



Access to Justice for Persons with Disabilities in North Carolina Courts Video Script

(00:01) Dark blue background with Judicial Branch Seal

(00:04) Title Slide (Dark blue background with gold and white letters)

Narrator: A special message from Chief Justice Paul Newby

(00:09) Chief Justice Paul Newby appears

Chief Justice Newby: It's the duty of the North Carolina Judicial Branch to uphold the Constitutional guarantee that the courts shall be open, and that justice shall be administered without favor, denial, or delay.

The Judicial Branch is committed to ensuring that individuals with disabilities have an equal opportunity to benefit from all court services, programs, and activities.

Many disabilities are not immediately visible or noticeable, and some disabilities create differing levels of challenge based on a variety of factors.

As part of our commitment to provide excellent customer service throughout the court system, each county has at least one local Judicial Branch official or employee who serves as a disability access coordinator, or DAC.

The North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts provides training to equip and assist all DACs as they serve the public.

You can contact your county's DAC by email at county name, like Wake, county name dot DAC at NC courts dot org if you believe you may need an accommodation.

Providing reasonable accommodations ensures equal access to the court system.

(01:24) Title Slide (Dark blue background with white letters)

Narrator: Access to Justice for Persons with Disabilities in North Carolina Courts



(01:30) Scene 1 (Courthouse with light blue background)

Narrator: Title two of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) applies to the services programs and activities of state and local governments.

(01:38) Scene 2 (Courthouse with light blue background)

Narrator: The North Carolina judicial branch is committed to ensuring that individuals with disabilities have equal access to all court functions in state courts.

(01:47) Scene 3 (Courtroom with judge and court staff sitting at bench with judge, and lawyers sitting in the gallery)

Narrator: One way the judicial branch guarantees equal access and participation is by providing reasonable accommodations to people with disabilities.

(01:57) Scene 4 (Female office worker wearing glasses with speech bubble above her head)

Narrator: This video guide explains your rights as a person with a disability to reasonable accommodations in North Carolina courts.

(02:03) Scene 5 (Male with thought bubble to the side of his head)

Narrator: What is a reasonable accommodation?

(02:05) Scene 6 (Female Office Worker with speech bubble)

Narrator: A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to the physical environment or to policies, procedures, or practices that are necessary to provide equal access to the courthouse or court services for a person with a disability.

(02:20) Scene 7 (Female office worker with speech bubble)

Narrator: Court personnel will gather information to better understand how to provide equal access to the courthouse or court processes for a person with a disability.





(02:28) Scene 8 (Female office worker with speech bubble)

Narrator: Depending on the circumstances, the reasonable accommodation you receive may not be your first choice of accommodation.

(02:36) Scene 9 (White text on blue background)

Narrator: Following is a series of examples of accommodations for different types of disabilities. These are only examples; modifications are specific to the individual and the type of disability.

(02:46) Scene 10 (Title slide)

Narrator: Accommodations for people with visual impairments

(02:50) Scene 11 (Blue and white background with gold circles containing icons)

Narrator reads bubble 1: Written materials provided in an alternate content – read aloud, text recognition, or distances translation.

Narrator reads bubble 2: lighting or seating adjusted

Narrator reads bubble 3: Human guide or dog guide allowed in the courtroom

(03:03) Scene 12 (Title Slide)

Narrator: Accommodations for people with hearing loss

(03:06) Scene 13 (Blue and white background with gold bubbles containing icons)

Narrator reads bubble 1: Licensed sign language interpreters during court proceedings

Narrator reads bubble 2: Communications access real time translation or CART or real time court reporters

Narrator reads bubble 3: FM transmitter system

(03:19) Scene 14 (Title Slide)

Narrator: Accommodations for people with physical disabilities





(03:21) Scene 15 (Blue and white background with gold bubbles containing icons)

Narrator reads bubble 1: Proceedings held in accessible courtroom

Narrator reads bubble 2: Accessible restrooms available

Narrator reads bubble 3: Trained service animal allowed in courtroom

(03:30) Title Slide (Blue background with gold and white letters)

Narrator: Accommodations for people with hidden disabilities (brain injuries, psychiatric, and / or medical disabilities)

(03:36) Scene 16 (Blue and white background with gold bubbles containing icons)

Narrator reads bubble 1: Provide extra time or periodic breaks

Narrator reads bubble 2: Hold hearing in alternate location

Narrator reads bubble 3: Modify scheduling to allow for a specific time of day

(03:45) Title Slide (Dark blue background with gold and white letters)

Narrator: Eligibility for accommodations in court

(03:50) Scene 17 (Split screen with blue background with a gold courthouse icon on the right and text on the left)

Narrator: Any person with a disability who is visiting a courthouse, observing court, or participating in North Carolina court programs, services, and / or activities can receive reasonable accommodations.





(04:00) Scene 18 (Blue and white background with gold circles containing icons)

Narrator: This includes people who are:

Narrator reads gold bubble 1: Parties or witnesses in a trial or hearing

Narrator read gold bubble 2: People serving as jurors

Narrator read gold bubble 3: People participating in court activities such as filing, conferences, or hearings

(04:15) Scene 19 (Female Office Worker with speech bubble)

Narrator: To determine whether you need to request an accommodation, you may want to find out the following information before you go to court whenever possible.

(04:25) Scene 20 (Blue background with four sections and a male wearing glasses in the middle)

Narrator reads upper left section: The physical arrangements of the room you will be in.

Narrator reads upper right section: The lighting and acoustics of the room.

Narrator reads lower left section: The availability of accessible bathrooms, elevators, etc.

Narrator reads the lower right section: The distance or angle of your seat from the judge, witness stand, attorneys, or jury.

(04:42) Title Slide (Dark blue background with gold and white letters)

Narrator: How to request accommodations

(04:44) Scene 21 (Blue background with calendar icon on left and white text on right)

Narrator: Submit your request for accommodations to the Disability Access Coordinator in your county as early as possible

Narrator: All requests for accommodation should be made prior to your court date or business with the court whenever possible.

Narrator: It is recommended that requests be made at least two weeks before your visit.





(05:02) Scene 22 (Blue office background with white male sitting at desk typing on computer)

Narrator: Each courthouse has a disability access coordinator, or DAC, to help the public with accommodations.

Narrator: Contact information for your local DAC can be found on the Judicial Branch website at [nccourts dot gov slash disability](https://nccourts.gov/disability) or email to [county name dot DAC at nccourts dot org](mailto:countyname.dac@nccourts.org). For example, [Wake dot DAC at nccourts dot org](mailto:Wake.dac@nccourts.org).

(05:25) Scene 23 (Blue background with white male wearing glasses on the right speaking into cellphone with a gold box with white text on the left)

Narrator: When making your request for reasonable accommodation, you will be asked to share some information about the following

(05:32) Scene 24 (Blue background with four sections with a white male wearing glasses in the middle talking on cellphone)

Narrator reads upper left section: Yourself 1. Your name 2. Your individual needs as related to your disability 3. Your business with the court

Narrator reads upper right section: Your case 1. The case file number 2. Location or room number 3. Date of court proceedings

Narrator reads lower left section: The specific accommodation or accommodations you need in order to fully participate in the case or conduct other business with the court

Narrator reads lower right section: Your attorney's contact information, if applicable.

(05:57) Scene 25 (Dark blue background with text and gold boxes with text)

Narrator: Be prepared to explain

Narrator reads box 1: The nature of your disability

Narrator reads box 2: How you think it will affect your full participation in the case or prevent you from conducting your business with the court

Narrator reads box 3: And how the requested accommodation will resolve the issue





(06:13) Title Slide (Dark blue background with gold and white letters)

Narrator: Denials of request for accommodations

(06:17) Scene 26 (Light and dark blue split screen with text)

Narrator: The court can deny your request for reasons such as

Narrator reads bullet number 1: The requested accommodation would fundamentally alter the court process

Narrator reads bullet number 2: The requested process would impose an undue financial burden on the court

Narrator reads bullet number 3: You are requesting a personal device, such as a hearing aid

(06:33) Scene 27 (Dark blue background with an African American male office worker on the left holding a sign with a red x and gold text box with white letters on the right)

Narrator: If your request is denied, consider finding a reasonable alternative that is not a fundamental alteration or undue burden on the court.

(06:42) Title Slide (Dark blue background with gold and white lettering)

Narrator: Questions and complaints

(06:45) Scene 28 (Dark and light blue background split screen: On the left, a white male is talking on a cell phone with a thought bubble containing a question mark above his head; On the right, a middle aged man is sitting at a desk typing on a computer cradling a telephone receiver between his cheek and shoulder with a speech bubble containing a document with a green checkmark above his head)

Narrator: Contact the North Carolina Disability Access Coordinator at 919- 890-1200 or DAC at nccourts dot org for help with questions or requests for assistance that could not be answered locally.

(07:00) Scene 29 (A light and dark blue split screen; On the left is an overhead view of a laptop with hands typing; On the right, white text.)





Narrator: A grievance procedure is available to the public for complaints about compliance with the ADA. Find it at [NCCourts dot gov slash disability](http://NCCourts.gov/disability).

(07:09) Scene 30 (Split screen with light blue and gold background; On the right, a bald African American man is sitting at a desk typing on a computer talking into a telephone receiver cradled between his cheek and shoulder; On the left, an African American male senior sitting in a motorized chair drives into a staircase.)

Narrator: Each county's local government is responsible for ensuring the accessibility of its courthouse building. If you have concerns regarding the physical accessibility of a courthouse building, contact your county manager.

(07:20) Title Slide (Dark blue background and North Carolina Judicial Branch seal and white text)

Narrator: For more information on accessibility in our state courts visit [NCCourts dot gov slash disability](http://NCCourts.gov/disability) or [ADA dotgov](http://ADA.dotgov).

(07:29) Title Slide (White background and Judicial Branch Communications Office logo and blue text above and below)

Narrator: This video was produced by the North Carolina Judicial Branch Communications Office in partnership with Court Programs and the Office of General Counsel.

(07:39) End Slide (White background with Disability Rights logo and blue text above)

Narrator: Special thanks to Disability Rights

