# PART A, CHAPTER 6: ACCESS AND ACCOMMODATIONS

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| **Policy Number** | **Authority** | **Scope** | **Effective Date** |
| Part A, Chapter 6 | [Americans with Disabilities Act](https://www.eeoc.gov/statutes/ada-amendments-act-2008) | All TWC-VR staff | 9/3/2024 |

## PURPOSE

In accordance with the authority (Federal and State) listed above, this policy is issued by the Texas Workforce Commission Vocational Rehabilitation Division (TWC-VR). Adherence to these rules and regulations issued under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by Title IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), supports Texans with disabilities in gaining, maintaining, and advancing in competitive integrated employment (CIE).

Specifically, the purpose of this policy and these procedures is to ensure adherence to providing the necessary access and accommodations to individuals with disabilities to participate in the VR program.

## DEFINITIONS

Access: A means of approaching or entering a place; obtaining, examining, or retrieving information.

Accommodations: Reasonable modifications or adjustments made in various aspects of employment, public services, and facilities to ensure equal opportunities and access for individuals with disabilities. These accommodations are designed to eliminate barriers and provide people with disabilities an equal chance to participate in various activities.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): Prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in several areas, including employment, transportation, public accommodations, communications, and access to State and local government programs and services.

Auxiliary Aids and Services: Devices or services that enable effective communication, typically for people who have difficulty with hearing, seeing, speaking, reading, writing, remembering, or understanding.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, including necessary and reasonable accommodations.

## POLICY

### General Overview

It is TWC-VR policy that accommodations, including auxiliary aids and services, must be provided, as needed, during the VR process to provide customers the ability to access and fully participate in their VR program (e.g., application, assessments, development, and implementation of Individualized Plans for Employment [IPE]).

It is TWC-VR policy that all individuals be provided access to buildings, offices, and events, as well as information provided in the preferred mode of communication to enhance understanding.

### Accommodations

Accommodations can vary depending on the specific needs of the individual. The goal is to create an inclusive environment that allows individuals with disabilities to participate fully in various aspects of society. The ADA prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities and promotes the idea that everyone should have equal opportunities and access.

Accommodations should be reasonable and not impose undue hardship on the employer or service provider. Examples of accommodations in different settings include the following:

* Employment: Providing accessible workspaces, modifying work schedules, providing assistive technology, or making adjustments to job duties.
* Public Services: Ensuring that public buildings, transportation, and services are accessible, such as installing ramps, elevators, or accessible restrooms.
* Education: Implementing modifications in the classroom, providing assistive technology, offering extended testing time, or providing accessible course materials.
* Public Accommodations: Ensuring that businesses, restaurants, and other public places are accessible, which may involve installing ramps, widening doorways, or providing alternative formats for written materials.
* Electronic and Information Resources (EIR): Ensuring all TWC websites and EIR are accessible to individuals with disabilities, including members of the public and agency employees.

Refer to the [TWC Accessibility Policy](https://www.twc.texas.gov/agency/twc-accessibility-policy) for more information.

## PROCEDURES

### General Overview

TWC-VR staff must follow the procedures outlined for Auxiliary Aids and Services, as well as other chapters of the VRSM outlining similar requirements.

## APPROVALS & CONSULTATIONS

There are no approvals or consultations for this policy and these procedures; however, consultation with VR Managers/Supervisors is encouraged as needed.

**REVIEW**

The Policy Planning and Statewide Initiatives Team, or designee, is responsible for reviewing this policy and these procedures and will update the Document History log if necessary.

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| **Date** | **Type** | **Change Description** |
| 9/3/2024 | New | VRSM Policy and Procedure Rewrite |