



Overview of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) became law in 1990. The ADA is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all public and private places that are open to the general public. The purpose of the law is to make sure that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else.

The ADA gives civil rights protections to individuals with disabilities similar to those provided to individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, and religion. It guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications.

The ADA is divided into five titles (or sections) that relate to different areas of public life, these include:

- Employment – which applies to employers who employ 15 or more employees (<https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/types/disability.cfm>)
- Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in State and Local Government Services
- Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability by Public Accommodations and in Commercial Facilities
- Telecommunications
- Miscellaneous Provisions

In 2008, the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) was signed into law and became effective on January 1, 2009. The ADAAA made a number of significant changes to the definition of “disability.” The changes in the definition of disability in the ADAAA apply to all titles of the ADA. “Disability” is defined as – “A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a record of such an impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment”.

For more information about the ADA go to: <https://adata.org/learn-about-ada>