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*Indiana Family and Social Services Administration*  
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# Accessibility Barrier Removal Procedure

## Purpose

The Indiana Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) is committed to ensuring equal access and navigation to agency facilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Architectural Barriers Act (ABA), and all other applicable federal, state, and local laws.

## Scope

This policy applies to all FSSA divisions, business units, and functional areas therein.

## Definitions

- **Accessibility barriers:** Architectural design of a building (e.g., stairs, doorways, hallway width, layout of room, etc.) which present additional barriers for people with disabilities.
- **Auxiliary aids:** Tools that help individuals with hearing, vision, or speech impairments affecting communications with others. Auxiliary aids and services can include qualified readers, taped text, audio recording, braille and large print materials, or other methods of making audible, written, and visually represented information accessible to individuals.
- **Barrier removal:** Removing or addressing architectural barriers where such removal can be carried out without much difficulty or expense.
- **Business unit:** Refers to all divisions, offices, and teams of staff who may not have a designated division.
- **Concerned party:** FSSA employees or visitors who have experienced and/or reported an accessibility barrier.
- **Contractor:** An individual or entity who has a professional services contract to perform consultation or work with or on the behalf of FSSA.
- **Disability:** The [ADA defines a disability](#) as a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. A person who has a record or history of having a disability, or an individual who is perceived as having a disability is also covered under this definition.
- **Legal counsel:** Refers to legal counsel involved in the barrier removal process including legal counsel handling leases and any FSSA legal counsel assisting with the complaint.
- **Office:** Refers to any space being leased or purchased to conduct business to the public on behalf of FSSA.
- **Supervisor:** Refers to business unit directors, managers, and all staff who supervise, lead, or oversee other staff.



## Introduction

The following procedure provides business units within FSSA a process to support barrier removal to comply with the ADA, ABA, and all other applicable federal, state, and local laws.

FSSA must be compliant with federal and state laws regarding physical and digital accessibility. It is the responsibility of FSSA business unit directors and supervisors to make the final decision about compliance. This includes encouraging contractors designated to work with the business unit to become and remain in compliance. The FSSA ADA Coordinator's role within the Office of Healthy Opportunities (OHO) is to provide ADA-related expertise, education, and guidance to encourage and monitor ADA compliance.

## Policy Statement

### ADA-related barrier removal complaint

- FSSA staff and visitors can submit ADA-related complaints or concerns to the FSSA ADA Coordinator or business unit leadership at any time. Staff and visitors can submit their complaints by emailing [ada@fssa.in.gov](mailto:ada@fssa.in.gov) or requesting a meeting with the FSSA ADA Coordinator.
- Complaints should include the following information, when possible:
  - Location or source of the accessibility barrier
    - When describing location, please include address of the physical building, suite or office number, and description of where the barrier is located in the building (e.g., the automated door in room E445 is not functioning).
  - Names of any staff or business unit leadership who were notified of the barrier previously.
    - Please include any information you can about what was discussed.
  - Explanation of how the accessibility barrier is limiting your access to physical spaces, needed tools and resources, and/or auxiliary aids.

*Please note:* Business unit leadership must notify the FSSA ADA Coordinator of any accessibility barrier complaint submitted by FSSA staff or visitors by email within 2–5 business days of receiving the complaint. Business unit leadership should include the same information as detailed above.

- The FSSA ADA Coordinator will review the information submitted to determine if the complaint is considered a barrier that FSSA can or should address.
- If the FSSA ADA Coordinator determines the complaint as an accessibility barrier, the FSSA ADA Coordinator will schedule a complaint review meeting with business unit leadership and the concerned party (if appropriate).
- An e-mail will be sent to the concerned party from the FSSA ADA Coordinator advising them that their concerns were received and are being handled by the business unit. If appropriate, contact information will be given for the business unit to discuss alternative arrangements until the barrier can be resolved.

## Complaint review meeting purpose and next steps

- The complaint review meeting purpose is to discuss the complaint, identify known facts, and learn if there were complaints filed in the online ticketing or record system that contractors use to monitor repair, modification, and ADA-related requests for physical locations. Reviewing this information will inform the FSSA ADA Coordinator and leadership on whether the concern or complaint that was originally shared constitutes an ADA complaint that needs resolution.
- The FSSA ADA Coordinator will draft documentation in conjunction with legal counsel and the business unit director or their designee to clarify the facts used to reach a decision. This information will be stored by the FSSA ADA Coordinator in a secure online location.
- If it is found that an FSSA ADA complaint is substantiated, the remaining steps outlined below in the barrier removal process will be followed.
- If the original claim does not result in a substantiated ADA complaint, then the concerned party will be contacted by the FSSA ADA Coordinator and informed of the decision along with available remedies.

## Barrier removal process

- Once a complaint is substantiated, the FSSA ADA Coordinator and business unit leadership will engage the appropriate partners and contractors to address the barrier.
- The FSSA ADA Coordinator will provide the contractor with the required and suggested recommendations for removing the barrier. This may include the following:
  - Appropriate measurements and height requirements
  - Proper equipment (e.g., door actuators, locking mechanisms, etc.)
  - Parking requirements for public visitors and employees
  - Spacing requirements in an employee's work area
- The contractor and FSSA ADA Coordinator will identify the relevant factors of the barrier and its removal. This information will be shared with business unit directors and legal counsel.
- All documentation will comply with the complaint process listed above.
- Legal counsel and the business unit director will make the final decision related to the barrier removal process and document it accordingly.
- Recurring meetings will be held between the FSSA ADA Coordinator, legal counsel, business unit directors, and contractor until the barriers and/or modifications have been implemented or resolved.