



Quick Takes

Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY
www.CIDNY.org

Manhattan

841 Broadway, #301
New York, NY 10003
212/674-2300 Tel
212/254-5953 Fax
646/350-2681 VP

Queens

80-02 Kew Gardens Rd, #400
Kew Gardens, NY 11415
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Victory for New Yorkers with Disabilities

New Yorkers with vision disabilities soon will be able to navigate state Board of Elections and Department of Motor Vehicles websites.



[Image description: Person at computer.]

Almost 400,000 voters across the state have visual disabilities. But because of outdated website designs, they've been unable to do simple things such as updating an address, changing to a married name or registering to vote. Under the terms of a legal settlement reached last week, those agencies must now start making their websites accessible to those who are blind or visually impaired.

Susan Dooha, executive director at the Center for Independence of the Disabled New York, or CIDNY, said the sites violated the Americans with Disabilities Act.

"By not allowing people to handle their voting information - which includes confidential information - privately and independently, the Board of Elections has been discouraging people from voting," Dooha said.

The agencies have until the end of 2019 to bring their websites into full compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.

Earlier this year, New York state passed significant election law reforms, including early voting and consolidation of primary days. Dooha said the agreement to improve access to the Board of Election website represents a parallel track.

"Good government groups have always wanted to make things easier for voters," she said. "And we have joined together to support measures that will bring more people to the polls."

March 2019

CIDNY also provided evidence in a successful legal action to ensure that polling places are accessible to people with mobility disabilities.

Much still needs to be done. Dooha noted most of the New York City subway system remains inaccessible to people with disabilities. And CIDNY has brought a lawsuit seeking to improve conditions for those who navigate hazards on the street.

"We are hoping that we will achieve a settlement agreement that will require New York City to not only bring its streets and curb cuts into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, but also that they'll maintain the accessibility," Dooha said.

The lawsuit against the State Board of Elections was filed by the National Federation For the Blind and two individual plaintiffs.

This story by Andrea Sears originally appeared in Public News Service and is reprinted with permission. It is also available in Spanish.

We Need Your MTA Stories

If you or someone you know are a person with a disability who lives in, works in, or travels to locations in the vicinity of any of these stations and who is impacted by the fact that they're not accessible, we'd love to talk with you.

- Broadway Junction (J/Z Lines Only)
- Bay Ridge Avenue (R)
- Bay Parkway (N)
- Borough Hall (4/5 Lines Only)
- 30th Avenue (N/W Lines)
- Broadway (N/W Lines)
- Court Square (G Line Only)
- Metropolitan Avenue (G/L).
- 238th St. (1)
- 168 Street (1)
- 181 St (A)
- 191 St (1)
- 190 St (A)
- 181 St (1)



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Please fill out this form so we can contact you:
https://www.cidny.org/subway_elevator_stories/.

All of Us Includes People with Disabilities

The All of Us Research Program is YOUR chance to make an impact and get involved in direct, cutting-edge research to find solutions that could help people with disabilities. For the first time, people with disabilities are being encouraged to participate and are being asked to enroll in a study that can directly impact how health care is received in the future. If we truly believe in the concept of "nothing about us without us," then we must answer the call when asked to participate. If you missed our special guest presentation on All of Us, you can still watch it on Facebook Live. Register at <https://www.joinallofus.org/together>.

Disability Legislative Awareness Day

Sixty four people from CIDNY--including staff, a board member, and advocates--traveled to Albany in the early hours of February 11th. We were part of a large contingent of Independent Living Centers (ILCs) from around the state prepared to speak on the Governor's state budget proposals. Participants joining us included folks from TransitCenter, Rise and Resist, Bronx Independent Living Services and AHRC.

At 28 appointments with legislators or their staff, we discussed funding increases for ILCs, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP), the Community Health Advocates (CHA) Program and Access to Home.



[Image description: One of the teams from Lobby Day.]

Attendees were very pleased to meet with their District representatives as well as other legislators and used the opportunity to remind them that they are voters.

We discussed the need for more elevators at subway stations and funding for a fully accessible subway system. Some participants shared their stories about the difficulties they experience as Deaf individuals when trying to use an inaccessible subway system.

Legislators heard from Sharon, who said: "Health care fails when your doctor prescribes you something and then the insurance company decides for you."

Suzhen, a vocal advocate on transportation issues, lives in HUD housing and uses a wheelchair. She said that when she receives an increase in payments from SSI, her rent "automatically increases. However, the rent increases at a higher rate than the SSI increase, making it difficult to pay rent." Julio explained that he lives with his parents and is unable to move out due to a lack of affordable housing. He wants to live independently.

Margaret took out a student loan to pay for graduate school. Her disability forced her to abruptly withdraw from school. She spoke with a financial advisor who told her to defer her student loan instead of requesting a discharge of her loan. She was never made aware of the option to request her loan be waived because of her disability. Now, at the age of 60, she faces over \$40,000 of student loans and accumulated interest and wants to share her story in support of oversight of student loan servicers and informing borrowers of their rights.

The personal experiences that our team shares help legislators understand how their constituents are impacted and why we support a specific policy agenda. We hope you can join us next time!

Take Action: Send a letter to your legislators urging them to #SaveCDPA in their one house budget proposals. Send a message to your Senator and Assembly member urging them to speak to the members of the lower Education Committees in support of an increase of only \$5 million for ILCs being included in their one house budget response. Go to: <https://ilny.us/advocacy/action-alerts>.



CID-NY

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NEED HELP?

Walk-in/drop-in to get the help you need. Staff will be available during these times for housing and benefits-related help.



Walk-In Days—Manhattan

Every Monday and Tuesday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Every Thursday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.



Walk-In Day—Queens

Every Monday 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Important Dates

March 10 - Daylight Savings Time

March 17 - St. Patrick's Day

March 20 - Purim

CIDNY's Writers' Group

Thursdays from 3:30-5:30 p.m.

A facilitated, non-judgmental writing group that promotes individual expression and creativity in a supportive atmosphere.

Housing Workshops

Wednesday, March 13, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. – Manhattan

Wednesday, March 27, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. - Queens

CIDNY's housing workshop covers housing options: NYCHA, HPD, HUD listings; NYC Housing Connect and other programs; what you qualify for; income and family size; and how to get and go over your credit report. CIDNY is a full-service center and other benefits will be discussed; we don't offer housing, but can provide information and assist with applications.

Movie Night Will resume in the spring.

CIDNY Action Network (CAN) Meeting

Wednesday, March 20, 1-3 p.m. – Queens

Come join us to hear about:

- our trip to Albany;
- the legislators we met; and
- the issues we presented to them
- where we go from here and creating a 2019-2020 agenda

Reunión de CIDNY Red de Acción

Miércoles, 20 de marzo, 1 p.m. – 3 p.m. - Queens

Ven y únete a nosotros para escuchar acerca de:

- nuestro viaje a Albany;
- los legisladores que conocimos; y
- los asuntos que les presentamos;
- a donde nos dirigimos desde aquí y creando una agenda para 2019-2020.

Please RSVP to Jose at (646) 442-1520. If you need an accommodation, such as large print or interpretation services, please let us know by Wednesday, March 6, 2019. Refreshments will be served.



MTA Board Meeting

Wednesday, March 27, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at MTA Headquarters, 2 Broadway.

Please arrive 45 minutes early and bring a photo ID. Upon arrival, people can choose to sign up to speak during the meeting. There is a two-minute limit for speakers. Join with us and other advocates as we make our voices heard. RSVP required.

All events are at CIDNY, 841 Broadway, Suite 301, New York, NY 10003, unless otherwise noted. To RSVP, contact Laurette at 212/674-2300 or lhamilton@cidny.org. For events in Queens or if you speak Spanish, RSVP to Jose at 646/442-1520 or jmera@cidny.org. If you need an accommodation, such as large print or interpretation services, let us know by Wednesday, January 2.

Por favor confirme su asistencia a Jose Luis Mera (646) 442-1520. Si necesita una acomodación, como servicios de interpretación o letra grande, avísenos antes del miércoles 2 de enero de 2019.

MARCH 2019 CALENDAR

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	 Walk-in Day 10 a.m.-2 p.m.  Walk-in Day - Queens 10 a.m.-3 p.m.	 Walk-in Day 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.	6	 Walk-in Day 10 a.m.-2 p.m.  Writer's Workshop 3:30-5:30 p.m.	8	9
10 Daylight Savings Time 	 Walk-in Day 10 a.m.-2 p.m.  Walk-in Day - Queens 10 a.m.-3 p.m.	 Walk-in Day 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.	 Housing Workshop – Manhattan 10 a.m.-2 p.m.	 Walk-in Day 10 a.m.-2 p.m.  Writer's Workshop 3:30-5:30 p.m.	15	16
17 St. Patrick's Day 	 Walk-in Day 10 a.m.-2 p.m.  Walk-in Day - Queens 10 a.m.-3 p.m.	 Walk-in Day 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.	20 Purim  CIDNY Action Network Meeting – Queens 1 – 3 p.m.	 Walk-in Day 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.  Writer's Workshop 3:30-5:30 p.m.	22	23
24	 Walk-in Day 10 a.m.-2 p.m.  Walk-in Day - Queens 10 a.m.-3 p.m.	 Walk-in Day 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.	 MTA Board Meeting 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.  Housing Workshop – Queens 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.	 Walk-in Day 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.  Writer's Workshop 3:30-5:30 p.m.	29	 CID-NY Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY
31						