



35th Anniversary of the Americans With Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law on July 26, 1990. It is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in everyday activities. The ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability just as other civil rights laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, and religion. The ADA guarantees that people with disabilities have the same opportunities as everyone else to enjoy employment opportunities, purchase goods and services, and participate in state and local government programs and public places.

According to the ADA, a person with a disability is defined as someone who:

- has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities,
- has a history or record of such an impairment (such as cancer that is in remission), or
- is perceived by others as having such an impairment (such as a person who has scars from a severe burn).

If a person falls into any of these categories, the ADA protects them. Because the ADA is a law, and not a benefit program, you do not need to apply for coverage.

The ADA covers a wide variety of disabilities, and its regulations do not list all of them. Some disabilities are visible, and some are not. **Some examples of disabilities include:**

- Cancer
- Diabetes
- Post-traumatic stress disorder
- HIV
- Autism
- Cerebral palsy
- Deafness or hearing loss
- Blindness or low vision



- Epilepsy
- Mobility disabilities such as those requiring the use of a wheelchair, walker, or cane
- Intellectual disabilities
- Major depressive disorder
- Traumatic brain injury

Find out more about the **Introduction to the Americans with Disabilities Act.**

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