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Proskauer Secures Landmark Remedial Plan Order for Blind and Low-Vision Pedestrians in Chicago

Proskauer For Good on **June 26, 2025**

Proskauer is proud to share a significant victory in our long-standing advocacy for the rights of blind and visually impaired pedestrians in Chicago. On May 29, 2025, the Honorable Judge LaShonda A. Hunt of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois entered a comprehensive Remedial Plan Order requiring the City of Chicago to install Accessible Pedestrian Signals ("APS") at 71% of its signalized intersections with pedestrian signals within 10 years and at all remaining signalized intersections with pedestrian signals by December 31, 2040. This Remedial Plan Order follows years of litigation and advocacy by Proskauer in partnership with Disability Rights Advocates ("DRA"), a nationwide nonprofit disability rights legal center, and marks a monumental step forward in ensuring that Chicago's pedestrian infrastructure is accessible to all. *American Council of the Blind of Metropolitan Chicago, et al. v. City of Chicago*, No. 1:19-cv-06322 (N.D. Ill.).

Background

APS are push-button devices that provide pedestrians with safe-crossing information in a non-visual format. Less than one percent of Chicago's 2,800+ signalized intersections have APS. In 2019, Proskauer and DRA filed a federal lawsuit on behalf of American Council of the Blind of Metropolitan Chicago and three individual plaintiffs alleging that the City of Chicago violated Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA") and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act by failing to provide APS at signalized intersections. The United States Department of Justice (the "United States") intervened in 2021, and the Court granted class certification in 2022. On March 31, 2023, U.S. District Court Judge Elaine E. Bucklo granted summary judgment to Plaintiffs and the United States, holding the City in violation of the ADA and the Rehabilitation Act.

Remedial Plan Order

The entry of the Remedial Plan Order effectively concludes the litigation and requires the City of Chicago to:

- **Install APS** at approximately 71% of signalized intersections with pedestrian signals by the end of 2035 (Phase I), and at all remaining signalized intersections with pedestrian signals by the end of 2040 (Phase II).
- **Prioritize installations** at signalized intersections with pedestrian signals in response to public requests (which may be made online, in-person or by telephone), at intersections identified in the City of Chicago's Complex Intersection Study as particularly dangerous or complex, at all newly signalized intersections, at all signalized intersections with pedestrian signals that undergo a traffic signal modernization, and at all signalized intersections with pedestrian signals within 1/8 mile of public transportation and public facilities.
- **Meet yearly minimums** to install approximately 1,844 APS over the next ten years.
- **Establish a robust compliance and maintenance program**, including on-site inspections, public reporting and timely repairs.
- **Create an APS Community Advisory Committee** and maintain an accessible APS website to facilitate transparency and community involvement.
- **Appoint an Independent Monitor** to oversee implementation and report annually to the Court.
- **Engage a Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist ("COMS")** with expertise in APS and familiarity with Chicago to consult on aspects of APS implementation and ensure that installations meet the needs of blind and visually impaired pedestrians.

The Court's order will not only require Chicago to install APS at all signalized intersections with pedestrian signals by 2040, but also maintain them and engage with the community. These efforts will guarantee meaningful access for Chicagoans with vision disabilities to navigate their city safely and independently. The Proskauer team has included numerous attorneys over the last six years and currently consists of Nigel Telman, Eddie Young and Ray Alvarez.

View original.

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