



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Justice Programs

Office for Civil Rights

Washington, D.C. 20531

Via Certified Mail Return Receipt Requested

March 24, 2026

██████████, Court Administrator
Canyon County Courthouse
██████████
██████████
Caldwell, ID 83605

Re: Notice of Findings and Administrative Closure
██████████ v. *Canyon County Courthouse* (20-OCR-0197)

Dear Administrator ██████████

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs (OJP), Office for Civil Rights (OCR), has completed its investigation of the above-referenced complaint alleging discrimination on the basis of disability at the Canyon County Courthouse (the “Courthouse”). After careful review of the factual record and applicable law, OCR finds insufficient evidence to conclude that the Courthouse violated Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Title II), 42 U.S.C. § 12132, or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), 29 U.S.C. § 794, and their implementing regulations, as alleged.

OCR has authority to investigate disability discrimination complaints under Section 504 and Title II. *See* 28 C.F.R. § 42.205(c)(1); 28 C.F.R. pt. 35. Section 504 prohibits discrimination against a qualified individual with a disability by a recipient of federal funding, 29 U.S.C. § 794, while Title II provides that no qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of a disability, be excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity, 42 U.S.C. § 12132. Here, the Courthouse is subject to Section 504 because it received federal funding from DOJ at the time OCR initiated this investigation, and subject to Title II because it is a public entity.

The Complainant, who uses a wheelchair for mobility, alleges that she was barely able to maneuver her wheelchair into the Courthouse elevator due to the narrow interior. She further alleges that she was unable to attend ██████████ because she could not pass through the fire doors leading to the courtroom, which were too narrow to accommodate her wheelchair. She asserted that, as a result, ██████████ occurred in the hallway, without a judge present.

Under Title II and Section 504, the Courthouse is required to ensure that individuals with disabilities are afforded an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from their services and programs. 28 C.F.R. § 35.130(a), (b). To establish a prima facie case of discrimination under Title II and Section 504, an individual must demonstrate that they are a qualified individual with a disability and that they were excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination by reason of disability. *See Lacy v. Cook Cnty., Illinois*, 897 F.3d 847, 853 (7th Cir. 2018).

OCR reviewed documentation and information provided by the Complainant and the Courthouse. This review demonstrated that the interior width of the relevant elevators at the Courthouse exceed recommended minimum clearances for wheelchair users and the elevator doors are consistent with ADA accessibility guidelines. The documentation further revealed that on the day of [REDACTED] the Complainant could not access her assigned courtroom in the Courthouse, as her wheelchair would not fit through a double-fire door with center mullion outside of the courtroom. A Courthouse facilities employee was made aware of the issue and informed the Complainant that he needed to gather the necessary tools to remove the mullion. The judge assigned to Complainant's [REDACTED] was also made aware of the issue and, prior to any adjustment by the facilities employee, reassigned [REDACTED] to a courtroom that did not require the Complainant to pass through the fire doors.¹ Moreover, during the course of OCR's investigation, the Courthouse modified the fire doors at issue by replacing the screws, which required an Allen wrench to remove the mullion, with cotter pins that do not require any tool to remove, thereby improving accessibility.

In sum, OCR's investigation revealed the Courthouse took immediate action to provide an accessible courtroom for the Complainant and subsequently made additional changes to improve accessibility. Accordingly, OCR finds there is insufficient evidence that the Courthouse excluded the Complainant from, denied her the benefits of, or otherwise discriminated against her in the provision of court services in violation of Title II of the ADA or Section 504.

Please be advised that OCR's closure of this Complaint is limited to the specific facts of the matter and does not preclude DOJ from taking additional appropriate action to evaluate a recipient's compliance with any of the laws that DOJ enforces. Closing this Complaint does not affect the Courthouse's obligation to comply with all applicable federal laws and regulations. Federal law protects persons who participate in OCR investigations or otherwise engage in protected activity from retaliation. OCR may initiate an investigation if it receives credible evidence of retaliation. 28 C.F.R. § 42.503(b)(1)(vii); 28 C.F.R § 35.134(a).

Based on the foregoing, OCR is administratively closing this Complaint. Thank you for your cooperation with this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris", followed by a horizontal line.

¹ Ultimately, the Complainant did not have to access a courtroom, as the legal matter was resolved with plaintiff's counsel and no hearing before a judge was held.

Christina W. Smith
Director
Office for Civil Rights
Office of Justice Programs
U.S. Department of Justice