

July 31, 2020

ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL RELEASES FIRST ANNUAL REPORT OF DISABILITY RIGHTS BUREAU ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS

Report Issued as Nation Commemorates 30th Anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today released the first annual [Disability Rights Bureau Investigation and Technical Assistance Activity report](#) for fiscal year 2019-2020. The report is being released as the nation celebrates the 30th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The report is the result of a law that went into effect in August 2019 that requires the Disability Rights Bureau to detail its efforts to enforce state and federal laws that protect individuals with disabilities in Illinois, notably the Illinois Environmental Barriers Act (EBA). The EBA requires physical accessibility in new construction, additions and alterations to public facilities, and new multistory housing. The report also addresses other actions taken by the bureau, beyond enforcement work, to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities.

“People with disabilities are entitled to equal access to schools, businesses and public buildings so that they can be active participants in their communities,” Raoul said. “As we celebrate this milestone anniversary of the ADA, I am proud to highlight my office’s continued action to protect and advance the rights of people with disabilities in Illinois.”

Raoul’s Disability Rights Bureau is responsible for investigating complaints related to noncompliance with state and federal laws, including the Illinois Human Rights Act, the Fair Housing Act, and the ADA. The ADA, which was signed into law 30 years ago on July 26, bans discrimination against people with disabilities and requires reasonable accommodations across areas of public life, including in schools, employment, public businesses, telecommunications and transportation. Attorneys and specialists in the bureau work to resolve violations of these laws and, when necessary, takes legal action against violators.

In addition to its enforcement work, the Disability Rights Bureau provides technical assistance to individuals with disabilities and to public and private entities seeking to comply with disability rights laws. The bureau also conducts disability rights training programs for law enforcement, architects, engineers, building code officials and inspectors, judges and court personnel, business owners, disability rights organizations, and other groups throughout the state. Bureau staff members also serve on a number of committees that address a variety of issues impacting the lives of people with disabilities.

Today’s report details these actions taken by the bureau in fiscal year 2019-2020. In the past year, the bureau has responded to 211 complaints about physical accessibility and disability discrimination, responded to 790 requests for technical assistance, and conducted seven presentations and trainings across the state. The most frequent complaints received this past year that resulted in investigations of alleged EBA violations include physical inaccessibility of routes, bathrooms, curb ramps, doors, entrances, parking, ramps, and sidewalks. The bureau also received complaints alleging discrimination against people who have disabilities, the most frequent involving service animals, effective communication, and businesses, housing providers, and public entities that demonstrated a pattern or practice of a failure to provide accommodations to individuals with disabilities.

For more information about disability rights laws or to file a complaint, Raoul encourages people to visit [the Attorney General’s website](#) or contact the Attorney General’s Disability Rights Bureau in Chicago at 312-814-5684

(TTY: 1-800-964-3013), in Springfield at 217-524-2660 (TTY: 1-877-844-5461), or by email at disabilityrights@atg.state.il.us.