



State of North Carolina

JOSH STEIN
GOVERNOR

March 17, 2026

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 35

THE COMMISSION ON ACCESSIBILITY

WHEREAS, Governor Josh Stein is committed to creating a safer, stronger North Carolina by ensuring that government is accessible, convening community and state government leaders to improve public services, expanding opportunity, promoting public safety, and upholding our shared values of freedom and opportunity for all; and

WHEREAS, government must be accessible for all people, regardless of ability, background, or circumstance; and

WHEREAS, physical access, language access, digital access, and communication access overlap in practice and should therefore be addressed together to deliver services effectively and uphold trust in public institutions; and

WHEREAS, an accessible government is not only fairer but also more efficient; and

WHEREAS, it is crucial to incorporate people's experiences in designing and evaluating accessible and comprehensive solutions for physical spaces, communication, digital access, and language access; and

WHEREAS, engaging individuals early is a cost-effective way of addressing potential barriers during the design phase rather than recreating or adapting spaces, communications, or digital systems later; and assessing usability ensures that physical, digital, language, and communication access can be meaningfully experienced, promoting full participation for all; and

WHEREAS, cabinet agencies have established ADA Transition Plans and Language Access Plans in compliance with existing law and may benefit from additional support to implement these plans; and

WHEREAS, the State of North Carolina seeks to create a resilient, integrated framework that embeds accessibility into its core functions through policy, design, procurement, budgeting, programming, and training, creating pathways for individuals to participate fully in their communities while ensuring efficiency and resilience; and

WHEREAS, accessibility in government not only improves services for the public but also expands opportunities for employment within state government by enabling more individuals to contribute their skills and talents.

NOW, THEREFORE, by the authority vested in me as Governor by the Constitution and laws of the State of North Carolina, **IT IS ORDERED:**

Section 1. Establishment and Purpose

There is hereby established the Commission on Accessibility (“Commission”) within the North Carolina Department of Administration (“DOA”), with additional leadership and support provided by the Office of Language and Communication Access (“OLCA”) at the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (“DHHS”), the North Carolina Office of State Human Resources (“OSHR”), and the North Carolina Department of Information Technology (“DIT”).

The purpose of the Commission is to recommend actions for DOA, DHHS, OSHR, and DIT as well as for the Governor’s Office and other cabinet agencies to improve access to government across digital platforms, communications, language access, and physical spaces, with strategic guidance by OLCA at DHHS, and with OSHR assisting in advancing accessibility in employment opportunities within state government.

Section 2. Membership

The Commission shall be composed of a minimum of twenty (20) members, appointed by the Secretary of DOA (the “Secretary”). Members should include individuals from the public as well as state employees with expertise or lived experience in the four pillars of accessibility: digital, language, communication, and physical access. In addition, there should be four (4) designated members: the Governor’s Designee, the Secretary’s Designee, the OLCA Director’s Designee, and the OSHR Director’s Designee. Members shall serve a term of two (2) years and may be reappointed to successive terms. Vacancies shall be filled by the appointing authority, and members appointed to fill vacancies shall serve for the remainder of the unexpired term. Members serve at the pleasure of the Secretary. The Secretary shall appoint two (2) Co-Chairs and one (1) Secretary from among the members.

In addition to the voting members, the Secretary may request appropriate representatives from cabinet agencies to serve as liaisons in support of the Commission.

Section 3. Meetings

The Commission shall meet quarterly or upon the call of the Governor, the Secretary, or the Co-Chairs.

Commission members shall participate actively during quarterly meetings, maintain consistent attendance, and serve on committees convened between quarterly meetings, as such participation is an expectation of Commission service.

Section 4. Duties

The Commission shall advise the Governor on matters affecting the accessibility of government, including:

- a. **Improved communications:** The Commission shall recommend guidance to make government information clearer, easier to find, available in plain language, and provided in alternative formats that meet the cognitive and sensory needs of the population. The Commission shall promote training and professional development for government staff on effective communication to ensure accessible, respectful, and effective interactions with all individuals across a variety of cultures and needs.
- b. **Expanded language access:** Through its recommendations, the Commission shall support the development of multilingual translations of vital documents and relevant public information, interpretation services (in person, remote, and via phone systems), procurement of language services (including American Sign Language), culturally appropriate materials, staff training, and other strategies to improve language access.
- c. **Enhanced digital platforms:** The Commission shall recommend accessibility improvements to ensure websites and apps are navigable, are compatible with screen readers, and provide multilingual captions and transcripts for audio and video content, including other digital accessibility measures.
- d. **Accessible physical spaces:** The Commission shall advise on ensuring government spaces are accessible, usable, and understandable to everyone through universal design. Recommendations may include improvements to entrances, restrooms, service areas,

- accessible signage (braille, multilingual, tactile, directional), neuro-accessible design, accessible parking, and emergency plans that meet accessibility and usability standards.
- e. **Overall impact:** By implementing these recommendations, government services and programs will become more accessible and usable for all North Carolinians. The Commission shall have the flexibility to involve members of the public to provide feedback and incorporate further accessibility improvements over time. All recommendations shall comply with applicable accessibility laws and regulations.
 - f. **Annual report:** The Commission shall prepare an annual report summarizing its activities, findings, and recommendations in collaboration with DOA, OLCA at DHHS, OSHR, and DIT, and submit the report to the Secretary and the Governor to support ongoing improvements in accessibility. DOA shall assist in the design, printing, and dissemination of the Commission’s annual report.

The Commission shall perform other duties as directed by the Secretary or the Governor.

Section 5. Administration

DOA shall serve as staff for the Commission and provide all administrative and required support services. Members shall serve without compensation but may receive reimbursement, contingent upon the availability of funds, for travel and subsistence in accordance with N.C. Gen. Stat. §§ 138-6 and 120-3.1.

Section 6. Duration

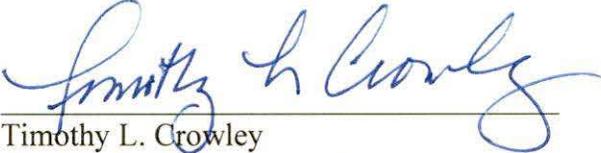
This Executive Order is effective immediately. This Executive Order shall remain in effect until March 31, 2030, pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 147-16.2(a), or until earlier rescinded.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto signed my name and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina at the Capitol in the City of Raleigh, this 17th day of 2026, in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty-six.



Josh Stein
Governor

ATTEST:



Timothy L. Crowley
Chief of Staff, Secretary of State

