



# Massachusetts Disability Quarterly

A Publication from the  
**Massachusetts Office On Disability**

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Vol. 2 Issue 4

*Full & Equal Participation in All Aspects of Life by All Persons With Disabilities*

Spring 2017

## Municipal ADA Grant Program Now Accepting Applications

*Rita DiNunzio*

The Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD) is pleased to announce the opening of the Municipal ADA Improvement Grant Program application and selection process. These grants will support capital improvements specifically dedicated to improving programmatic access for persons with disabilities. Eligible applicants include any Massachusetts city, town, special purpose district and/or regional governmental organization. Grants of up to \$250,000 will be awarded to successful applicants to remove barriers and create and improve accessible features in cities and towns throughout the Commonwealth. Examples of access improvement include the addition of features such as ramps, elevators, power lifts, signage, communication access devices, and curb cuts.

Municipalities that have signed, or are willing to sign, a Community Compact (CC) and selected the ADA Self-Evaluation & Transition best practice option will be provided priority for grant funding. Every City or Town in the Commonwealth is eligible to apply. Grants will be awarded to projects that demonstrate that they will have a real and tangible positive impact to persons with disabilities. Planning Grants will also be available for applicants that have not yet met the Administrative Requirements set forth in Title II of the ADA and do not have Self-Evaluation or Transitions Plans.

Under MGL Chapter 40 Section 8J, MOD serves as the coordinator of municipal Commissions on Disabilities (CODs) and recognizes that architectural and programmatic barriers to facilities and services exist throughout many municipal buildings in Massachusetts. MOD seeks to work with communities to realize their ADA Title II obligations and engage in an interactive process so that municipalities can better understand and achieve increased access and opportunities for persons with disabilities.



Lt. Governor Polito and David D'Arcangelo with Town officials at Milford Community Compact signing

### **Application Process and Deadlines**

Year 1 Application period is February 6, 2017 through June 30, 2017. All Year 1, FY17 grants must be submitted in hard-copy. For more details please email [mod-grants@massmail.state.ma.us](mailto:mod-grants@massmail.state.ma.us) or call MOD.

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# MOD

## Call for Art

### "Breaking Barriers"

# 2017

[www.mass.gov/mod/art](http://www.mass.gov/mod/art)

Artwork: *Freedom From Shame*, by Pops Peterson.

## Call for Art: "Breaking Barriers" is Underway!

The Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD) is pleased to announce that we are now accepting submissions for our 2017 Call for Art and juried art exhibition. We are calling on talented Massachusetts residents of all abilities to submit an original work that captures the theme of "Breaking Barriers." The barriers persons with disabilities sometimes encounter are not only physical but also societal. Selected entries will be displayed at a public exhibition in late 2017 (date to be determined) and in an online gallery.

Part of our inspiration for this exhibition relates to a piece of artwork currently displayed in MOD created by Maurice "Pops" Peterson, Artist in Residence of the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD). His work, "Freedom from Shame," shown above, artistically captures our theme through its depiction of an athlete with a disability in a moment of victory and celebration. A central purpose in holding this exhibition is to showcase the talent of our Commonwealth residents and to present works to the public that will raise awareness of and challenge the barriers and stigma that persons with disabilities often encounter. The exhibition will deliver the important message that ability comes in all forms.

Artists who enter the Call for Art will have an opportunity to gain statewide exposure and recognition in addition to experiencing the process of entering their work for consideration for display in a juried art show.

The Call for Art is open to all Massachusetts residents ages 18 and over. Out-of-state students of Massachusetts colleges and universities are eligible. Submissions must be original two-dimensional works of visual art (photography included) depicting the theme of "Breaking Barriers."

**Deadline:** Submissions will be accepted through **August 1, 2017.**

### Jury:

Pops Peterson, Artist in Residence of the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination;  
Marian Brown, Founding Executive Director of Arts Connect International;  
David D'Arcangelo, Director of the Massachusetts Office on Disability;  
Ken Strickland, Provost of the Massachusetts College of Art & Design;  
Charles J. Washburn, Vice President & COO of VSA Massachusetts.

For more information on how to enter or request reasonable accommodations, visit: [www.mass.gov/mod/art](http://www.mass.gov/mod/art). You may also [download the call for Art poster](#) on the webpage. We look forward to receiving your entries!

# Jeffrey's Access Corner: Ramp Dimensions

*Jeffrey Dougan*

As promised in the last column, this quarter I will discuss additional requirements for ramps and the current differences between the various regulations. Last time, we addressed ramp slopes specifically. This edition will guide you through the other various obligations such as width, handrails, length and landings under the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board's (MAAB) rules and regulations and the Americans with Disabilities Act Design Standards (ADA Design Standards).

## Ramp

The maximum rise of a ramp is not to exceed 30 inches; therefore the run, or length, of the ramp cannot exceed 30 feet without the provision of a landing. Both the MAAB and ADA Design Standards are the same in this respect.

In Massachusetts, ramps must provide a clear width measuring 48 inches measured between the handrails. The MAAB has a more stringent requirement than the ADA Design Standards which only requires a ramp to provide a clear width of 36 inches.

In Massachusetts, handrails must be provided on both sides of a ramp with both an upper (located at a height of 34" – 38") and a lower (located at a height of 18" -20") handrail. Again, the MAAB has a more stringent requirement than the ADA Design Standards which only require one handrail on each side located at a height of 34" – 38".

Handrails must also be: 1. "continuous," meaning that one should not have to lift their hand from the handrail along the ramp run; 2. "round or oval in cross section," to allow someone to grasp the handrails; 3. provide "extensions" at the top and bottom of each ramp run, so someone can get to level ground before losing the use of a handrail (there is an exception to not provide the extension if it is a safety hazard); and 4. if wall hung, shall provide a clearance of 1 ½ inches between the wall and handrail to prevent someone's arm from slipping between the wall and handrail. The MAAB and ADA Design Standards have the same requirements with respect to these obligations.

Landings are required at the top and bottom of each ramp run, where it begins and ends, as well as any place the ramp changes direction. For example, if there is a switchback ramp with an initial length of 25 feet before it changes direction, there would be a landing at the top and bottom of the ramp and where it changes direction. Landings are also required every 30 feet if the ramp is a straight run ramp. Let's say you have a 32 inch rise to overcome and you have decided to install a straight run ramp. To overcome a 32 inch rise, by the math, will require, at a minimum, a 32 foot ramp (maximum running slope of 1:12 or 8.33%). Landings would be needed at the top and bottom of the ramp as well as somewhere in-between the 32 feet that you were planning. Due to the requirement that landings be the width of the ramp and provide 5 feet of level area, the 32 foot ramp you had planned now becomes a 47 foot ramp in total length; a 5 foot landing at the top, a 5 foot landing at the bottom and a 5 foot landing at the 30 foot mark, ultimately adding 15 feet of additional space. As mentioned above, landings must be the width of the ramp and level for 5 feet. Where a ramp changes direction, the landing must provide a 5 foot by 5 foot level landing to allow appropriate maneuvering space for the turn. The MAAB and ADA Design Standards have the same requirements when it comes to the provision of landings.

In summation, the biggest differences between the MAAB and the ADA Design Standards have to do with the width of a ramp and the number of handrails provided. Most of the other obligations are very similar.

Well, that about does it for this quarter. If there are any questions related to this topic, please let me know. You can reach me by email at [jeff.dougan@state.ma.us](mailto:jeff.dougan@state.ma.us) or by phone at 617-727-7440 extension 27316.



Jeff and his dog Caylee

## New Process to Contact MOD

Due to new changes, MOD will no longer have walk-in hours. Face-to-face meetings with staff will be by-appointment only. The best way to reach MOD is by phone or through use of our online form:

[www.mass.gov/mod/ContactUs](http://www.mass.gov/mod/ContactUs).

If you contact MOD by phone, you will notice our new automated phone system which is available during normal business hours (9am-5pm). Voice prompts will ensure that you reach the appropriate staff member. Remember, you may find the answer to your question by visiting our website, [www.mass.gov/mod](http://www.mass.gov/mod).

We appreciate your patience and understanding as we undergo these changes. We are committed to maintaining the quality of our service to the public.



# Spring 2017 Calendar

## March

**12, Sunday**  
Daylight Savings Begins

**20, Monday**  
March Equinox

**29, Wednesday**  
Vietnam Veterans Day



## April

**Autism Awareness Month**

**2, Sunday**  
World Autism Awareness Day

**3, Monday**  
Red Sox Opening Day

**9, Sunday**  
Former POW Recognition Day

**17, Monday**  
Patriot's Day

**25, Tuesday**  
Regional COD Meeting, Brookline

## May

**Lupus Awareness Month**

**14, Sunday**  
Mothers' Day

**23, Tuesday**  
Special Needs Awareness Day  
CAM Training, Leominster Day 1

**24, Wednesday**  
Phenylketonuria Awareness Day  
CAM Training, Leominster Day 2

**29, Monday**  
Memorial Day

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