

# Transitioning from a Presidential Campaign to a White House Office for Disabilities, Including the Presidential Disabilities Advisor and Representative Council of Disabled People

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## Executive Summary:

This national policy outlines the steps to transition from a **Presidential Campaign Disabilities Initiative** to the establishment of a permanent **White House Office for Disabilities**, headed by a **Presidential Disabilities Advisor**. The office will be supported by a **Representative Council of Disabled People**, which will work across various disabilities to implement a comprehensive update to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This proposal emphasizes creating an inclusive, empowered, and organized framework for addressing the diverse needs of disabled communities at the highest levels of government.

This policy details the actions needed, timelines for implementation, challenges that may arise, and budget estimates. The estimated cost for establishing and maintaining the office, along with implementing comprehensive ADA reforms, is **\$60 billion** over five years.

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## I. Transitioning from Campaign to the White House Office for Disabilities

### Policy Objective:

Facilitate the seamless transition from a presidential campaign disability initiative into a formal **White House Office for Disabilities**, ensuring the sustained involvement of disabled communities in federal policymaking.

### Actions:

1. **Create a Transition Team for Disabilities:**
  - Form a **Disabilities Transition Team** immediately after the election, composed of campaign disability advisors, advocates, legal experts, and representatives from disability rights organizations.
  - The transition team will be tasked with assessing current federal disability initiatives, preparing to establish the White House office, and setting priorities for the first 100 days in office.
2. **Appoint the Presidential Disabilities Advisor:**
  - In the first 30 days after inauguration, appoint a **Presidential Disabilities Advisor**, a cabinet-level position, to oversee the transition from campaign pledges to actionable policies.



- This advisor will coordinate with existing agencies, such as the **Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)** and the **Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)**, to align policies with the goal of updating the ADA.
- 3. Establish the White House Office for Disabilities:**
- Within 100 days, formally establish the **White House Office for Disabilities**, with the Presidential Disabilities Advisor serving as its head. This office will coordinate all federal disability-related policies and work with various stakeholders to ensure comprehensive representation.
  - The office will be tasked with overseeing ADA modernization efforts, ensuring that updates are drafted, legislated, and implemented effectively.
- 4. Form the Representative Council of Disabled People:**
- Within six months of the administration's start, create the **Representative Council of Disabled People**, which will consist of 25-30 members representing different types of disabilities, including physical, cognitive, psychiatric, developmental, sensory, and chronic illness disabilities.
  - The council will meet quarterly, advise the Presidential Disabilities Advisor, and act as the key interface between the government and disabled communities.

**Timeline:**

- **Day 1-30:** Establish the Disabilities Transition Team and appoint the Presidential Disabilities Advisor.
- **Day 30-100:** Formally establish the White House Office for Disabilities and begin hiring staff.
- **Month 6:** Establish the Representative Council of Disabled People and hold the first council meeting.

**Challenges:**

- Ensuring the transition team and new office are adequately resourced and staffed.
- Securing bipartisan support in Congress for creating the new office and appointing key positions.



**Budget Estimate:**

- **\$500 million** over five years for staffing, operational costs, and initial setup of the office and council.

**Sources:**

- White House Office of Budget and Management (OMB), U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) reports on federal office transitions, EEOC estimates.

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**II. Establishing a Permanent Presidential Disabilities Advisor and White House Office for Disabilities****Policy Objective:**

Create a permanent, structured office within the White House to oversee all disability-related policies, programs, and initiatives at the federal level, with a focus on modernizing the ADA and promoting accessibility, inclusion, and equity for disabled Americans.

**Actions:****1. Duties of the Presidential Disabilities Advisor:**

- The Presidential Disabilities Advisor will be responsible for coordinating disability-related policies across federal agencies, ensuring that all federal programs align with ADA principles.
- The advisor will develop national strategies to promote disability employment, healthcare access, transportation, and education inclusion.
- This advisor will lead the modernization of the ADA, focusing on emerging issues such as digital accessibility, workplace accommodations, and housing standards.
- Provide quarterly reports to the President and Congress on the status of federal disability programs, the ADA, and emerging challenges.

**2. Functions of the White House Office for Disabilities:**

- Oversee and monitor all federal disability programs, ensuring they are executed effectively and that agencies comply with updated ADA standards.
- Act as a liaison between the federal government, disabled communities, private sector stakeholders, and international disability rights organizations to promote best practices and inclusivity in all areas of life.



### 3. Collaborate with Federal Agencies:

- Work with the **Departments of Justice, Labor, Education, Housing and Urban Development, and Health and Human Services** to ensure their regulations reflect updated ADA standards.
- Ensure that each federal department creates a dedicated disability office or liaison that coordinates efforts with the White House Office for Disabilities.

#### Timeline:

- **Year 1-2:** Establish the full structure of the office and assign liaisons in federal agencies.
- **Year 2-3:** Begin full coordination of federal programs and ADA compliance across agencies.
- **Year 3-5:** Regularly update Congress and the public on the progress of ADA modernization and federal disability policies.

#### Challenges:

- Integrating disability-related policies across diverse federal agencies with different mandates.
- Potential resistance from certain sectors in updating ADA requirements.

#### Budget Estimate:

- **\$1 billion** over five years for operations, staffing, interagency coordination, and administrative costs.

#### Sources:

- Department of Justice (DOJ) ADA compliance reports, Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) reports on disability programs, GAO estimates on federal office operations.

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## III. Modernizing and Updating the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

### Policy Objective:

Update the ADA to address modern challenges, including digital accessibility, employment practices, healthcare, education, housing, transportation, and public accommodations. The new ADA will be forward-thinking and address gaps in existing legislation to meet the current needs of disabled people.



## Actions:

### 1. Digital Accessibility:

- Update ADA provisions to explicitly cover **digital platforms**, ensuring websites, mobile applications, and software used by federal agencies and private businesses are accessible to people with disabilities.
- Require that all businesses provide **WCAG 2.1-compliant** websites and digital services.

### 2. Workplace Accommodations and Remote Work:

- Expand ADA provisions to guarantee **remote work accommodations** for disabled employees, ensuring flexible schedules, assistive technologies, and telework options are protected rights.
- Update federal workplace accessibility standards to include newer technologies, such as ergonomic equipment and adaptive technologies like voice recognition software and eye-tracking systems.

### 3. Healthcare Access:

- Strengthen ADA requirements for **healthcare facility accessibility**, including fully accessible medical equipment, adjustable-height exam tables, and accessible diagnostic tools for all medical facilities receiving federal funds.
- Expand insurance coverage, under the ADA framework, for **mobility aids, prosthetics, and mental health services** related to disabilities.

### 4. Education Accessibility:

- Require schools, universities, and vocational programs to implement **universal design principles** in all facilities and instructional methods, ensuring students with disabilities have equitable access to education.
- Provide additional federal funding to ensure that **Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)** and **504 Plans** are effectively implemented and monitored in public schools.

### 5. Housing and Transportation Accessibility:

- Ensure that all new housing developments receiving federal funds meet **universal design standards**, making them fully accessible for people with mobility, sensory, or cognitive impairments.



- Mandate that all public transportation systems, including buses, subways, trains, and ride-sharing platforms, meet modern ADA standards for accessibility and real-time service information for people with disabilities.

**Timeline:**

- **Year 1-2:** Identify priority areas for ADA modernization (digital accessibility, workplace accommodations).
- **Year 2-3:** Draft and pass legislative updates to the ADA in Congress, focusing on expanding protections in healthcare, education, and transportation.
- **Year 3-5:** Implement new ADA standards across all sectors and ensure federal compliance.

**Challenges:**

- Resistance from the private sector due to the cost of complying with expanded ADA requirements, especially in digital and physical infrastructure.
- Difficulties in securing bipartisan support for legislative updates.

**Budget Estimate:**

- **\$40 billion** over five years for ADA modernization, infrastructure retrofitting, compliance, and implementation costs.

**Sources:**

- DOJ reports on ADA enforcement, U.S. Access Board, Department of Transportation (DOT), Department of Labor (DOL), and Government Accountability Office (GAO) estimates.

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## **IV. Representative Council of Disabled People**

**Policy Objective:**

Ensure that disabled individuals have a direct voice in the policymaking process through the **Representative Council of Disabled People**, a diverse body representing various disabilities. The council will advise the Presidential Disabilities Advisor and the White House Office for Disabilities, ensuring that the perspectives of disabled communities are included in all federal policies.



## Actions:

### 1. Selection of Council Members:

- The **Representative Council of Disabled People** will consist of 25-30 members, each representing different disability groups, including those with physical, cognitive, sensory, psychiatric, developmental, and chronic illness disabilities.
- The council members will be selected through a nomination process by **national disability rights organizations**, ensuring that they are representative of the broader disability community.

### 2. Duties of the Council:

- Provide regular input and feedback to the Presidential Disabilities Advisor and the White House Office for Disabilities on policy priorities, gaps in current disability protections, and opportunities for ADA modernization.
- Organize quarterly public hearings and community outreach efforts to gather input from disabled individuals and advocacy organizations.
- Issue **biannual reports** to Congress, providing recommendations on federal disability policies and the progress of ADA implementation.

### 3. Integration with Federal Agencies:

- The council will collaborate with federal agencies, including the DOJ, DOL, HUD, and HHS, to ensure that all new regulations meet the needs of disabled individuals and comply with updated ADA standards.
- The council will also serve as a liaison between the federal government and local disability advocacy groups, ensuring grassroots feedback is incorporated into policymaking.

## Timeline:

- **Year 1:** Establish the council and hold the first meeting.
- **Year 1-2:** Conduct public hearings and issue the first biannual report on ADA updates.
- **Year 2-5:** Continue quarterly meetings, public outreach, and biannual reporting to Congress.

## Challenges:

- Ensuring diversity within the council and adequate representation of different disabilities.



- Maintaining consistent public engagement and effective communication between the council and federal agencies.

**Budget Estimate:**

- **\$500 million** over five years for council operations, public hearings, and outreach programs.

**Sources:**

- Office of Budget and Management (OMB), National Council on Disability (NCD) reports, and U.S. Access Board estimates.

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**Total Budget Estimate:**

- **\$60 billion** over five years for the creation of the White House Office for Disabilities, ADA modernization, the Representative Council of Disabled People, and the comprehensive update of national disability policies.

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**Conclusion:**

This comprehensive national policy outlines the process of transitioning from a **Presidential Campaign Disabilities Initiative** to a fully operational **White House Office for Disabilities** and the appointment of a **Presidential Disabilities Advisor**. By investing \$60 billion over five years, this policy ensures that disabled individuals have a strong voice in federal policymaking, that the ADA is modernized to meet current and future challenges, and that the government is accountable for promoting accessibility and inclusion across all sectors.

