

ACCESSIBLE PARKING IN TEXAS

>>: Hello.

>>: Hey. How are you?

>>: I'm good. How are you?

>>: I'm doing good.

>>: Can you hear me okay? Perfect.

>>: We'll be starting soon.

>>: Okay. We're going to start it. Okay. We'll be
starting the recording first.

(Recording in progress)

>>: Hello. Good morning, everyone. Thank you for

coming and joining us at the GCPD governor's committee on

people with disability and accessibility and our webinar

series. Today, I'll focus on accessibility parking in

Texas. We've invited specialists, panelists who are aware

what parking -- parking issues with people with

disability. We're going to give information, some

standards, legal changes that have taken place, and those

kinds of support. Before we get going, I want to give you

some information. We have a few people -- ask questions

about CEUs and we don't exactly award those for this.

However, you can take the e-mail that we send you

afterwards and talk with your agency to see if they can

accept that as participation for self-guided study. If

you have any questions, you can type those questions in the Q and A because we're going to keep everything in one place during the presentation. We'll have those panelists answer some of those questions. And then if you have any concerns or something that you missed during the presentation, we'll also have a recording that you can view later. All right. Well, thank you. I hope you all have a good presentation today. I'm going to talk a little bit about the governor's committee. The goal is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities to enjoy full equitable life, live independent and determine their own lives. The committee recommends changes with

policy and programs for people with disabilities and with various different areas and where they live and the committee also supports local and commission on people who have disabilities and we give grants and awards to improve awareness. Soon, we're going to have one in October. We also encourage disability-related legal issues. Now we're going to turn it over to our panelists. Marsha.

>>: Thank you. My name is Marsha Godeaux. I work with the department of licensing and regulation. I've worked there about 15 years. We're going to go over some of the requirements in the Texas accessibility standards.

One of the most common questions we get is how do I make my place or in this case parking ADA accessible. While

the Texas accessibility standards and the act are similar,

there are significant differences between the two.

Possibly the first and possibly the most important

difference is that TAS is regulated by 469 of the state

government code and this is a construction law. This

requires new construction, renovations, and alterations to

a facility to trigger accessibility requirements as

opposed to the ADA law which is a regulation of title 1,

2, and 3 which are civil rights laws. Everyone that uses

the facilities have the same rights so that the facility

is operational, it must be accessible to all. When

determining if a project needs to be compliant with the

Texas accessibility standards, our first question we ask was, is there construction of any kind. This will tell us if the parking provided will need to be accessibility with the standards. Now, that was possibly the simplest way to determine the compliance with the standards -- when it's needed. If you're here to learn more than just if it's required to be accessible, so then we need to determine what kind of construction you're doing. If a project is new construction of parking facilities, lots, or spaces, that makes sense. Those are required to be accessible and comply with the Texas accessibility standards requirements. We'll talk about those details on how to make that in a few minutes. However, when the

construction project is a renovation to an existing facility, there's some additional requirements beyond what is being constructed. A construction project that is an alteration to a primary function area triggers compliance with things called the path of travel elements. I know, you said what is that? Let's start with the term alteration to a primary function area first. So determining if the construction project is an alteration to a primary function area, you have to determine what is a primary function of the facility itself. What is the major activity it's intended for. For example, a courthouse couldn't be without courtrooms or a school

couldn't be a -- a school construction project couldn't be a school without classrooms. You can't have a parking garage without parking spaces. There are some areas in the facility that are not primary functionary. Janitor's closets or boiler rooms. These are areas not make or break, meaning if they didn't have those spaces, the building would still function as it's needed. It's important to determine these types of areas to determine if construction project is an alteration to a primary function area. Now, remember when I said that new construction has to be made accessible, and the same goes for alterations. The standards explain that, if you do an alteration to an existing element, it has to comply with

the standards. So if you make an alteration or an addition to a parking lot of the facility, it has to comply. Another example, a little less on topic, would be if we chose only to update the one toilet room, feeling that the rest of these fixtures are perfectly acceptable, right? The altered toilet room would have to comply with accessibility requirements, but the others would not, as they're not being altered. However, the TAS takes things further in some construction projects. If it's affecting a primary function area, remember the areas that the building is intended for, the facility compliant has to comply with additional path of travel elements. So for

example, office building, we're adding offices with doors.

That would be a primary function of the office building

and trigger compliance is what we call path of travel

elements. The whole path must comply, including all of

those nasty toilet fixtures we just saw. So there are

path -- what are path of travel elements? They are

parking areas toilet and bathing rooms, telephones,

drinking fountains, and the routes connecting those

elements to the altered area, including the entrance. The

path of travel must be continuous, unobstructed, and fully

comply with the Texas accessibility standards

requirements. Again, for those that like to take screen

shots, the path of travel elements are the accessible

route to the parking, restrooms, telephones, and drinking

fountains. These must apply with the standards when the

construction project is an alteration that affects the

usability of a primary function area. Now, having said,

there are two situations where there may be exceptions.

The first is if the construction project is fully funded

by the tenant. So we have large complexes that have

tenants within them. If it is funded by them, there is an

exception. So what we mean by fully funded means that it

is completely funded by the tenant, meaning the owner is

not reimbursing of any kind, and then the path of travel

elements outside that tenant space would not be required

to comply -- to be updated to comply with the Texas
accessibility standards. That includes the parking. So
to rephrase that, the alterations by tenant and areas that
only the tenant occupies do not trigger path of travel
including the parking that fall under the landlord's
authority, should the construction project be funded by
the tenant. Landlord authority means that the path of
travel elements outside the tenant space. So for example,
we have a strip center here. The tenant is working on an
interior construction project and paying for it
themselves. The path of travel elements outside the
tenant space, so those restrooms, the route, and the
parking, would have -- sorry, outside the space would not

have to comply with the TAS for this particular construction project. That doesn't mean that the owner gets a free pass. Those elements including the parking still have to comply every time the owner does any other construction work for them to specifically or if other construction projects that are not strictly tenant-funded.

Finish this project, we would not have to make those particular outside elements accessible at the time of construction. This also does not exempt the elements within the tenant space, including restrooms located or telephones or drinking fountains. In addition, should the tenant renovation be a tenant that is for the whole

building, the exterior path of elements, including the parking, are considered to be tenant jurisdiction and would have to comply with the requirements that we'll talk about here shortly. So they would have to comply with all of those. Now, remember the landlord remains responsible to the department for compliance regardless of the tenant exception being applied. They do not get away with the ADA requirements that are civil rights laws. The next path of travel exception for parking is the project complies with safe harbor. This is the closest thing you're going to get to accessibility requirements to what's referred to as grandfather clause. We hear that one a lot. Because when it comes to building

accessibility, there's no such thing as being grandfathered. Safe harbor is path of travel elements that previously complied with the previous addition of the TAS. For Texans, if the path of travel elements comply with the 1994 Texas accessibility standards, they don't have to be updated to meet the updated requirements. I'll repeat that. The path of travel elements that were previously constructed and complied with the 1994 Texas accessibility standards and are not being altered, because remember, if you alter an element, you must comply, then they can remain. So for example, the office building that did the office alteration we were talking about before, if

parking -- if the parking complied with 1994 TAS in full,

it would not have to be updated to comply with the 2012

Texas accessibility standards. I want to add that, if

previous construction project applied for a variance for,

say, the slope of your accessible parking and was allowed

per TDLR, then it didn't comply with 1994 standards and

safe harbor would not be applied. Again, safe harbor does

not mean that the project path of travel elements don't

have to comply ever. Just until the next construction

project that makes an alteration. So those elements

would -- if it never complied with the 94 standards, it

does not meet safe harbor. So now we know, when you have

to make an accessible parking complied, but how to make it

accessible, so let's talk about that. There are many kinds of parking out there. If somebody has a pregnant mom parking, veteran, on street, and contractor, they have to have accessible spots in each kind. If you keep your eyes open, you can see some weird stuff all over. All of these types of parking lots are considered parking facilities. Each of them provides accessible parking spaces. There are some less common vehicle parking that you may not realize is required to be accessible. Valet parking is a special case in that the parking facilities where the vehicles are stored must be providing accessible parking because not all accessible vehicles can be driven

by valets. They have to provide loading zones that comply with standards as well. Something else that may not be commonly known, if you provide ride share dedicated area, it would be considered passenger loading areas and need to comply with those requirements as well. Next one that may be coming up more often now are electrical vehicle charging spaces. These are considered fuel dispensers.

Therefore, they don't have to meet parking requirements of the TAS. They have to meet operable parts and must be on a route but are not required to be anything further at this time. However, that may change soon, as TDLR and feds are working to start ensuring accessibility for these types of elements. That was a lot of information. Main

point is, if you provide parking facilities, you must provide accessible parking. Of course, there's a few exceptions. If a parking facility is for delivery of vehicles parking and has provided a compliant public loading zone, that would not be required for that facility. Here's an example of what appears to be a parking facility that is for law enforcement vehicles. If you look at the lot, it appears to be not just for those, unless it's an unmarked car. This one may not qualify for the exception, actually. It's not working. Click. Come on. There it goes. Now, when looking at parking facilities, the number of total parking spaces tell us how

many accessible spaces must be provided. The space is determined in facility by facility basis. For example, in this image, you can see a surface lot and a parking garage. These would be considered two different parking facilities. In this photo, you can see two distinct parking lots. The garage and the surface parking lot. If you count the spaces of both together, you'll get the wrong number of accessible spaces. These kind of facilities, you're going to go to table 208.2 in the TAS. That'll give you the number of required accessible spaces based on the total parking spaces provided per each facility. When that number goes over 500, the calculation goes to 2 percent of the total. In addition, to the

standard accessible parking spaces, there is a requirement to also provide a certain number of van accessible parking spaces. Those allow for bigger vehicles. For every six or a fraction of six, accessible parking spaces, you have to provide a minimum of one van accessible parking space.

If you had 325 parking spaces, according to table, that requires eight accessible parking spaces to be provided and of those eight, two of them have to be accessible.

Where there are four facility -- there are -- sorry, there are four different types of facilities listed that have their own requirements for a minimal number of spaces.

These are to accommodate for medical facilities that have

a greater need for accessible parking. Hospital

outpatient facilities reserve 10 percent of the patient

and visitor parking for accessible parking. Out of that

10 percent, every six or a fraction of six spots will be

van accessible. This does not include those reserved for

hospital staff and doctors. They have to use table 208.2.

What we mean when we say outpatient facilities, these are

facilities located in hospitals that do not meet overnight

stays. These patients are doing procedures and leaving

and need larger accessible spaces to maneuver into their

vehicles. The second facility that has large need for

accessible parking spaces would be rehabilitation and

physical therapy facilities located on -- focused on

treating outpatient physical therapy. Parking for these

gets 20 percentage accessible parking spaces because many

of the patients are temporary or permanently disabled.

Here's just a few of the conditions that affect mobility.

When we see somebody out -- get out of a vehicle with a

disabled space and they don't look disabled, we may wonder

if they should be in that spot. There's a wide range of

disabilities that do not require the -- that don't require

mobility aids. We see more of these now with COVID and

having respiratory issues. Lastly, there are three

residential facilities required to provide accessible

parking spaces beyond table 208.2's minimal number. Group

homes, women's shelters, places of education. It's important to note that the Texas accessibility standards do not cover parking that is for apartments, condos, or single family residents. Those are exempted from the standard. You can contact your local housing office for more information on federal requirements for those types of facilities. If you have one of the subject facilities, the social service establishment, the emergency response or faculty housing, at least one parking space for dwelling unit must be provided. I went too far. Sorry.

In addition to those accessible parking spaces must be located on the shortest accessible route to that dwelling unit. Speaking of accessible parking locations, the

accessible parking spaces must be on the shortest route to the entrance that they serve. Remember, our path of travel requirements include accessible route to the altered area, so the shortest route to that particular entrance. If a parking facility is not serving a particular building like that of a parking garage downtown, the parking has to be to the closest pedestrian image to that parking facility. So here, we have two spaces that are installed on the shortest accessible route to three facilities. There's one ramp and it's right in the middle of the stories. However, should there be multiple entrances at the accessible serve must be

dispersed. There is an exception to the location for van accessible parking spaces dispersion allowing them to be on one level of a multistory parking facility. Another exception on location, you are allowed to move -- if you have several different parking facilities within one site, the standards allow you to move your parking spaces to be grouped on to one lot or facility as long as it's greater accessibility, meaning distance to the entrance, parking fees, coverage. You can't charge a parking fee to the lot if the closer lot is not charging fees. The same depth as the parking space itself. The van space is 11-foot wide with an aisle totaling 16 feet wide for the two. The standards allow an exception that allows for the van space

to be 8-foot wide with an 8-foot wide access aisle. That is a total of 16 feet. The parking space and associated access aisle must be level, no more than 2 percent slope in any direction and must be a full width and length of both the parking spaces and associated access aisles. Associated access aisle must be on the same level as parking spaces and cannot overlap vehicular way. Angled van accessible parking must have an access aisle on the passenger's side of the vehicle, nonangled parking spaces may have on either side. The standards require that the access aisle be marked and connect to an accessible route. Speaking of the accessible route, the parking spaces must

be designed to prevent the vehicle parked in them from
reducing the required accessible route clear width to less
than 36 inches. Wheel stops are not necessarily a cure
all, but when this comes to really big cars and trucks,
but they can be helpful. Vertical height requirements of
the accessible parking are that 98 inches minimum and that
accommodates the need of several of the taller accessible
vehicles. Now the Texas accessible standards require an
accessible parking space to be -- that is this particular
icon. The others are not technically allowed to be used
based on the standards themselves, so if you've seen the
faster speedy wheelchair guy or I went and saw an alien in
a wheelchair once. Those don't comply. The spaces that

are van accessible, those have to be indicated as well.

That sign has to be located that the bottom surfaces, a

minimum of 60 inches above the parking ground surface and

the accessible sign required should be under that. Now,

notice I said 60 inches above, so should you have a sign

located behind a curb like this one, measurements should

be taken from the ground surface of the parking itself,

not from where the ground surface of the sign is located.

Then there's one last exception. Should your parking

facilities have four or fewer parking spaces, the

identification signage, this does not have to be provided.

It doesn't exempt the requirement of providing spaces or

associated access aisles, just the signage itself. Now,

there were some access -- those were the accessibility

parking requirements of the TAS. Let's go over the

additional requirements that are part of the Texas

administrative rule, chapter 68 that are in addition to

the Texas accessibility standards. It's important to note

that these requirements do not qualify for safe harbor

because they are included in path -- that are included in

path of travel requirements. The way the standards are

written right now, the path of travel including accessible

parking requirements like this one, but the safe harbor is

defined in the 1994 Texas accessibility standards. The

parking requirements and the rule are not part of those

1994 standards. They don't qualify. So that, at a minimum, these should be added to every alteration project as a primary function project. Went too far. First is that these requirements only apply to paved parking. They should -- should you have a gravel or grass parking facilities, these requirements would not apply. Chapter 68, 104.1 requires a symbol of accessibility to be painted with a contrasting color within your spaces. Requirement number 2 says that the words no parking must be painted in the associated access aisle. The letters must be all capital letters with a height of 12 inches, stroke of 2 inches minimum, and centered on the aisle. This doesn't

distinguish the direction or state that the lettering

cannot be angled along those common access aisle lines.

And the number 3 is it requires additional signage

specifying consequences of parking within the spaces

without proper authority. The sign must be -- state

violation subject to -- must be mounted with the signage

required per the standards. So no lower than 8 inches

below. So they're located above the parking surfaces. I

do have any information there in case anybody has

questions. So we will turn it over to the next presenter.

>>: Also remember that you'll want to put your

questions in the Q and A so people can answer those in

there. Chase, if you'll take it away.

>>: All right. I'm trying to. Hang on one second.

It's not letting me advance now. Matthew, are you able to

advance it for me and I just tell you? All right. First,

my name is Chase Bearden. Thank you for having me. A big

part of why we're here is to talk about enforcement and SB

904 that passed in the 88th legislature. My work has been

statewide. Parking is one of the major issues we get

called on from across the state. Myself, I am a C5-6

quadriplegic. I regained some use of my arms and I do use

accessible parking every day. It's vital to my ability to

be able to work and live and do the things I need to do.

I think we have to take one second to really understand

what accessible parking is. For those that might be attending from a county or a city and don't know anyone who actually really depends on these spaces, for many in our community, it's not just getting close enough to get into a building. It's actually a health and safety issue. Especially during this heat, the great example, myself, I -- since I'm a quadriplegic, my injury level created to where I cannot sweat at all. This is pretty common for a lot of people with different disabilities or on different medications. Add that in today's heat and a person can quickly end up in a very serious situation. What most people don't think about is when you park in that accessible space, those cross hatch marks are so vital,

and if you cannot open your door all the way to get in and
out of your vehicle or lower your ramp to get your power
chair up the ramp because there's a motorcycle parked
there or someone squeezed in there where it's supposed to
say no parking, you can effectively put someone in a very
serious life-threatening situation. I know most probably
never think of that, but that is one of the major reasons
why we've worked with other groups to try and make sure we
are enforcing the State laws around accessible parking and
where we see a lot of abuse happening. You may say, I see
a lot of those spots open all of the time. There's
probably plenty of space at 5:00 in the morning, but at

5:00 in the afternoon, it's intense in trying to find a way to get around. It's very difficult. So with that being said, take this really seriously within your communities and understanding why the disability community is really pushing to see more enforcement around accessible parking. For the longest time, many of the tickets that were issued were dismissed, and it took many of our volunteer groups, and I myself worked with parking mobility here in Travis county to start getting data in and collected to be able to see how many were being dismissed and what issues were being caused. Once -- originally in 2019, now let's go back to why the recent bill had to be passed, then Representative Springer filed

a bill that would improve the requirements of things
needed with accessible parking, and the first thing being
that it had to have the no parking sign painted on the
ground in the middle of the access aisles, the sign had to
also show what the fine levels were and a few other having
that contrasting color. So what ended up happening, and
something that we had brought to the attention during the
session and that we were afraid might happen is that most
judges and counties and cities, when a ticket is issued,
would have no idea which standard that accessible parking
space was under. A judge doesn't know, is this the same
new building or old building and where is that parking

space, so they started dismissing. The reason we found out, we're able to collect data off of volunteers through an app that is used that really starts to give you a snapshot of what's going on. It's exactly what we had expected is that they could not tell which standard it needed to go under. The old standard or the newest standard. So they just started dismissing blindly. What we did was then come back to now Senator Springer, this last session, and we asked them if they could work oncoming up with a minimum standard for enforcement. It's something used in other states. It did not reduce what has to be done on new buildings. What it did is it requires, you know, all new buildings to be built to the

newest standard and have all of the no parking and the cross hatch, the sign, of course, and everything. But it actually created a lower bar for enforcement, and that being said, under 3163, when they added those things, we needed to backtrack because we didn't know how to address the enforcement issue, if people started rejecting them.

So once 904 was submitted and it passed out of the house and senate and signed by the governor, we got questions starting that hit -- let's go to the next slide. All right. Here we go. Actually, you know, I'll read the intent really quickly. SB 904 from the 86, the requirements for how accessible parking spaces are

designated, TDLR inspects new buildings, putting thousands of spaces under the old system which are waiting to be updated or out of compliance. So basically, all of those spaces are unenforceable. Law enforcement no longer tickets those spaces intended for people with disabilities and we all know what happens when you don't enforce a law. People won't follow it anymore. Some judges had stopped and by enacting a minimal enforcement standard that allows for both the old and new standards, the State can protect those spots. That was the reason for SB 904. If you go to the next slide, so the big question we got, and that was sent an e-mail early on was if the parking space or area is generally in compliance with the standards that

are specified clearly, what does that really mean? How do

you know what is considered minimal in that area? So if

you go to the next slide, I can show you some pictures.

All right. So unfortunately, this is our building. Our

sign was stolen a while back from our accessible parking

space, and then the next sad thing was the striping

company we hired a couple of years ago used a very

inferior paint and it has completely disintegrated in this

heat. So we are in the process of actually getting that

restriped very soon. We ended up having to put in a new

accessible parking sign. So right now, under the old

standards, which came from 2019, the photo on the left

would, of course, not be in compliance and you could not enforce it. Now, on the right, the main thing people have to look for now when it comes to is this an enforceable parking space is the sign. If the sign is there and it's reasonably a person would -- any reasonably person would realize that is considered an accessible parking space, then it can be enforced, even if it doesn't have the no parking in the cross aisles. We just can't figure out -- judges are never going to know, TDLR isn't going to be able to supply them which spaces are under the newest code and what's under the old. So that's one good example. If the sign is there, then it's enforceable. Now, if you go to the next page, so here's two good examples of this

around our neighborhood. This is one of the biggest problems we see is it's not just people who are abusing the spaces, but when tenants or even cities and counties don't maintain those parking spaces, as you can see, that is completely -- everyone would know that's an accessible parking space under the standards. The problem is it's missing the sign. So neither of those can actually be enforced. That's one of our biggest problems right now, and something cities, counties, TDLR and all of us need to work on is finding a mechanism that allows us to report to TDLR and a mechanism that sends out a letter or something easy to the building owners that asks them to come back

into compliance so that way, that space can be enforced
and can be under the current program, otherwise we are not
doing our jobs as state, county, or, you know, advocates
to protect and allow enforcement in this area. I know
it's kind of confusing, but the main thing that we want to
see is good enforcement. We've been working on and
finding a way to track and automate where these kinds of
spots are, and we would love to work with TDLR and any of
the other volunteer groups to show how we can do it to
help, but all in all, we have to have enforcement of these
spaces. We have to have them up and compliant, otherwise,
we are really just disserving a large population of people
who may need those spaces. I always do we mind people

that, if you don't right now, at some point in your life,
you probably will or a family member will. So please take
this serious. Go back to your cities and your counties
and let them know how important it is to maintain and
continue enforcing, and if you run across spaces like this
and have to dismiss them, take action. Reach out to the
building owner. I know it takes extra time, but we all
have to do the right thing and make sure we bring as many
of these spaces that are out of compliance and unable to
be enforced back into code. That is the -- the
construction of why we push to get that minimal
enforcement standard. It doesn't mean, you know,

currently, right now, a police officer would write a warning for that, at least. In the past, many wouldn't because they know it wouldn't go through. It would be dismissed. It's important for people to at least get a warning. Once the sign is in place, then I think full enforcement should be made in that position. If y'all have any questions, please feel free to reach out. My information is here. I'd be more than happy to talk and we'd love to help solve any parking issues and help with making sure you bring up your cities and counties. Thank y'all.

>>: Okay. Stefan, take it away.

>>: All right. Good morning. My name is Stefan

Krisch, I'm the director of registration services with the Texas department of motor vehicles. Thank you for allowing me to speak with y'all today regarding the application process for parking placards and license plates for persons with disabilities. Parking placards are available for a temporary or permanent disabilities. They hang from the vehicle's rear-view mirror. The vehicle does not have a rear-view mirror, display on the center portion of the dashboard in a manner visible through the windshield. When a disabled placarded is placed transporting a person with a disability, the vehicle operator is afforded the same parking privileges

as the operator of a vehicle displaying a disabled person
license plate. Both placards have an expiration date area
3 inches in height and a month and year expiration date.
Information written on the placard includes the county
number, first four digits of the driver's license,
identification card, or military ID and the initials of
the applicant. Red disabled placards are issued with a
permanent disability that is an out of state or country
resident and seeking medical treatment in Texas. Blue
disabled are issued to a person with a permanent
disability. Disabled license plates include the -- are
issued to those with a permanent disable. The
international symbol of access is required to be displayed

on the license plate, including disabled veteran license plates to be authorized to park in a designated parking space. Placard and plate eligibility is based on medical condition that meets the legal definition of disability.

Disability means a condition in which a person has visual acuity of 2200 or less, in the better eye with correcting lenses, limited field of vision in which the widest diameter of the visual field, 20 degrees or less, mobility problems that impair a person's ability to move around, potentially caused by paralysis, lung disease, cardiac deficiency, wheelchair confinement, or any other medical condition causing a person to use a brace, crutch, or

other assistive device. A placard or plate is valid when being used by the person with the disability or someone who is driving the person with the disability. Just because you have the plate, if you are not the person that is disabled, you are not entitled to use that parking space. It is a violation of the law in that regard. It is also unsafe to operate the motor vehicle on a public roadway with the disabled placard hanging from the rear-view mirror. Please only put that placard on the mirror when you're parking and don't drive around with it. It is a distraction when you're driving. Application for disabled person license plates must be submitted through the Texas county in which the applicant resides.

Application for the placards must be submitted through the collector's office in the county in which the applicant resides or in the county in which the applicant is seeking medical treatment. For out of state or out of country residents, the application for disabled placards must be submitted through the Texas collector's office in which the applicant is seeking medical treatment. The applicant may be the owner of a registered vehicle regularly operated by or for the transportation of a disabled person or a disabled person who is not a vehicle owner.

Application for disabled parking placards and license plates may be made by submitting the application for

persons with disabilities parking placard and/or license plate or a form available on our website. The disabled person or person making application on behalf of the disabled person must include the driver's license number or identification card number issued by the Texas department of public safety. Out of state driver's license or identification is allowed for nonresidents who have a Texas address. Those seeking treatment in Texas and nonresident military personnel stationed on a military installation in Texas. Initial application for disabled person license or placard must provide for proof of disability. The disability statement on the form must be signed by a physician, physician's assistant, advanced

practice nurse, or advanced nurse practitioner licensed to practice in Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, or Oklahoma or a physician practicing medicine in a hospital or other health facility of the U.S. military or U.S. department of veterans affairs. The licensed professional signature must be notarized on the form unless a separate prescription, electronic or paper is submitted in lieu of the notarized signature. The prescription should include the disabled person's name, type of disability, license medical professional's title, as I've disclosed, and their signature. Blue disabled placards, which are the permanent ones, are valid for four years. Red placards,

the temporary ones, are valid for six months from the date

of issuance or until the end of the disability, whichever

comes first. Red placards for out of state or country

residents with permanent disability are valid for six

months from the date of issuance. You will need to apply

for a new placard when your temporary disability extends to

renew. To renew a blue placard, you would download our

form, complete all sections on page 1, the front of the

new -- and -- but you're not required to complete the

disability statement, the doctor statement on page 2.

Submit a copy of the original application along with

your -- the new application to the county tax office. If

you don't have a copy of your original application, you

can also submit your expired placard to the county office and they will accept that. So the key point is once you submit that original application, make sure you keep a copy of that. That will come in handy in the future when you need to renew. It'll save you the hassle of going back to your doctor and getting that statement recompleted. A new VTR 214 is not required when renewing disabled person license plates. So as of January 1st, 2022, anyone parking in a disabled parking space must have a license plate that features the international symbol of access. Disabled veteran license plates do not feature the ISA unless it is requested. Texans with disabled

veterans license plates wishing to use a space must apply

for a placard or for a new disabled veteran license plate

that features the international symbol of access. The

veteran must immediate the eligibility requirements for

disabled parking placard or for the license plate

featuring the ISA. Please, please be aware that not all

disabilities that qualify for a disabled veteran license

plate will automatically qualify you for the international

symbol of access plate. You have to meet those same

impairments that I discussed early on in the presentation.

For a disabled parking placard, the procedure is the same

as a non -- you know, someone not a veteran. For a

disabled veteran license plate with an ISA, download a

different form, the application for disabled veteran placard which is a VTR 615. Either form, you will have your healthcare practitioner complete the section, disability statement, or provide the prescription just like I disclosed in the previous slide. Then just like before, submit this to your county tax collector.

Currently issued, if you happen to have a disabled parking placard that came with your veteran plates that is still valid, that will remain valid until time of renewal. At time of renewal, you will be required to meet those new requirements where you would have to provide the medical certification. Little bit of additional information here.

If you happen to be visiting Texas from another state of country, we do offer reciprocity, so your valid disabled placard and plates will be honored, provided that plate is valid. Keep in mind, you have to abide by Texas parking laws, not the parking laws of your home state or country.

If the purpose of your visit is to seek medical treatment in Texas, you have a permanent disability, keep in mind, you can apply for a Texas temporary parking placard. If your placard is lost or stolen, you can replace it by presenting a copy of that VTR 214, hence the reason to keep a copy of it always, that you originally submitted to your collector's office. If you don't have a copy of the form and the county can't verify, they don't have a copy

on file, and I'll tell you the smaller counties are good

about keeping access of those copies, but the larger

counties, it just isn't possible. It's not feasible, so

please keep a copy of that original form because if you

don't have it and they can't verify it, you will have to

reapply, which includes a new medical certification.

Also, keep in mind that a law enforcement officer may

seize a placard that the officer believes is being used

illegally. If your placard is seized by law enforcement,

you would like a new one, you will be required to apply as

though it was an initial application needing a new medical

certification and a completely new form. Finally,

vehicles with a disabled placard displaying the ISA, only

displaying the ISA are allowed to park in a designated

spot for persons with disabilities and they could be also

with the park -- the placard or the plate can be exempt

from local and state government parking meters. You don't

receive benefits for federal parking. State law does not

allow you to exceed the meter limit, but certain city

ordinances allow for that. Check with your local

jurisdiction. Visit our website,

www.txdmv.gov/motorists/disabled-parking-placards-plates.

It'll save you some hassle there having to fill it out at

the county. Download and review the resources that I've

displayed here. We've got a brochure that covers basic

facts for persons with disabilities, details the license

plates and a brochure that speaks to the special plates

for disabled veterans. That's all I have. Thank you.

>>: Thank you. We have five minutes left. I hope

we have enough time to talk about the volunteer. So we

have Melonie Curry. Take it away.

>>: Good morning. I'm with the city of Houston.

Park Houston, we are the parking management division for

the city. I'm here to share information about how to

start a volunteer program. Volunteers are very vile in

our efforts in keeping Houston accessible. In 2021, there

was a study done is that said that 23 percent of the

adults in America are volunteers and that leads to almost a 1.2 billion dollar impact. So volunteers not only have impact in accessibility, but all across our country. They allow people to fulfill a passion. They are transporting a loved one who has a need for that parking space. Chase shared the importance of those parking spaces. Many view them as convenience, but those are vital for people with disabilities to work, live, and play. Next slide. Now, Texas state statute 681.0101 allows government entities to establish a volunteer program. You have to provide your participants a four-hour training, you want them to understand the regulations. It's important that they understand how to handle conflict. Nobody is happy

receiving a parking citation. They're going to encounter

conflict. They have to treat the public with respect.

Above all things, always put their personal safety first.

All volunteers required to be recertified every three

years, and it's important during that recertification

program that you talk with your volunteers about their

experience, so you can improve your process and also, they

are very important recruiters for your program in the

future. Next slide, please. There we go. Okay. There

we go. One of the first things you want to educate your

volunteers on is what is a valid parking space that can be

enforceable. Chase talked about how his organization did

the work to make sure that these parking spaces are enforceable and the main requirement is that it has that ADA sign in the front of the parking space, directly in front of that parking space, and that sign must have the international symbol of access. The other ADA requirements are not required for enforcement of a parking citation, but you must have that sign. We provide our volunteers with this hand out so if they see someone with a valid placard and they've parked in the access aisle, we want to let them know that this is a no parking zone because we don't want to punish people that have a right to use that space. And then as discussed, the -- anyone using an ADA parking space must have a license plate with

the international symbol of access or the wheelchair emblem. That includes disabled veterans now. Valid placards, they're going to have that information from the county filled out. They're going to have that sticker. They're going to have the date punched and the date written, and those must coincide. And the -- of course blue placard is valid for four years, a red for six months, and a very good way that you can identify fake or fraudulent placards, they get the expiration dates wrong, especially on the red placards. They'll buy them off of Facebook or some type of social media outlet and make a red valid for three or four years, and that's just a red

flag to know that that's not a valid placard. So that's something you include in your training when preparing your volunteers to go out and patrol. And it was shared earlier about the requirements for veterans. Educate about the change and the regulations. Many of them, they haven't applied for the correct credentials, they have the license plate with the international symbol of access, or to get their parking placard, so this lets them know what they're going to need. We partner with our department of veterans affairs to spread the word, and also, we give our volunteers these types of hand outs. It helps them escalate and gets the word out in the community that the veterans now have this requirement to park in ADA parking

spaces. Now, as you -- after you educate and empower your volunteers, you have to equip them to patrol. The most important piece of equipment is that they have some type of identification showing they're a representative for your agency. Of course, an ID card with their name, your -- the name of your agency, and how to contact your agency if there's any kind of dispute out in the field.

We also provide safety vests and caps. Not a full uniform, but if your agency decides to do so, that could be something that you could also do. You're going to give them hand held devices or citation books so they can issue the citations, but you must emphasize that they must keep

those very secure and that they are the only ones authorized to use that equipment. This is another time when they should always practice social distancing, not for the sake of worrying about the virus, but don't be close enough to someone to where they can snatch that equipment out of your hand. We've had that happen to a couple of volunteers. Fortunately, we had pictures of the person's vehicle and their license plate number, so we were able to track them down, and it didn't end well for them in the long run. But keep their distance so that no one can come in and just snatch your equipment out of your hand. And you, as the administrator of the program, be prepared to take all of the heat. From my experience,

I've been doing parking for 16 years. No one likes a parking citation. They especially do not like one that's going to cost between 500 to \$1,300, depending where you are in Texas. You need to be prepared to expect all of that that the volunteers are going to encounter out in the field. Put your contact information on the back of your citations, give them your business card or have your contact information on the back of their ID so that you can deal with disgruntled people out in the field and you can show them how they can dispute the citation. People make mistakes, they might have forgotten their placard. You can give them the information they need. They can go

on and not feel threatened or uncomfortable due to the heat that's coming on at that moment. Now, it's important that you want to train advocates and not avengers. Some people get a false sense of security, a false sense of superiority when you give them that badge or that ticket book. They're looking to punish people, they become power hungry, they want to inflict pain. We want people passionate about supporting the parking rights of the community. We want advocates. These are people who are working on a passion to feel a need. They have a loved one who needs the space. They know the importance of it. They have a desire to serve their community. They want to increase accessibility in their community. They're not

looking to fulfill a dream of being a cop or being the
next Arnold Schwarzenegger. They want to -- their passion
is to protect the needs of the disabled unit. Always
emphasizing in your trainings that you're not being
trained to be the heavy hand of the law. You are trained
to be an advocate and a support for members of the
disabled community. And after you have done your
training, take your time to evaluate. How many people
have you trained? How many of those people that you
trained, how many are still active? How many are
returning for recertification? If someone is not
returning, reach out to them and find out why. Find out

why they've made the choice to become inactive. If you're not hearing from someone in a while, reach out. Maybe they're having a personal crisis in their life and you can offer support because of the support that they've offered you throughout the program. Because you think most of our agencies, our enforcement officers are focused on the public right-of-way. So I know in Houston, having volunteers who could address the parking violations on the private properties and shopping centers, and grocery stores, at hospitals, it's a very important in our efforts to keep Houston accessible. We've had years where volunteers issue over 80 percent of the citations for people illegally parking in disabled parking spaces. They

have an impact. And of course you want to take the time to celebrate and congratulate them and recognize them. We have a luncheon in the summertime and we try to have a little holiday celebration just to let them know how important and how vital and the impact they're having. We share statistics about citations that have been dismissed due to an error or the number -- the percentage of citations compared to our officers and police officers combined. Let them know their impact. We don't focus on the number of -- that each volunteer has issued, because we're focusing on the advocacy, of protecting the rights of the disabled community. I hope I was able to condense

it in five minutes, but if you have any additional questions, here is any contact information.

>>: Well, thank you so much. We want to wrap it up.

If you have more questions, we can stop the recording and we have a few minutes to, and thank you for coming, and I hope you've learned more about accessibility parking.

Take care. Good-bye.

(Recording stopped)

>>: Thank you, all. Take care. Good-bye.