

Disability & Accessibility Concerns in Spokane, WA

Community Feedback Summary



1. Housing

- **Not enough accessible and affordable housing**
 - People with developmental disabilities, including those on CORE waivers, struggle to move from institutions into the community because there aren't enough housing options.
- **Evictions and fair accommodations**
 - About 40% of evictions involve people with disabilities. Many have asked for accommodations, but their requests are ignored or delayed.
- **Shelter access problems**
 - Most shelters aren't designed for people who need help with daily tasks. For example, Union Gospel Mission (UGM) allows wheelchair users but requires chores that some people can't physically do.
- **Need for a better housing plan**
 - Many in the community want Spokane to create a housing strategy that includes affordable, accessible options for low- and middle-income residents with disabilities. This should prevent displacement and ensure housing is near important services.



2. Transportation

- **Paratransit limits and gaps**
 - Paratransit services have limited coverage in areas like Cheney, Deer Park, and North Spokane. Many other transportation services only allow rides for medical or grocery trips.
- **Blocked sidewalks and curb issues**
 - Lime scooters, snow, plants, and broken sidewalks create dangers for wheelchair users and people who are visually impaired.
- **Traffic law enforcement**
 - Spokane needs stronger enforcement of laws that protect pedestrians, especially those who are visually impaired.



3. Employment

- **Barriers in vocational training**
 - Many job seekers with disabilities face long wait times for help from the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). The system for prioritizing requests isn't clear.



4. Education

- **Public school accessibility**
 - Some schools, like Lewis & Clark High School, don't have enough accommodations. For example, the large campus only has one elevator.
- **Driver's license rules in state programs**
 - Programs like CWTAP (Child Welfare Training & Advancement Program) require a driver's license, which excludes people who cannot drive due to disabilities.



5. Public Buildings & Infrastructure

- **Library accessibility problems**
 - The new Spokane Valley Library doesn't have disabled parking near the entrance and is missing a drive-up book return.
- **Poor signage in public buildings**
 - City Council buildings and other public spaces don't have Braille signs, making navigation harder for visually impaired individuals.



6. Benefits & Support Services

- **Delays in disability benefits**
 - Many people face a gap in support. Social Security benefits take longer to process than ABD (Aged, Blind, and Disabled) benefits last, leaving people without financial help for a period.