

# Fairfax County Park Authority

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LOB #338:

## **ADA (AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT) AND THERAPEUTIC SUPPORT**

### **Purpose**

This LOB provides prescribed and mandated access and ADA compliance to 426 parks and park facilities, staff training, and therapeutic support for residents, visitors, and employees. The therapeutic support includes leisure coaching, sign language interpreters, assisted listening devices, alternative formats, aquatic wheelchairs and other assistive devices to ensure that people with all abilities have access to parks and recreational activities and/or an accessible working environment.

The Board of Supervisors signed an agreement in 2011 to address the Department of Justice audit findings specific to program access and physical access to more than 426 park sites. Funding has come primarily from the General Fund in General Construction and Contributions funding along with Park Authority funding. In addition, this LOB also addresses the Transition Plan that was originally developed in the early 1990s and over time and as funding became available is being completed. Work is managed in collaboration with the Planning and Development Division as it pertains to buildings, trails and access, playgrounds, and fields. Updates to the ADA also impact the park system in the development of sites, use of technology, training requirements for staff and actual retrofitting as necessary within the transition plan. The ADA/Inclusion section is responsible for the development and management of adapted programs for customers with disabilities; management and coordination of facility accessibility issues and inclusion opportunities in programs and services; agency-wide compliance with the ADA.

### **Description**

This LOB ensures compliance with the ADA, which requires accessibility to facilities, programs, and services for citizens with physical or mental impairments. Accessibility may require physical modifications for facilities, program modifications, or services such as sign language interpreters. Costs to achieve compliance may be personnel (sign language interpreters), operating (minor physical changes to facilities or access routes, program modifications, or contracted sign language interpreters), or capital (major physical changes to facilities or access routes).

The agency has one full-time position that spends 95 percent of the time in interpretation of the ADA mandates for both program access and physical access requirements. Other staff time is distributed among exempt staff sign language interpreters, project managers working on ADA accessibility issues, program staff making program modifications, and maintenance staff performing minor physical modifications. The provision of ADA and inclusion programs is comprised of the following services:

**Inclusion** - Upon request, written accommodation plans, detailing needs and specific strategies, are provided for customers with disabilities participating in agency camps, classes and programs. Plans typically include techniques for behavior management, adaptations and modifications and are utilized to help ensure successful outcomes. Customers who are hard of hearing or deaf can request an interpreter to provide effective communication in any agency program or service.

**Leisure Coaching** - Based on assessed need, trained staff can be utilized, on a limited basis, to help transition the customer and implement the accommodation plan. Leisure coaches can also provide sensitivity training to other customers and help empower instructors or staff to make reasonable accommodations.

**Programming** - Recognizing that some customers with disabilities need more structure than standard classes or camps provide, traditional land and aquatic based programs are provided by staff to help facilitate the development of foundational skills for transitional opportunities into inclusive programs.

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**Facility Accessibility** - The ADA Coordinator can answer questions regarding the physical accessibility of agency facilities. All facilities are designed or renovated in compliance with the architectural guidelines set forth by the United States Access Board (ADAAG).

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance** - The ADA Coordinator is charged with ensuring agency compliance and enforcement of the ADA in the areas of employment, program access, new construction and alterations, communications, and technical assistance.

**Agency-Wide Support** - Staff support and guidance is provided to other divisions in the areas of:

- Planning, development and construction of new and altered facilities, including ADA interpretation and compliance requirements with construction plans and documents
- ADA quality assurance compliance via on-site construction reviews
- Employee accommodation requests
- Temporary event planning and accessibility requirements
- Customer ADA complaints
- Customer ADA requests
- Behavior management support for customers with disabilities
- Staff training and development
- Adaptations and accommodations for customers with disabilities in division programs and services

## Benefits

This federally mandated LOB provides equal access to all programs and services to all individuals regardless of ability. All residents and visitors have access to all park facilities.

## Mandates

This LOB is in place to ensure compliance with federal law, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), including changes made by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-325), which became effective on January 1, 2009.

## Trends and Challenges

The main trends include new and changing technology, and a need for medical knowledge by staff. The major challenges that this LOB faces include a growing customer base, hiring and training staff to deal with medical emergencies, and a growing complexity of medical challenges.

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## Resources

Category	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Adopted
<b>LOB #338: ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) and Therapeutic Support</b>			
<b>FUNDING</b>			
<b>Expenditures:</b>			
Compensation	\$276,753	\$285,533	\$311,447
Operating Expenses	49,851	52,266	53,777
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$326,604</b>	<b>\$337,799</b>	<b>\$365,224</b>
General Fund Expenditures	\$326,604	\$337,799	\$365,224
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>POSITIONS</b>			
Authorized Positions/Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)			
<b>Positions:</b>			
Regular	1 / 1.2	1 / 1.2	1 / 1.2
<b>Total Positions</b>	<b>1 / 1.2</b>	<b>1 / 1.2</b>	<b>1 / 1.2</b>

## Metrics

Metric Indicator	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Estimate	FY 2017 Estimate
Number of individuals with disabilities accessing programs and services	913	982	1,044	1,117	1,195
Percentage growth in access requests for inclusion services (over 2013 baseline)	No data available	7.60%	14.35%	28.92%	30.89%

All Park Authority programs are open to all individuals regardless of ability. This LOB supports unique requests for accommodations including one on one support through a leisure coach, sign language interpreters, auditory aids, aquatic wheelchairs and other assistive devices to provide inclusion for all Park Authority programs and services. This LOB does not include adapted aquatic programs.

The number of individuals with disabilities accessing programs and services and the percentage growth in access requests for inclusion services indicators are both projected to increase in FY 2016 and FY 2017 based on population growth as well as increased awareness by the public of the ADA and the inclusive program services provided by the FCPA.