



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

REGION IX
CALIFORNIA

50 UNITED NATIONS PLAZA
MAIL BOX 1200, ROOM 1545

SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102

September 21, 2022

By email only to: GCaserotti@piercecountylibrary.org

Gretchen Caserotti
Director
Pierce County Library System
3005 112th Street.
E. Tacoma, Washington 98446

Re: OCR Docket No.10-22-8002
Pierce County Library System, Washington

Dear Director Caserotti:

This letter is to advise you of the resolution of the compliance review that the U.S. Department of Education (Department), Office for Civil Rights (OCR) initiated in Pierce County Library System (Library). OCR investigated whether the Library's online programs, services, and activities exclude qualified persons with disabilities from participation in, deny them the benefits of, or otherwise subject them to discrimination under any program or activity, in violation of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and its implementing regulation at 28 C.F.R. Part 35. In addition, OCR investigated whether the Library fails to take appropriate steps to ensure that communications with applicants, participants, members of the public, and companions with disabilities are as effective as its communication with others, in violation of 28 C.F.R. § 35.160(a).

OCR enforces Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Title II) and its implementing regulation at 28 C.F.R. Part 35, which prohibit discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities by public entities, including public education systems and institutions, regardless of whether they receive Federal financial assistance from the Department.

OCR conducted an assessment of the Library's online programs, services, and activities and noted possible compliance concerns including, but not limited to:

- Although there was an extensive navigation menu, no "skip navigation" or "skip to content" link was present, posing a barrier to those who use computer keyboards for navigation due to a disability.
- Users with disabilities who use computer keyboards for navigation due to a disability did not have access to all contents and functions.

The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

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- The foreground and background colors of important content lacked sufficient contrast, posing a barrier to people with low vision.

On September 19, 2022, the Library signed the enclosed resolution agreement (Agreement) to voluntarily resolve the compliance review pursuant to Section 302 of OCR's *Case Processing Manual*. OCR will monitor the implementation of the Agreement.

This concludes OCR's compliance review. This letter should not be interpreted to address the Library's compliance with any other regulatory provision or to address any issues other than those addressed in this letter. This letter sets forth OCR's determination in an individual OCR compliance review. This letter is not a formal statement of OCR policy and should not be relied upon, cited, or construed as such. OCR's formal policy statements are approved by a duly authorized OCR official and made available to the public. An individual may have the right to file a private suit in federal court whether or not OCR finds a violation.

Under the Freedom of Information Act, it may be necessary to release this document and related correspondence and records upon request. If OCR receives such a request, we will seek to protect personally identifiable information that could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy if released, to the extent provided by law.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 415-486-5525 or at Jessica.Plitt@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jessica Plitt", written over a light blue rectangular background.

Jessica Plitt
Civil Rights Attorney

Enclosure

Courtesy copy by email only to:

Petra McBride
Mrg. Executive Office Administration
PMcBride@piercecounitylibrary.org