[DRAFT] Americans with Disabilities Act Transition Plan – July 2025

Southeast Michigan Council of Governments



SEMCOG

SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

SEMCOG. . . *Developing Regional Solutions*

MISSION

SEMCOG, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, is the only organization in Southeast Michigan that brings together all governments to develop regional solutions for both now and in the future. SEMCOG:

- Promotes informed decision making to improve Southeast Michigan and its local governments by providing insightful data analysis and direct assistance to member governments;
- Promotes the efficient use of tax dollars for infrastructure investment and governmental effectiveness;
- Develops regional solutions that go beyond the boundaries of individual local governments; and
- Advocates on behalf of Southeast Michigan in Lansing and Washington

ADA Transition Plan (DRAFT)

© SEMCOG 2025

Preparation of this document is financed in part through grants from and in cooperation with the Michigan Department of Transportation with the assistance of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration; and other federal and state funding agencies as well as local membership contributions and designated management agency fees.

Permission is granted to cite portions of this publication, with proper attribution. The first source attribution must be "SEMCOG, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments." Subsequently, "SEMCOG" is sufficient. Reprinting in any form must include the publication's full title page. SEMCOG documents and information are available in a variety of formats. Contact SEMCOG's Information Center to discuss your format needs.

SEMCOG

Southeast Michigan Council of Governments
Information Center
1001 Woodward Avenue, Suite 1400
Detroit, MI 48226-1904
313-961-4266 • fax 313-961-4869
www.semcog.org • infocenter@semcog.org

Table of Contents

Table of Contents ii

SEMCOG Transition Plan 1

Introduction 1

SEMCOG Vision 1

SEMCOG Core Values 1

Organizational Commitment to Accessibility 2

Self-Evaluation and Accessibility Barriers 2

Barrier Impact Analysis 3

Implementation 4

Responsible for Implementation 5

Monitoring and Reporting 5

Progress Monitoring and Reporting 5

Public Involvement 6

Advisory Group 6

Grievance Procedure 6

SEMCOG Transition Plan

Introduction

SEMCOG, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments is a voluntary association of local governments fostering cooperative efforts to move Southeast Michigan forward. SEMCOG helps facilitate coordinated planning and decision making to address regional challenges and opportunities. This includes transportation planning, environmental stewardship, economic development, and quality of life improvements.

SEMCOG Vision

All the people of Southeast Michigan benefit from a connected thriving region of small towns, dynamic urban centers, active waterfronts, diverse neighborhoods, premiere educational institutions, and abundant agricultural, recreational, and natural areas.

SEMCOG Core Values

- **Visionary** – We work holistically, inspiring, innovative regional and local solutions.
- **Collaborative and Inclusive** – We are respective, approachable, and embrace different perspectives to meet the diverse needs of our region.
- **Strategic** – We are intentional, yet flexible to leverage opportunities.
- **Integrity** – We are committed to the ethical and honest stewardship of our fiscal, natural, and built resources.
- **Knowledgeable** – We strive for excellence through sound data and research and continuous learning, ensuring we are a credible and influential voice for Southeast Michigan.

SEMCOG's main policy-making body is the Executive Committee, a representative subset of General Assembly delegates and alternates. This committee reviews regional studies and acts on plans, policies, and recommendations. It typically meets six times per year. All Executive Committee and General Assembly meetings are open to the public. Meeting dates are available on SEMCOG's website.

About This Report

As the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Southeast Michigan, SEMCOG is required by federal law to develop an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan. This plan sets forth the steps necessary to make its facilities accessible to people with disabilities. 28 CFR §35.150(d).

DRAFT

Organizational Commitment to Accessibility

Addressing accessibility is crucial to developing comprehensive regional solutions that improve Southeast Michigan. SEMCOG is dedicated to creating a region that welcomes and supports all individuals, regardless of age, income, physical or cognitive ability. By proactively identifying and removing barriers, SEMCOG aims to foster a comprehensive approach that reflects the needs of the communities it services.

Meeting Accessibility

All public meetings at SEMCOG are designed to be accessible to all members of the public. Meetings are held at physically accessible locations throughout the SEMCOG region. This includes SEMCOG offices and various regional venues. Meeting notices and agendas state reasonable accommodation, including sign language interpreters, are available as requested.

Requests for accommodation can be submitted to the ADA Coordinator with advance notice to ensure proper arrangements. Virtual meeting accommodation is also available.

Document and Information Accessibility

SEMCOG is committed to providing information in formats accessible to everyone. Upon request, documents and handouts are available in alternative formats including large print, audio recordings, and Braille. Staff will make effort to accommodation requests made at least 24 hours prior to scheduled meetings and events.

Digital Accessibility

Digital accessibility is core to SEMCOG's communication strategy. SEMCOG's website complies with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, incorporating accessibility best practices such as properly structured content, text alternatives for images, and consistent navigation templates.

Self-Evaluation and Accessibility Barriers

Identified Accessibility Barriers

In February 2025, an initial assessment conducted by the SEMCOG ADA Coordinator revealed specific areas where improvements are needed to enhance accessibility. These findings are a starting point for creating a more considerate environment and will be expanded during subsequent self-evaluation processes:

DRAFT

Table 1: Self Evaluation - Identified Barriers

Category	Barrier Identified	Impact
Physical Access	Independent access into suite, large conference room and restrooms for people with disabilities	Limits the ability of people with mobility impairments to independently enter and navigate facilities.
Physical Access	Wayfinding signs are needed for ADA accessible restroom, and signs should be 60 inches from the floor.	Creates difficulty locating accessible facilities.
Physical Access	Lack of Braille signage within the building	Creates barriers for persons with visual impairments
Digital Access	Website documents not accessible to visually impaired individuals	Prevents equal access to important information and resources.
Policy	Grievance procedure for ADA compliance for SEMCOG employees missing	Lacks clear process for employees to address disability-related concerns.

SEMCOG is committed to removing these barriers as available resources allow and welcomes public input to help identify any additional accessibility concerns present at office and meeting-space facilities, in communications, or in programs.

Barrier Impact Analysis

The identified barriers present significant challenges to individuals with disabilities, potentially limiting their ability to:

- Independently access and navigate SEMCOG facilities
- Obtain critical information and resources
- Effectively communicate accessibility concerns
- Fully participate in SEMCOG's programs and services

DRAFT

Implementation

In response to the accessibility barriers identified during its self-evaluation, SEMCOG will implement the following strategies:

SEMCOG will follow the timeline below in implementing accessibility improvements:

Table 2: Implementation Schedule as of July 2025

Project/Action	Status	
Improve independent access into suite, conference room and restroom	In progress	Updates scheduled for August 2025
Inadequate wayfinding signage	Completed	Signage in public spaces have been updated to increase visibility.
Lack of Braille signage within building	In progress	Signage in lobby has been updated with Braille signage.
Update SEMCOG website to improve accessibility	In progress	Website schedule for update in Summer 2025
Develop and formalize ADA grievance procedure for employees	Completed	Forms are available on SEMCOG website. Grievance instructions included in this document.

DRAFT

Responsible for Implementation

Nick Friedrich serves as the SEMCOG ADA Coordinator and is responsible for implementing the Transition Plan.

Table 3: Implementation Responsibilities

Name	Title	Responsibility
Nick Friedrich	Coordinator, Internal Operations	Overall implementation oversight
April Scales	Specialist, Web	Website and digital accessibility improvements
Yvonne Taylor	Manager, Human Resources	Employee policies and training
Trevor Layton	Manager, Communications	Accessible document creation

Monitoring and Reporting

Progress Monitoring and Reporting

SEMCOG recognizes the importance of continually tracking progress in implementing the Transition Plan. To ensure SEMCOG is making meaningful progress toward improving accessibility for everyone, we will establish an ongoing monitoring process:

- Annual internal assessment of SEMCOG facilities
- Annual review of the Transition Plan
- Periodic reporting to Executive Committee
- Full update of the Transition Plan every five years

Understanding that accessibility needs evolve over time, SEMCOG must adapt strategies accordingly. New technologies, facility modifications, or emerging best practices may require adjustments to the approaches taken.

DRAFT

Public Involvement

Advisory Group

SEMCOG established an ADA advisory group in April 2025 to gather feedback on the Transition Plan. These meetings were conducted at SEMCOG offices with virtual participation options to ensure maximum accessibility and engagement. Participants were provided with the opportunity to give insight into issues experienced at SEMCOG meetings and facilities. SEMCOG will continue to engage individuals with disabilities and advocacy organizations through:

- Annual public meetings to review progress
- Regular consultation with local accessibility rights organizations
- Accessible feedback form on the SEMCOG website

Grievance Procedure

Grievance Procedure – General Public

This grievance procedure is established to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). It may be used by anyone who wishes to file a complaint alleging discrimination on the basis of disability in the provision of services, activities, programs, or benefits by SEMCOG. Federal and state law prohibits intimidation or retaliation of any kind for filing a complaint.

Filing a complaint

The complaint should be in writing and contain information about the alleged discrimination, including the complainant's name, address, phone number, location, date, and description of the problem. The complainant can file a complaint online, or SEMCOG can provide alternative means of filing the complaints, such as a personal interview or a tape recording of the complaint, which will be made available for people with disabilities upon request.

The complaint should be submitted by the grievant and/or their designee as soon as possible but no later than 90 calendar days after the alleged violation. The complaint may be submitted electronically from the online complaint form or mailed directly to SEMCOG's ADA Coordinator.

Within 15 days after receipt of the complaint, SEMCOG's ADA Coordinator or their designee will meet or communicate with the complainant.

DRAFT

Figure 1: SEMCOG ADA Complaint Form

SEMCOG | SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

SEMCOG ADA Complaint Form

SEMCOG is committed to ensuring that no person is denied access to its services, programs, or activities on the basis of their disabilities, as provided by Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Any person(s) or organization(s) believing they have been a victim of discrimination based on a disability may file a complaint by completing the form below or by contacting SEMCOG's ADA Coordinator, Nick Friedrich by phone at (313) 961-4266 or via email at infocenter@semcog.org.

This complaint form can be provided in an alternative format upon request.

* First name

* Last name:

* Address

Street address	
Unit (if applicable)	
City	
State	
Zip code	

* Your phone number:

* Your phone number:

* Your email address:

* Date of complaint/incident

Month/Day/Year

Date

MM/DD/YYYY

* Location of complaint/incident

* Are you filing this complaint on your own behalf?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

* Description of complaint/incident (please describe what happened and why you believe you were discriminated against. If known, please include the contact information and/or names of the person(s) who discriminated against you, as well as any witnesses)

SUBMIT

Grievance Procedure - SEMCOG Employees

It is SEMCOG's intent to ensure that no qualified individual, because of a disability, is discriminated against regarding any term or condition of employment, provided that such an individual can perform the essential functions of the job with or without reasonable accommodation.

Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) is an equal opportunity employer and complies with all applicable federal, state, and local fair employment practices and laws. SEMCOG prohibits discrimination and harassment of any type and affords equal employment opportunities to employees, applicants, or any other covered persons without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, height, weight, marital status, pregnancy, age, national origin, disability status, genetic information, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law. This applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including but not limited to, recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation, benefits, and training.

SEMCOG will endeavor to make reasonable accommodation of an otherwise qualified applicant or employee related to an individual's: physical or mental disability; sincerely held religious beliefs and practices; and/or any other reason required by applicable law, if such accommodation would allow the individual to perform the essential functions of the job, unless doing so would impose an undue hardship upon SEMCOG's business operations.

Any applicant or employee who needs accommodation to perform the essential functions of the job should contact Human Resources to request such accommodation. The individual should specify what accommodation is needed to perform the job and submit supporting documentation explaining the basis for the requested accommodation, to the extent permitted and in accordance with applicable law. SEMCOG will then review and analyze the request, including engaging in an interactive process with the employee or applicant, to identify if such accommodation can be arranged. SEMCOG will evaluate requested accommodation, and as appropriate, identify other possible accommodation, if any. The individual will be notified of SEMCOG's decision regarding the request within a reasonable period. SEMCOG treats all medical information submitted as part of the accommodation process in a confidential manner.

Any employee or applicant who believes they have been or are being discriminated against because or as a result of their disability status, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, height, weight, marital status, pregnancy, age, national origin, genetic information, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law should contact the Human Resources department to file a formal

DRAFT

complaint. Complaints related to disability status will be shared with the designated ADA Coordinator for investigation and resolution.

A disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that renders the individual unable to perform or significantly limits the individual's ability to perform one or more major life activities as compared to an average person in the general population; or, there is a record of such impairment; or, the individual is regarded as having such an impairment.

To file a complaint, the process SEMCOG follows for staff is:

- Within 30 calendar days of the alleged discriminatory act and/or policy, statute, or legal violation, a written complaint must be provided to the Human Resources department containing the complainant's name, address, contact information, and detailed description of the alleged violation. (Note: The complaint can be submitted in alternate format depending on the needs of an individual's disability.)
- An investigation will be conducted by the Human Resources department, designated ADA Coordinator, and other related or involved individuals as needed.
- The Human Resources department or designated ADA Coordinator will respond to the complainant in writing within a reasonable time frame that is not to exceed 45 calendar days from receipt of the written complaint. The response will provide information concerning the resolution of the complaint.
- A record of all ADA-related complaints will be maintained by SEMCOG for a minimum of 5 years.

Any employees with questions or concerns about equal employment opportunities in the workplace are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of Human Resources. SEMCOG will not allow any form of retaliation against individuals who raise concerns regarding equal employment opportunities. If employees feel they have been subjected to any such retaliation, they should contact Human Resources. To ensure our workplace is free of artificial barriers, violation of this policy including any improper retaliatory conduct will lead to corrective action, up to and including termination of employment. All employees must cooperate with all investigations conducted pursuant to this policy.

DRAFT

Contact Information

Nick Friedrich
ADA Coordinator
SEMCOG

1001 Woodward Avenue, Suite 1400
Detroit, MI 48226
Email: infocenter@semcog.org
Phone (313) 961-4266

DRAFT

SEMCOG Officers
2024-2025

Gwen Markham
Chairperson
Commissioner,
Oakland County

Anne Marie Graham-Hudak
Vice Chairperson
Supervisor,
Canton Township

Laura Kropp
Vice Chairperson
Mayor,
Mount Clemens

Joe LaRussa
Vice Chairperson
Mayor,
Farmington

Diana McKnight-Morton
Vice Chairperson
Trustee,
Washtenaw Community College

Frank Viviano
Vice Chairperson
Supervisor,
Macomb Township

Amy O'Leary
Executive Director