetings: August 21-22, 2000; September 6-7, 2000
- Final rule: September 3, 2002
- Department of Justice adopted guidelines: July 23, 2010

### **ADAAG Revision and Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Guidelines.**

This rulemaking revised ADAAG, updated the Minimum Guidelines and Requirements for Accessible Design (MGRAD) for federal facilities covered by the ABA, and created new guidelines for accessible housing.

The rulemaking consists of separate scoping and application sections for each law and one set of technical requirements for both the ADA and the ABA. The ADA scoping section is based on recommendations of the Board's ADAAG Review Advisory Committee and covers private facilities (places of public accommodation and commercial facilities) and state and local government facilities. The other scoping section addresses federally funded facilities covered by the ABA. New scoping and technical provisions for accessible housing are included in this rule and are based on requirements for "Type A" dwelling units contained in the 1998 edition of the ICC/ANSI A117.1 standard, "Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities."

The Board established a 22-member ADAAG Review Advisory Committee to review and make recommendations for updating ADAAG to ensure that it remains consistent with technological developments and changes in model codes and national standards and continues to meet the needs of people with disabilities. The committee developed a comprehensive set of recommendations addressing the format of the guidelines, its numbering system, and changes to the scoping provisions and technical requirements. Cited as an outstanding example of reinventing government, the committee and the Board received the Vice-President's Hammer Award in July 1996.

The Board issued a proposed rule in November 1999. The comment period closed in May 2000. Over 2,500 comments were received on the proposed rule. The Board held two public hearings (Los Angeles, California on January 31, 2000 and Arlington, Virginia on March 13, 2000). It also held informational meetings in Washington, D.C. in October 2000 to hear from industry associations and disability groups on issues regarding automated teller machines, reach ranges, and captioning equipment for movie theaters. In April 2002, the Board placed in the docket for public review a draft of the final guidelines to promote the harmonization of the Board's guidelines with the International Code Council (ICC)/American National Standards Institute (ANSI) A117.1 Standard on Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities and the International Building Code. The ANSI Committee and the ICC were currently in the process of revising the private sector accessibility provisions. Without taking this step, an important opportunity would have been missed to harmonize the Board's guidelines with those of the private sector.

- Notice of intent to establish advisory committee: April 6, 1994
- Notice establishing advisory committee: September 14, 1994
- Full committee meetings: October 24-25, 1994; January 26-27, 1995; April 26-29, 1995; February 26 - March 1, 1996; July 7-9, 1996; August 26-28, 1996 (numerous subcommittee meetings were also held)
- Committee presented recommendations to the Board: July 10, 1996

- Notice of proposed rulemaking: November 16, 1999
- Public hearing: January 31, 2000; March 13, 2000
- Information meeting: October 24-25, 2000
- Draft final rule: April 2, 2002
- Final rule: July 23, 2004
- U.S. Postal Service adopted guidelines: May 17, 2005
- General Services Administration adopted guidelines: November 8, 2005
- Department of Transportation adopted guidelines: October 30, 2006
- Department of Defense adopted guidelines: October 31, 2008
- Department of Justice adopted guidelines: September 15, 2010

### **Outdoor Developed Areas.**

The Board created a 26-member Outdoor Developed Areas Regulatory Negotiation Committee to achieve a consensus approach and requirements for making outdoor developed areas accessible. The Committee presented its report in September 1999. In October 2001, the Board sponsored an information meeting on the committee's report in Denver, CO during the annual meeting of the National Recreation and Park Association.

An NPRM for federal facilities covered by the ABA was published in June 2007. The Board held three public hearings in Denver, CO; Washington, DC; and Indianapolis, IN. In October 2009, it released draft final guidelines for public comment. Approximately 80 comments were received. A final rule was published in September 2013. Proposed guidelines for non-federal sites will be published for comment at a future date.

- Notice of intent to establish regulatory negotiation committee: April 18, 1997
- Notice establishing regulatory negotiation committee: June 4, 1997
- Full committee meetings: June 26-27, 1997; September 24-26, 1997; December 14-16, 1997; January 31-February 2, 1998; May 18-21, 1998; August 11-14, 1998; October 21-24, 1998; January 19-22, 1999; April 27-30, 1999; July 15-16, 1999
- Committee presented report to the Board: September 15, 1999
- Information meeting: October 4, 2001
- Notice of proposed rulemaking: June 20, 2007
- Draft final rule: October 19, 2009
- Final rule: September 26, 2013

### **Emergency Transportable Housing.**

A federal advisory committee on emergency transportable housing was created to provide recommendations on supplementing its guidelines to specifically cover emergency transportable housing. Access to such housing proved problematic in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and, after verifying and examining the issues involved, the Board determined that supplementary guidelines were needed. The committee included representation from disability groups, industry and code groups, and government agencies. The committee presented its report to the Board in November 2008. The Board published a proposed rule in June 2012; the comment period closed in August 2012. One public hearing was held in July 2012. At the close of the comment period,

the Board received 45 comments, including those from the public hearing. A final rule was published in May 2014.

- Notice of intent to establish advisory committee: June 25, 2007
- Notice establishing advisory committee: August 23, 2007
- Full committee meetings: September 24-25, 2007; November 19-20, 2007; January 24-25, 2008; February 14, 2008; March 27-28, 2008; July 9, 2008; July 24, 2008; August 21, 2008
- Committee presented recommendations to the Board: November 18, 2008
- Notice of proposed rulemaking: June 18, 2012
- Public hearing: July 11, 2012
- Final rule: May 7, 2014

### **ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) for Transportation Vehicles – Update (non-rail vehicles).**

In April 2007, the Board released for public comment a preliminary draft of revisions updating its accessibility guidelines for buses and vans covered by the ADA. It received approximately 90 comments. The Board used this input to refine the draft and then published a second draft in November 2008 for additional comment. An NPRM to revise and update the accessibility guidelines for buses, over-the-road buses, and vans was published in July 2010. Two public hearings were held during the comment period. One important issue was raised after the close of the comment period. As a result, the Board re-opened the comment period for additional public input related to the late comments. The commenters raised issues about the 1:6 ramp slope requirements and a new design that locates the shallower ramp partially inside the vehicle. This design constrains the maneuvering space within the vehicle at the top of the ramp and at the fare box and creates a grade break within the ramp run. During the extended comment period, which ended in October 2012, the Board held two information meetings to gather input on these issues. A final rule was published in December 2016.

- Draft guidelines for buses and vans: April 11, 2007
- Second draft of guidelines for buses and vans: November 19, 2008
- Notice of proposed rulemaking: July 26, 2010
- Public hearings: September 30, 2010; November 8, 2010
- Re-opening of comment period: August 20, 2012
- Public hearings: September 19, 2012; October 2, 2012
- Final rule: December 14, 2016

### **Information and Communication Technology.**

In July 2006, the Board created an advisory committee to update and revise the Section 508 standards and the Telecommunications Act Accessibility Guidelines. Forty-one organizations served on the Telecommunications and Electronic and Information Technology Advisory Committee. The committee's membership included representatives from industry, disability groups, standard-setting bodies in the U.S. and abroad, and government agencies, among others. The committee completed its work and presented its report to the Board in April 2008. In March 2010, the Board published an ANPRM and held two public hearings during the comment period. In response to this input, it published a second ANPRM in December 2011; two hearings were

held. A proposed rule was published in February 2015. Three public hearings and a webinar on the proposed rule were held during the comment period. A final rule was published in January 2017.

On January 22, 2018, the Board issued a correction to its updated accessibility requirements for ICT to restore provisions on TTY access that were inadvertently omitted. The original Section 508 standards and Section 255 guidelines required that devices with two-way voice communication support use of TTY devices which provide text communication across phone connections for persons with hearing or speech impairments. In its ICT refresh, the Board had proposed replacing this provision with a requirement for real-time text (RTT) functionality, a new technology with significant advantages over TTYs. In finalizing the rule, however, the Board chose to reserve the RTT requirement because the Federal Communications Commission had initiated its own rulemaking to address RTT functionality. In doing so, the Board intended to add the original TTY provision back into the rule, but the necessary language was unintentionally omitted. The correction notice restored the TTY requirement with minor editorial changes for consistency with the new format and terminology of the updated requirements and corrected two typographical errors in other sections of the rule.

- Notice of intent to establish advisory committee: April 18, 2006
- Notice establishing advisory committee: July 6, 2006
- Full committee meetings: September 27-29, 2006; November 7-8, 2006; February 6-8, 2007; May 22-24, 2007; July 16-18, 2007; September 4-6, 2007; November 13-16, 2007
- Committee presented recommendations to the Board: April 3, 2008
- Advance notice of proposed rulemaking: March 22, 2010
- Public hearings: March 25, 2010; May 12, 2010
- Advance notice of proposed rulemaking: December 8, 2011
- Public hearings: January 11, 2012; March 1, 2012
- Notice of proposed rulemaking: February 27, 2015
- Final rule: January 18, 2017
- Correction notice (direct final rule; request for comments): January 22, 2018

### **Public Rights-of-Way (including Shared Use Paths).**

When the Board issued final rules for state and local governments in 1998, it decided to reserve provisions for public rights-of-way, due in large measure to the concerns of the transportation community expressed in comment to the Board on proposed and interim final rules for entities covered by title II of the ADA. Rather than finalizing the guidelines for public rights-of-way, the Board began an ambitious outreach plan to the highway industry. The Board produced a series of videos, an accessibility checklist, and a design guide on accessible public rights-of-way.

Following this outreach, the Board decided to reinstate rulemaking by convening a federal advisory committee to develop recommendations for the guidelines. In October 1999, the Board created a 31-member Public Rights-of-Way Access Advisory Committee. Representatives of a wide range of stakeholders, including transportation industry organizations and disability and pedestrian advocates developed recommendations for scoping and technical provisions addressing access to sidewalks, street crossings, and related pedestrian facilities. The committee presented its report to the Board in January 2001.

In June 2002, the Board released draft guidelines for public comment based on the committee's recommendations. A public meeting on the draft guidelines was held in Portland, OR in October 2002.

In November 2005, the Board revised the draft guidelines based on public comments on the initial draft and released them as a notice of availability. This action was done to assist the Board in preparing a regulatory assessment of the impacts of the rule. A proposed rule was published for public comment in July 2011; two hearings were held, and the comment period closed in February 2012.

When the Board approved draft final accessibility guidelines for trails, coverage of shared use paths was deferred to future rulemaking. Commenters on the outdoor developed areas rule had previously raised concerns about the need for differing guidelines for shared use paths. Commenters noted that shared use paths differ from trails and typically are in more developed outdoor areas, as opposed to the more primitive trail settings. Unlike trails, shared use paths are designed to serve both bicyclists and pedestrians and are used for transportation and recreation purposes.

As a result, the Board initiated rulemaking to cover shared use paths. In September 2010, it held a public information meeting in conjunction with the ProWalk/ProBike 2010 Conference. This meeting provided an opportunity for individuals with disabilities, designers of shared use paths, and others with expertise in this area to share information with the Board to assist in the development of new accessibility guidelines. It then published an ANPRM for shared use paths in March 2011. In February 2013, the Board published a Supplemental Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to include requirements for shared use paths as part of the public rights-of-way rule. The Board suspended action on this rule in 2017 in light of Executive Order 13777 *Enforcing the Regulatory Reform Agenda*, which was rescinded in January 2021.

- Notice of proposed rulemaking: December 21, 1992
- Interim final rule: June 20, 1994
- Final rule: January 13, 1998 (public rights-of-way not included in the final rule)
- Notice of intent to establish advisory committee: August 12, 1999
- Notice establishing advisory committee: October 20, 1999
- Full committee meetings: December 2-3, 1999; February 9-11, 2000; May 18-19, 2000; August 16-18, 2000; October 18-20, 2000
- Committee presented recommendations to the Board: January 10, 2001
- Draft guidelines: June 17, 2002
- Public hearing: October 8, 2002
- Notice of availability of second set of draft guidelines: November 23, 2005
- Notice of proposed rulemaking: July 26, 2011
- Information meeting on shared use paths: September 13, 2010
- Advance notice of proposed rulemaking on shared use paths: March 28, 2011
- Supplemental notice of proposed rulemaking on shared use paths: February 14, 2013
- Final rule published: August 8, 2023

- GSA Adopted PROWAG Under ABA: July 3, 2024
- DOT Adopted PROWAG Under ADA: December 18, 2024

## APPENDIX C

### ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS ACT CASES

	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026 (est.)	FY 2027 (est.)
Complaints pending at start of the fiscal year	127	161	237	290	305
Complaints received during the fiscal year	201	341	320	300	335
Total complaints closed during the fiscal year (details in the next table)	167	265	267	285	305
Complaints pending at end of the fiscal year	161	237	290	305	335

### REASONS FOR CLOSURE OF COMPLAINTS CLOSED DURING THE FISCAL YEAR

	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026 (est.)	FY 2027 (est.)
Investigation resulted in completed corrective action	54	77	100	100	110
Investigation resulted in a determination that we did not have jurisdiction	22	31	12	15	15
Investigation resulted in a determination that there was no violation of the standards	17	24	17	20	20
Waiver or modification issued by the standard-setting agency	1	1	1	1	1
Referred without an investigation	73	124	127	140	150
Administrative closure	0‡	0‡	10‡	9‡	9
Total complaints closed during the fiscal year	167	265	267	285	305

‡ Note: The use of the “administrative closure” designation has varied over time. Prior to FY 2023, the Access Board used the “administrative closure” label for complaints that included unintelligible or “spam” filings and complaints that lacked sufficient details to discern the nature of the allegations. In FY 2023, the Board discontinued the practice of counting spam filings as complaints and ceased to use the “administrative closure” designation. However, during FY 2025, the Access Board resumed the “administrative closure” of cases, using that designation only for complaints stating potential ABA violations, but where staff was unable to obtain

sufficient information from the complainant or other sources to pursue resolution of the complaint.

## APPENDIX D

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### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE DATA

	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026 (est.)
Technical Assistance (Calls and Faxes)	5,352	5,770	4,741	4,500
Website User Sessions	2,330,559	2,600,000	2,500,000	2,500,000

### TRAINING DATA

	FY2023	FY 2024	FY2025	FY 2026 (est.)
Training Sessions	127	117	78	75
Training Participants	20,382	24,894	15,112	16,000

## APPENDIX E

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### AGENCY PERFORMANCE PLAN

The Board's FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan includes four goals and a stewardship objective:

- Establish technical specifications for accessible design
- Provide education and information on the importance and implementation of accessible design
- Improve the accessibility of the federal government
- Promote accessibility throughout society
- Improve agency systems and modernize operations

The Board established long- and short-range goals and annual objectives that describe the strategies it will implement to achieve the goals.

### ESTABLISH TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS FOR ACCESSIBLE DESIGN

The Board will continue to develop and update accessibility guidelines and standards and work cooperatively with organizations that develop codes and standards affecting accessibility. It has developed the following objectives for this program area:

- Develop and update technical specifications to achieve accessibility standards that will be enforceable under the ABA as to the ABA standard-setting agencies – The United States Postal Service (USPS), the General Services Administration (GSA), the Department of Defense (DOD), and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and – that adopts them.
- Coordinate with standards and codes organizations to build effective industry accessibility standards
- Engage with the public to provide information about the development of accessible design
- Address accessibility of emerging technologies and design trends
- Collaborate with organizations to encourage research on accessibility

### FY 2026: Rulemaking

The Board plans to propose the following regulatory actions that it considers required by statute or outside the scope of E.O. 14192:

#### *Guidelines for Universal (or Adult) Changing Tables*

The FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 requires that mid-sized and large airports seeking certain federal funds, beginning in 2030, provide at least one universal changing table in each terminal building. The legislation directs the Access Board to issue comprehensive accessible design standards for universal changing tables, as well as standards addressing their privacy,

accessibility, and sanitation, by May 2026. The Access Board intends to seek approval to publish an ANPRM seeking public input on the guidelines early in FY 2026.

The Board also proposes to issue direct final rules that would (1) update the agency's procedures under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act with respect to non-discrimination on the basis of disability in its federally-conducted programs and activities, and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, requiring that all information and communication technology procured, developed, maintained, or used by the Board be readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities; and (2) update its regulations for handling requests under the Freedom of Information Act. As these regulations govern only agency organization, management, or personnel, they are not subject to the deregulatory requirements of E.O. 14192. During FY 2026, staff will draft these rules, at least one of which may be completed by the end of the fiscal year.

### **FY 2027: Rulemaking**

In FY 2027, the Board aims to publish the following rulemaking documents, if approved:

- Proposed standards for universal changing tables at airports subject to certain requirements in the FAA Reauthorization Act, and perhaps a final rule that would establish the standards.
- A direct final rule setting forth Access Board obligations and procedures under Section 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act if this has not been published in FY 2026.
- A direct final rule on processing requests under the Freedom of Information Act if this rule has not been published in FY 2026.

### **FY 2026: Codes and Standards**

The Board will continue to work with the aforementioned private sector codes and standards organizations, and interagency work groups to harmonize the Board's guidelines with model codes and standards domestically and internationally.

### **FY 2027: Codes and Standards**

The Board will continue to develop and update accessibility guidelines and standards and work cooperatively with organizations that develop codes and standards affecting accessibility.

## **PROVIDE EDUCATION AND INFORMATION ON THE IMPORTANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ACCESSIBLE DESIGN**

The Board provides training and technical assistance on accessibility guidelines and standards to a wide variety of individuals in addition to both public and private entities, including architects, builders, designers, technology companies, manufacturers, people with disabilities, disabled veterans, state and local governments, and federal agencies. The Board's long-range goal is to be known as a leading source of information on accessible design.

The Board maintains the following objectives to provide education and information on the importance and implementation of accessible design:

- Provide training on accessible design and the Board’s guidelines and standards
- Provide technical assistance on the implementation of accessibility guidelines and standards
- Create guides, manuals, and animations to promote understanding of accessible design
- Use stakeholders’ feedback to improve information services
- Conduct and sponsor research on accessible design and technical innovations

### **FY 2026: Training & Technical Assistance**

#### *Online Guides, Webinars, and Website*

The Board will continue developing materials for the online guides to the ADA and ABA accessibility standards. Technical guides covering Chapter 7: Communication Elements and Features of the standards are being finalized and will be released in FY 2026. These guides will address fire alarm systems, telephones, detectable warnings, assistive listening systems, ATMs and fare machines, and two-way communication systems. During FY 2026, technical guides covering Chapter 9: Built-In Elements will begin development, which covers drinking surfaces, work surfaces, benches, check-out aisles, and sales and service counters. Future installments to the guides will be released and announced through Board email subscribers as they become available.

In FY 2026, the Board will continue to offer its webinar series for the built environment and information and communication technology, which will reflect updated guides, most recent rulemaking activities, Board priorities, and best practices.

### **FY 2027: Training & Technical Assistance**

The Board will continue to improve its website, continue developing technical guides, and responding to information and training requests from a range of stakeholders (including business, government, and individual consumers).

## **IMPROVE THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

The Board is committed to improving the accessibility of the federal government and has the following objectives in this program area:

- Improve the accessibility of federal buildings and facilities through enhanced awareness and robust enforcement of the Architectural Barriers Act
- Improve accessibility of federal information and communication technology through collaboration with other federal agencies
- Be a model employer of persons with disabilities

## **FY 2026: ABA Enforcement and Awareness**

The Board will continue to investigate complaints under the ABA. Based on complaint receipts and closures to date in the current fiscal year, it expects to receive 300 new complaints, and close 285. Of the 285, the Board expects to close 100 following investigations resulting in the completion of corrective action, with an additional 15 investigations resulting in determinations that it lacked jurisdiction and 20 that the complaint allegations did not amount to a violation of the standards, as well as a single complaint where we are expecting the agency to issue a waiver. The Board expects to refer complainants to other federal agencies in 140 matters when it is clear—prior to the commencing of an investigation—that the allegations relate to a disability-related or civil rights law other than the ABA.

The Board will continue providing periodic updates to complainants on the status of their complaints. It will continue refining program processes based on performance measures previously developed to better increase efficiency in the operation of the compliance and enforcement program.

In FY 2026, we will consider ways of increasing outreach on the ABA in areas of the country where complaint data suggests a possible lack of awareness (e.g., areas in which there are a significant number of ABA-covered facilities as compared to a relatively low number of complaints). We will also continue the practice of conducting site investigations where appropriate, such as where we do not receive timely or accurate information in response to requests or where circumstances might prevent an agency from providing us with sufficient documentary evidence of violations or corrective action. Subject to any hiring limitations that might exist, we would seek to increase the capacity of the ABA compliance and enforcement program to timely investigate and resolve complaints by adding at least one compliance specialist.

## **FY 2027: ABA Enforcement and Awareness**

The Board will continue to provide effective and responsible customer service and increase efficiency in the operation of the compliance and enforcement program. We anticipate a rise in the number of complaints received and resolutions in FY 2027 over our FY 2026 estimate. We estimate the total number of new complaints for FY 2027 to be 335. We expect to close 305 complaints. Closures will include 110 complaints resolved with corrective action; 15 for lack of ABA jurisdiction following an investigation; 20 in which we find there is no violation; one because of a waiver; and 150 referrals without investigation where complaints concern alleged violations of law not covered by the ABA.

We will evaluate existing goals for the program and implement additional metrics, which may include where we have sufficient data, establishing timeframes within which we will acknowledge receipt of complaints, within which we will contact agencies to initiate investigations and goals for the reduction of the number of open complaints; and within which we will make a determination whether ABA violations exist after receiving a complaint.

## **FY 2026: Accessible Federal Information and Communication Technology**

During FY 2026 the Board will contribute to the FY 2025 Section 508 Governmentwide Assessment Report by providing data analysis and recommendations to improve Section 508 compliance across government. As the assessment is conducted and reported annually, the Board will collaborate with GSA and OMB to develop assessment criteria for the FY 2026 governmentwide assessment. The Board and GSA will assist agencies that must respond to the assessment criteria by addressing their inquiries.

The Board will further leverage its roles in co-chairing two subcommittees of the Federal Chief Information Officers Council (CIOC) Accessibility Community of Practice. Continuous efforts are underway to identify best practices in Section 508 that can be promoted for use at other agencies. In addition, the Board will provide bi-monthly Section 508 best practices webinars and will co-sponsor the annual Interagency Accessibility Forum (IAAF) that educates federal employees on the latest developments in accessible information and communication technology.

As a leader of the Section 508 ICT Testing Baseline Portfolio and the W3C Accessibility Conformance Testing (ACT) (international), the Board will continue to develop testing baselines for ICT covered by Section 508. To expand the Baseline Portfolio, the Board will continue to collaborate with GSA to further develop the baselines for software and hardware.

The Board will continue the development of Baseline alignment tools, including further development of test cases and the alignment reporting tool. Collaboration with the University of Maryland will continue on the Baseline for Web workshop to develop a hybrid test methodology which combines automated test tools and manual testing to ensure accurate and consistent test results for Section 508 conformance.

The Board plans to continue its contributions to W3C WAI activities, including support of the Accessibility Guidelines Working Group and facilitating the Accessibility Conformance Testing Task Force (ACT TF).

## **FY 2027: Accessible Federal Information and Communication Technology**

The Board plans to continue its collaborations with GSA, OMB, and other federal agencies in further promoting ICT accessibility in FY 2027, including the development of annual Section 508 Assessment criteria, and contributing to the annual report.

The Board intends to expand the Section 508 ICT Testing Baseline Portfolio by releasing baselines for software and hardware and the Baseline for Web Alignment Framework. Additionally, the Board will identify test processes that align to the Baseline Portfolio. The collaborative project with the University of Maryland is expected to conclude with the development of a hybrid test methodology for web content. This methodology will combine automated test tools and manual testing to ensure accurate and consistent test results for Section 508 conformance, aligning with the Baseline for Web.

The Board will continue to support any new OMB directives to agencies regarding compliance with the Section 508 accessibility standards and will assist with agency reporting requirements.

### **FY 2026: Model Employer of Persons with Disabilities**

Consistent with Executive Order 14356, “*Ensuring Continued Accountability in Federal Hiring*”, the Board will implement hiring practices that ensure the necessary accommodations are provided for individuals with disabilities. This will allow applicants to have equal opportunities to demonstrate their qualifications during the hiring process, while prioritizing the recruitment of individuals committed to improving the efficiency of the federal government.

In FY 2026, the Board is continuing its efforts to ensure that leaders at all levels promote the vision for a model EEO workplace. The Board will partner with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to conduct a needs assessment to identify areas where managers and employees require training and development. Additionally, the Board is improving the consistency of desired outcomes by strengthening policies and procedures.

### **FY 2027: Model Employer of Persons with Disabilities**

The Board plans to continue its efforts and practices for employing people with disabilities in FY 2027. As part of this effort, the agency will develop a high-performing workforce that reflects the various communities the Board serves by optimizing outreach.

The Board continually seeks to improve its ability to prevent and address disability discrimination. Furthermore, the Board is working towards providing workforce training, to include general EEO training for employees and management.

## **PROMOTE ACCESSIBILITY THROUGHOUT SOCIETY**

As noted above, the Board’s technical assistance and ABA enforcement program contribute to promoting accessibility in various segments of society. The Board also promotes accessibility in the public sphere in other ways, apprising various audiences about accessible design, disability-related issues, and its programs and services. The Board has two primary objectives in this program area:

- Identify and address inequities in accessibility faced by underserved communities
- Identify and work to address barriers to accessibility beyond those covered by the Board’s guidelines and standards

The Board approaches these objectives with four strategies:

5. To sustain and increase public awareness of the Board and its activities
6. To hold events where the Board can hear from members of the public
7. To learn more about communities impacted by accessibility barriers and disability-related concerns
8. To strengthen relationships with Board stakeholders

## **FY 2026**

Thus far in FY 2026, the Board continues to promote awareness of its work, programs, and service. The Board also plans to execute the following activities in FY 2026:

4. In May 2026, the Board will host a town hall in Providence, Rhode Island to learn about the state of accessibility in the region directly from residents, as well as to share information about the Board's rulemaking agenda and services. The Board will meet with city and state officials to promote accessibility in government services, as well as provide training directly to staff from all levels of government. The Board will also meet with various representatives from local tourism agencies, tribal communities, and local disability advocates to promote accessibility and increase awareness of the Access Board's technical assistance services.
5. A pre-meeting visit to Nashville, TN to plan and prepare for the April 2027 Board meeting will take place late in FY 2026. Planned meetings will take place with local and federal government leadership, accessibility focused organizations, and residents.
6. The January 2026 Board meeting will be virtual and largely focus on next steps and preparations for the May 2026 out-of-town meeting in Providence, RI.

### *Outreach*

The Board will continue to undertake initiatives to enhance equity for historically underserved communities. As part of this effort, the Board finalized its Communication and Outreach Strategy and Plan in FY 2024, which included a particular focus on outreach activities that provide information on services and programs to underserved communities with high rates of disability and professionals serving those communities. Throughout FY 2025, the Board's Public Affairs Program began implementation of the communication plan to help improve the agency's outreach efforts. The Board continues to establish and strengthen relationships with other federal agencies that own or lease federal facilities where in-person services are provided to underserved communities with high rates of disability. As noted above, the Board works with federal agencies to establish ABA compliance strategies aimed at proactively ensuring the accessibility of buildings and facilities in underserved communities through accessibility assessments and the remediation of architectural barriers.

## **FY 2027**

The Board aims to strengthen relationships with existing stakeholders and audiences by continuing to reach out to professional associations, trade groups, federal agencies, and other organizations whose stakeholders can benefit from its services and programs. Additionally, the Board will continue to build relationships with other federal agencies who serve underserved communities, including Tribal Nations. One of the goals of this work is to listen to and learn about accessibility and barriers in Tribal communities through attendance at Tribal conferences and gatherings, presentations to Tribal leadership and officials, and hosting listening sessions.

The Board also aims to acquire new stakeholders and audiences, including those in underserved communities, through outreach, promotional materials development, and more Spanish-

translated agency documents. These activities are included in the Board’s Communication and Outreach Strategy and Plan. Moreover, the Access Board developed a new series of one-page fact sheets for distribution at public events. Several fact sheets were developed, with each focusing on a specific subject matter, such as built environment accessibility, the Architectural Barriers Act, and an overview of the U.S. Access Board. Per the Board’s Communication and Outreach Strategy and Plan, the latter fact sheet was translated into Spanish and has been regularly distributed at public events, including the Board’s meeting in New Orleans, LA.

At the April 2025 Board meeting, the Board voted for the 2027 out-of-town meeting and town hall to take place in Nashville, TN. Possible events and meetings include a panel discussion on music venue accessibility; an “accessibility walk” to view accessibility issues and solutions in the public right-of-way; and meetings with city and state officials to understand efforts to improve accessibility in Tennessee. Additionally, the Board will host its annual town hall meeting in Nashville to hear directly from residents regarding the state of accessibility in their community. The 2027 out-of-town meeting and town hall will support the ongoing objectives of the Board.

FY 2027 Board meetings will take place in October 2026, January, April, and July 2027. The October and January meetings will be virtual. The out-of-town meeting in Nashville, TN will take place in April. The July 2027 meeting will be held in-person in Washington, D.C.

## **IMPROVE AGENCY SYSTEMS AND MODERNIZE OPERATIONS**

For FY 2023 through FY 2026, the Board added a stewardship objective to its strategic plan to improve agency systems and modernize operations. The Board has created a multi-year Information Technology Strategic plan and roadmap to guide its current and future IT investments and objectives including software, hardware, data center operations, and the mandated cyber security initiatives. The Board has set the following objectives:

- Use data and technology to modernize and enhance operations and services.
- Use tools and internal systems to consolidate and retain agency knowledge.
- Update agency policies, procedures, and administrative regulations.
- Safeguard Board’s staff, assets, and data against cyber security vulnerabilities.
- Implement automation for improved efficiency and cost savings.
- Modernize the USAB website for ease of use and easy access to important information.
- Creation of in-house applications to assist with on-going USAB staff activities.

The Modernizing Government Technology Act delivers a clear mandate to federal agencies to look for ways to increase efficiency and effectiveness and improve service to the public. The Board has a requirement to employ centralized identity management systems for agency users that can be integrated into applications and common platforms. Information Technology (IT) resources are critical in support of the Board’s strategic objective to improve agency systems and modernize operations. This objective includes using data and technology to enhance operations and services, using tools and internal systems to consolidate and retain agency knowledge, and updating agency policies, procedures, and administrative regulations. The Board plans to review

the possible use of artificial intelligence (AI) to automate recurring tasks for cost savings and improved productivity. To further the goals of creating a safe technical environment, the Board will strenuously work towards improved vulnerability management and staying ahead of the potential cyber security threats. The overall goal of the Board, in accordance with recent and ongoing IT mandates, is to create a common environment for enterprise platform standards, processes, and governance, modernize legacy agency equipment, and secure and enhance the IT infrastructure. The IT appropriation provides resources for IT security enhancement modernization efforts, continued adoption of cloud-based computing solutions, consolidation of infrastructure and networks, and the modernization of legacy IT systems and applications. This funding level will also support the maintenance and enhancement of foundational capabilities that facilitate cloud migration and increase functionality.