

Disability Rights Commission

Ordinance Overview &
Making Recommendations

Madison General Ordinance

39.04

- Establishes the Disability Rights Commission.
- 12 residents who are “knowledgeable and sensitive to the service needs, rights, and responsibilities of residents with disabilities” and 1 Alder appointed by the Mayor.
- Priority given to people with disabilities, family members, and advocates.
- Describes the 5 duties and responsibilities of the DRC.

1st Responsibility of the DRC

Ordinance: Recommend policy to the Mayor, Common Council and Department of Civil Rights in all areas that affect people with disabilities and their families.

This means: Recommend action on issues the Mayor, Common Council and Department of Civil Rights might not be working on right now.

Example: We recommend the Department of Civil Rights make more hybrid meeting options available for public events.

2nd Responsibility of the DRC

Ordinance: Study and make recommendations to all City departments, committees, and commissions on proposals to provide better access to facilities and services for people with disabilities and their families.

This means: A City Department is seeking public comment on a plan or initiative. The DRC can review the plan or ask for a presentation and make recommendations as a Commission.

Example: We recommend the City Department grant program explore include renovations for inclusive design elements in the eligibility

3rd Responsibility of the DRC

Ordinance: The Commission shall monitor and report violations of city ordinances and state laws pertaining to residents with disabilities to the appropriate agency.

This means: Commissioners can contact appropriate City staff directly with resident feedback or concerns. You can also let residents know about the Report a Problem portal where many issues can be reported to city agencies.
<https://www.cityofmadison.com/reportaproblem/>

Example: Email or call city staff. If you notice a pattern, bring it up in a future topic

4th Responsibility of the DRC

Ordinance: The Commission shall solicit comments and suggestions from residents and organized groups regarding the concerns of residents with disabilities.

This means: Be a part of the community we serve. Ask people for feedback to help inform Commission discussions and decision making.

Examples: Go to community events, talk with people in your neighborhood, connect with other residents online, read local disability message boards, sit in on other BCC meetings.

5th Responsibility of the DRC

Ordinance: The Commission shall establish close working relationships with other City Boards, Commissions and Committees whose activities may affect people with disabilities.

This means: Liaison positions (like the Transportation Commission Liaison). Connecting with other Board, Commission and Committee members.

Examples: Sit in on other BCC meetings or check out their agendas to see if there are issues that the DRC should be aware of. Alder members and DCR staff may also highlight issues in their

Sample Recommendation Language

Dear City Department:

Thank you for presenting to the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) about the Proposed Plan. The DRC provides recommendations related to issues that may affect people with disabilities and their families. The services in the Proposed Plan are essential for people with disabilities to access housing and public transportation. We believe the following recommendations will provide better access to services for people with disabilities in Madison under the Proposed Plan.

Recommendation 1:

Consider Language

Broad - Easier Implement Specific - Harder Implement

- Explore
- Increase
- Decrease
- Support
- Facilitate

- Percentages
- Dates
- Dollar Amounts
- Inputs
- Outcomes

Questions & Discussion