



**COMMON COUNCIL MEETING
HUMAN RESOURCES AND HUMAN RIGHTS
Jahmel Robinson, Chair**

DATE: MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2025

TIME: 5:30PM

LOCATION: Council Chambers-2nd Floor, City Hall

LIVESTREAM: YouTube—<https://www.youtube.com/@albanycommoncouncil>
Facebook—<https://www.facebook.com/albany.commoncouncil>

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION:

- Interviewing perspective applicants for appointment to the Commission on Human Rights
- **LOCAL LAW A OF 2025**

A LOCAL LAW AMENDING CHAPTER 42 (DEPARTMENTS AND COMMISSIONS) OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ALBANY BY ADDING A NEW PART 43 THERETO CREATING THE CITY OF ALBANY COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: YES

Council Member Keegan introduced the following:

LOCAL LAW A OF 2025

A LOCAL LAW AMENDING CHAPTER 42 (DEPARTMENTS AND COMMISSIONS) OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ALBANY BY ADDING A NEW PART 43 THERETO CREATING THE CITY OF ALBANY COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

Be it enacted, by the Common Council of the City of Albany, as follows:

Section 1. Chapter 42 (Departments and Commissions) of the Code of the City of Albany is hereby amended to read as follows, by adding a new Part 43, to be entitled “Commission on Disabilities” thereto:

PART 43
COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

§ 43-405 Legislative Findings and Purpose.

The passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990 marked a significant milestone for the Disability Rights Movements. In mandating that public entities on both local and state levels develop ADA transition plans, the federal government took concrete steps in committing to full accessibility and societal inclusion. To comply and show support for this legislation, the City of Albany has adopted an ADA Transition Plan as well as an ADA Public Streets and Sidewalks Plan. Of note, the ADA itself achieves limited inclusivity for the disability community, requiring a stronger commitment by the City for the advancement of equity. In adopting this local law, the Common Council reaffirms its commitment to the ADA, the goals of both established Transition Plans, and our commitment to full inclusivity and equity for all our citizens. It is the intent of the Common Council that the Commission on Disabilities herein established will provide essential guidance, expertise and lived experience to ensure that City decisions and policies reflect the needs and rights of the disability community.

§ 43-406 Establishment; Appointment of Members.

A. There is hereby established a Commission on Disabilities comprised of nine members, four of whom shall be appointed by the Mayor and five of whom shall be appointed by the Common Council.

B. Members shall be appointed for three-year terms; provided, however, that:

1. Of members initially appointed by the Mayor, one shall be for a term of one year, one shall be for a term of two years, and two shall be for a term of three years.

2. Of members initially appointed by the Common Council, one shall be for a term of one year, two shall be for a term of two years, and two shall be for a term of three years.

- C. No member of the Commission shall serve for a period which exceeds two consecutive three-year terms; provided, however, that a member may be considered for reappointment to the Commission after one year of non-membership; and provided, further, that appointment to fill vacancy in an unexpired term shall not apply to the limitations in terms of service otherwise applicable under this subsection.
- D. Every effort shall be made to ensure that a full spectrum of disability representation is on the Commission including but not limited to those with visual impairments, hearing impairments, mobility impairments, intellectual or development disabilities, mental health issues, or substance abuse issues. Appointments shall prioritize individuals living with disabilities first as they are the experts on these issues followed by family members, providers, and advocates with expertise in disability policy.
- E. Members shall continue to serve on the Commission until their successors have been appointed.
- F. Annual, from among its membership, the Commission shall elect a Chair and such other officers as determined.
- G. Five members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum. Five votes shall be required to be present for such action.
- H. The Commission shall develop such rules and bylaws as necessary for the transaction of business and the conduct of meetings.

§ 43-407 Filling of Vacancies.

Any vacancy occasioned by resignation, death, or removal of a member shall be filled promptly in the same manner as the predecessor to fill the unexpired term.

§ 43-408 Qualifications of Members.

Members of the Commission shall reside in the City of Albany and possess a reputation for fairness, integrity, and responsibility, and have demonstrated an active interest in public affairs and service. The Mayor and the Common Council shall reflect community diversity in their appointments, including, but not limited to, income level, disability status, race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, and sexual orientation. In addition, there shall be a strong preference for appointment of individuals who identify as members of the disability community who have direct lived experience with disability. Officers and employees of the City of Albany shall not be eligible for appointment.

§ 43-409 Meetings and Staff.

The Commission shall meet no less than six times per year and shall establish a regular meeting calendar which shall be readily available to the public. Meetings of the Commission shall be public and comply with provisions of the Open Meetings Law. The City Clerk, or their designee, shall serve as staff to the Commission.

§ 43-410 Powers and Duties

A. The Commission, by its members or their duly authorized officers or employees, shall have the following functions, powers and duties:

1. Review and make recommendations on the Americans with Disabilities Act Transition Plans in coordination with the appropriate City of Albany departments;
2. Coordinate necessary items with the Active Transportation Planning Commission, Commission on Human Rights, Community Police Review Board, and any other board as appropriate;
3. Advise City departments on matters related to disability access in City services, public spaces, and training for City employees;
4. Assist in providing City residents with information and resources to services provided by the City, County, State, Federal government, or local provider community.

B. The Commission, by its members or their duly authorized officers or employees, shall have the following general obligations:

1. Refer cases to the Commission on Human Rights that may constitute violations of the New York State Human Rights Law or other civil rights violations;
2. To hold conferences and other public meetings in the interest of constructive resolution of tensions, prejudice, and discrimination occasioned by disability status and related issues, increasing disability access and equity in the City of Albany;
3. To issue such publications and reports of investigations as in its judgment will tend to effectuate the purposes of this part;
4. To enlist the cooperation and participation of community organizations, industry and labor organizations, media and mass communication, fraternal and benevolent associations, and other groups in an educational campaign devoted to fostering further mutual esteem, justice, and equity amongst the disability community and to open new opportunities in all phases of community life for individuals with disabilities; and
5. To encourage and stimulate City of Albany agencies and departments to take such action as shall fulfill the purposes of this part.

§ 43-411 Reports.

The Commission shall file an annual report with the Common Council and the Mayor on or about January 31 summarizing its activities for the preceding year.

Section 2. This local law shall take effect upon final passage, public hearing, and filing with the Secretary of State, but shall not take effect earlier than January 1, 2026.

**APPROVED AS TO FORM THIS
25TH DAY OF JULY, 2025**

Corporation Counsel

To: **Shaniqua Jackson, City Clerk**

From: **Council Member Meghan Keegan**
Ninth Ward Intern Margaret MacCallum

Re: **Common Council Legislation**
Supporting Memorandum

Date: **July 25, 2025**

Sponsor: **Council Member Keegan**

LOCAL LAW A OF 2025

TITLE

A LOCAL LAW AMENDING CHAPTER 42 (DEPARTMENTS AND COMMISSIONS) OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ALBANY BY ADDING A NEW PART 43 THERETO CREATING THE CITY OF ALBANY COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

GENERAL PURPOSE OF LEGISLATION

The recognition of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990 is critical to the inclusion and equity for all residents of Albany. In response to the ADA, the City of Albany adopted an ADA Transition Plan as well as an ADA Public Streets and Sidewalks Plan. This legislation would create a commission to provide essential guidance, expertise and lived experience to ensure that City decisions and policies are responsive to the needs and rights of the disability community.

NECESSITY FOR LEGISLATION AND ANY CHANGE TO EXISTING LAW

Generally, new permanent boards, committees, and commissions are created by adding the enabling legislation for such bodies to Chapter 42 of the City Code. Section 504 of the City Charter requires that new City commissions be created by local law.

This legislation does not change any existing law, because the ambit of the Commission's powers and duties are not generally within the current purview of any other City board, commission, or body.

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact may be up to \$5,000 for potential services and equipment needed for commission member accessibility.