

Americans with Disabilities Act

No one likes to hear they're a target for a lawsuit, but it's a lot better to know ahead of time so you can jump out of the way, rather than wait till it happens and then having to deal with the mess. Read on, and you'll find out why you're the target, and that the "jump" to avoid this one is easy.



There's something quietly happening in the halls of D.C. that you probably haven't heard of, but it's coming, and it's going to have huge impact on churches. The Americans with Disabilities Act was put in place decades ago. It ensures that people with disabilities have equal access to any public or private business that sells to the public. This includes schools, stores, banks, stadiums, and pretty much everything -- except churches. Written into the law is an exemption that churches do not have to comply with the ADA.



The reasoning at the time was that churches didn't have the budget to do this, and rather than force the closing of churches across the country, the exemption was included. Churches are not required by law to comply with the ADA, but they are encouraged to do so.

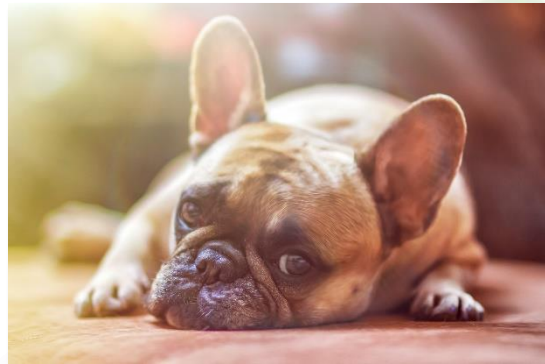
For the most part, we've done pretty well on adding wheelchair ramps and such, but not so much to support people that are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (D/HH).

- Yes, D/HH is covered under the ADA and,
- Yes, it's a VERY active area of litigation, and
- Yes, hiring sign language interpreters or people to caption all your services and meetings is really expensive.

Once the exemption for churches is removed, if you do not have a *Reasonable Accommodation* for any guest that could potentially visit your church on a regular basis, you're open for a lawsuit and a newspaper headline stating your church is guilty of

discriminating against people with disabilities. And yes, there are a lot of folks that would like nothing better than to make a headline like that happen.

Okay, enough of the worry. Don't lose sleep over this, we've got you covered. This is one of the reasons Church Captioning was created, to get ahead of the coming issue. Instead of hiring people (at a cost of around \$4K or so per month) or scrambling to find ASL volunteers, now you can just let our website do it for you. Anything said anytime, anywhere, by anyone in your church can be instantly captioned, and even done so in multiple languages. That absolutely meets the requirement of providing a *Reasonable Accommodation*.



There, you now know how to jump out of the way of becoming that target. Instead of becoming a target for a lawsuit, now you can become a welcoming community for anyone that is Deaf or Hard of Hearing.

For more information on how to get a captioning system installed at your church, visit www.churchcaptioning.com or send a note to info@churchcaptioning.com or give us a call at **952-381-1234**.

