



SAN FRANCISCO HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

**Department of Disability  
and Aging Services**

# Mayor's Disability Council

Eli Gelardin, Director

Office on Disability and Accessibility

January 16th, 2026



Image: Wheelchair users protesting outside of San Francisco City Hall in 1977. One protester has a hand-made “We Shall Overcome” sign on the back of his wheelchair (black and white. Credit: Anthony Tusler)

# Director's Report

This report provides an overview of key issues and initiatives that the Office on Disability and Accessibility has been engaged with since the last MDC meeting. The Council is encouraged to follow up on any of these topics.

For public engagement, contact **ODA@sfgov.org** or call **415-554-6789** or visit our website.

[Office on Disability and Accessibility | sfhsa.org](https://sfhsa.org).



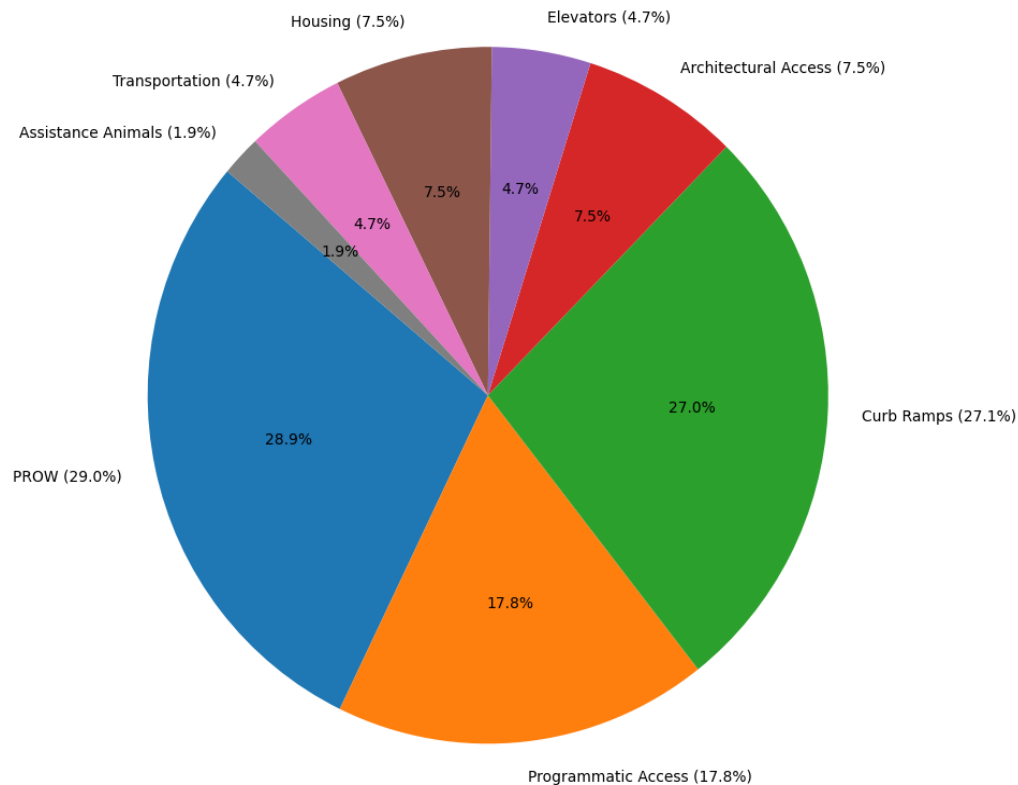
# ODA's Purpose

The San Francisco **Office on Disability & Accessibility (ODA)** helps ensure that the City's programs, services, facilities and digital information are accessible to people with disabilities of all ages and backgrounds. As the City's overall ADA Coordinator, ODA leads compliance with **Title II of the ADA** and other federal, state, and local disability access laws.

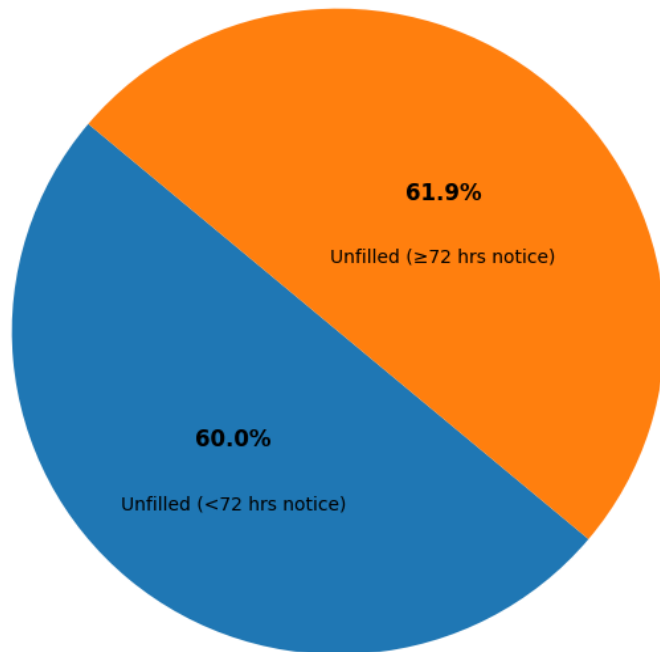
## Key Functions:

- Oversees the City's **ADA Transition Plan**, including capital planning and the City's ADA grievance and appeals procedures
- Provides **technical assistance** and **policy guidance** to City leadership and departments
- Supports the **Mayor's Disability Council**
- Serves as a **liaison to the disability community**
- Advises the **Mayor, Board of Supervisors, and City departments** on disability rights and accessibility

# ADA Grievances Received by ODA FY25-26 (July-December)



# ASL In-Person Interpreter Requests received by ODA FY25-26 (July-December)



# ADA Grievance Spotlight

An individual with a disability was repeatedly evicted from temporary housing while hospitalized and in rehabilitation due to a shelter policy requiring residents to return within seven days. The person argued this policy disproportionately impacts people with disabilities who need extended medical care.

Following a grievance filed under Title II of the ADA, the investigation confirmed the policy exists but emphasized that it must allow reasonable accommodations. The shelter system agreed to secure housing for the individual upon discharge and implemented staff training to ensure future cases include an interactive process for disability-related absences.

The resolution ensured the individual will have a placement after rehab and provided clear instructions for next steps, including appeal options through local and federal civil rights agencies.

# Policy Updates

## National

### H.R. 1634 — *ThinkDIFFERENTLY About Disability Employment Act*

**Status:** *Passed the House; referred to Senate committee.*

This bipartisan bill would require the **Small Business Administration (SBA)** to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the **National Council on Disability (NCD)** to help increase *employment opportunities for people with disabilities*, including support for disability entrepreneurs and self-employment pathways.

The focus is on structural collaboration between federal agencies to expand job access for people with disabilities.



# Policy Updates -2

## State

### SB 84 — Disability Access: Notice and Opportunity to Cure (Niello)

**Status:** *passed the Senate but is still pending in the Assembly.*

The bill requires a person alleging an accessibility barrier to first provide written notice identifying the violations and give the business **120 days to correct them** before a lawsuit seeking statutory damages, attorneys' fees, or costs can proceed. If the violations are fixed within that window, the business would not be liable for those damages. The bill applies to **small businesses (50 or fewer employees)**.

Supporters (**business coalitions**) argue SB 84 encourages faster fixes and reduces costly litigation for small businesses, while opponents (**disability advocates**) raise concerns that it could delay enforcement and weaken incentives for proactive accessibility compliance.





# Policy Updates - 3

## Local

### Safe Streets Executive Directive

Executive Directive 25-06 establishes San Francisco's Street Safety Initiative to make streets safe for all users—drivers, pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders—through a coordinated, citywide approach. Building on Vision Zero, the initiative adopts the Safe System model, emphasizing safer people, streets, vehicles, speeds, and post-crash care.

It prioritizes protecting vulnerable populations, reducing severe injuries and fatalities, and using data-driven, evidence-based solutions. Immediate actions include forming a multi-agency working group, confirming the High Injury Network, launching quick-build safety projects, expanding automated enforcement, and increasing high-visibility policing.

Longer-term goals include a Street Safety Dashboard, updated design standards, traffic calming programs, and systemic improvements to align safety with housing, health, and mobility goals. The directive underscores that safety is non-negotiable and shared across all city departments.



# Disaster Response

## San Francisco Power Outage

In December, severe winter storms caused widespread power outages across San Francisco, impacting over 160,000 customers, especially in Civic Center and Richmond. Prolonged outages disrupted heating, food storage, medical devices, and communications, disproportionately affecting older adults and people with disabilities.

The City activated emergency operations, opened Community Resource Centers with PG&E for warmth and charging, expanded food support through Meals on Wheels and vouchers, and arranged temporary hotel stays via 211.

ODA supported residents at Civic Center and Richmond sites, coordinating accessible transportation and accommodations for impacted residents.



# New & Announcements

January

Staff Transition, ADA Grievance and Housing Initiative Coordinator  
(Thank You, Helen!)

Megan Elliot appointed new Deputy Director of Programs at DAS

Accessible Tourism discussions initiated with City Departments

Disability Visibility Collective Quilt (Alice's Dream Quilt) 1/31 @ DCC

# Looking Ahead

## Dates of Note

**ADA Grievance & Self Evaluation Pilot** (timeframe extended, early spring)

**Capital Projects FY26** (estimated completion dates)

- Somarts (2/27)
- Hallide Plaza (10/26 to 7/27 & 7/27-7/28)
- City Hall Lift (6/26)
- Sunset Dunes (& other parks) (8/26)
- Wheelchair Charging Stations (tbd)

**Superbowl LX** (Levi's Stadium, 2/8)

**FIFA World Cup 2026 matches** (Levi's Stadium, 6/13-7/1)

**National Association of the Deaf, 58<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference** (Union Square, 6/30-7/5)



# Questions?





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# Thank you



[www.sfhsa.org](http://www.sfhsa.org)