

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Accessibility Policy

This policy establishes the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation's (OPRHP) policy on accessibility for people with disabilities to New York's state parks and historic sites.

OPRHP is committed to making all reasonable efforts to ensure that the agency's facilities, programs, and services are accessible to and usable by visitors of all abilities. The agency will ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the New York State Building Code, and the New York State Human Rights Law provisions for public accommodation to enhance accessibility to all members of the public.

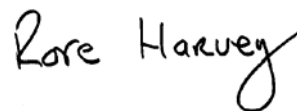
Accessibility to state parks and historic sites and programs and services offered by the agency is to be achieved through physical design, specialized adaptive recreation equipment, interpretive resources, and reasonable accommodations.

1. All newly built or substantially renovated facilities and trails will adhere to the most current accessibility design standards.
2. All existing facilities and trails will be assessed for compliance with the most current standards and a plan for remediation of all non-compliant features will be developed and implemented. At properties that are eligible or listed in the State or National Register of Historic Places, the plan for remediation shall be developed in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office and in accordance with OPRHP's policies on cultural resource protection.
3. All newly developed programs and services offered to the public by the agency will adhere to the most current accessibility standards.
4. All existing programs and services will be assessed for compliance to the most current standards and a plan of remediation of all those that are non-compliant will be established and implemented.
5. All reasonable accommodation requests will be directed to facility staff and fulfilled to the greatest extent practicable.
6. Wheelchairs are permitted in any areas open to pedestrian use. A wheelchair is defined as a manually operated or power-driven device designed primarily for use by an individual with a mobility disability for the main purpose of indoor and/or outdoor locomotion.

7. In accordance with the OPRHP guidance documents, use of other power-driven mobility devices (“OPDMD”) by individuals with mobility disabilities will be allowed in all appropriate locations in state parks and historic sites, unless they: a) present a safety hazard to the user or other members of the public using the facility; or b) will result in an adverse impact to natural or historic resources. Permits issued at the facility will be required for certain devices and registration may be required upon arrival at the facility. Reasonable speed limits and other safety related requirements may be established and shall be posted and/or included in permits. In some instances, OPDMD may be allowed during some periods, but excluded during high use periods. For example, they may be allowed on a specific path during weekdays, but excluded on weekends when high visitation would make operation on the path unsafe.
8. Service animals that have been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability will be allowed in all locations regardless of other pet policy restrictions, unless their presence poses a danger to themselves or the public using the facility. Certification or identification as a service animal is not required and should not be requested. Under no circumstance should a person be asked to disclose his or her disability. When the need for a service animal is not apparent, the handler may be asked: a) if the animal is required because of a disability; and b) what work or tasks the animal has been trained to perform. Therapy dogs are defined as those that provide therapeutic and emotional support. Therapy dogs are not service animals and may be treated in accordance with the facility’s pet policy.
9. Information about accessible facilities and programs will be made readily available through our agency website and at our facilities and will be included in publications and informational materials.
10. Agency employees whose responsibilities include public interaction will be trained to understand their responsibilities and how to respond to requests for information and reasonable accommodations.
11. The agency will utilize an Advisory Group comprised of members who represent individuals with varying types of disabilities.

Any questions regarding implementation of this policy should be directed to the Deputy Commissioner for Operations or may be submitted to OPRHP’s Albany Office Accessibility mailbox (Accessibility@oprhp.state.ny.us).

This policy is effective immediately.



Dated: September 7, 2011

Rose Harvey