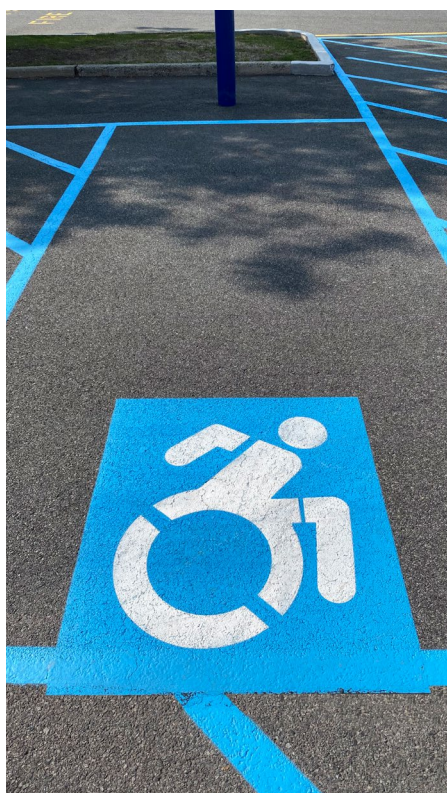




NEW JERSEY

# Guide to Accessible Parking



State of New Jersey  
Phil Murphy, Governor  
Tahesha L. Way, Lt. Governor

NEW JERSEY HUMAN SERVICES



Division of Disability Services  
Department of Human Services  
Sarah Adelman, Commissioner

*Editors Note:* Although state law uses the term “handicapped” parking, the word “handicapped” has been changed to “accessible” throughout this guide to reflect person-first language.

Reserved parking for people with disabilities ensures safe and equal access to goods and services. Accessible parking makes it possible for individuals with a disability to use and benefit from the services offered by public and private entities.

**Accessible parking requirements in New Jersey are a combination of New Jersey statutes and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.**

### Highlights of Accessible Parking In New Jersey

- Every application for the issuance or renewal of a “Person with a Disability Identification Card” (**see Fig. 1**), required every three years, must include medical certification from a qualified practitioner that the qualifying disability continues to exist. (N.J.S.A.39:4-205)
- The individual who holds the “Person with a Disability Identification Card” must be in the vehicle or with the driver at all times as proof of disability. This card is for the sole use of the individual with a disability and is non—transferable. Abuse or misuse of this privilege will be cause for immediate revocation of the ID card, placard and plates and fines of at least \$250. (N.J.S.A.39:4-205)
- Permanent Placards (**see Fig. 2**) are required to be renewed every three years and will clearly display the date on which they shall become invalid. (N.J.S.A.39:4-206)
- Temporary Placards (**see Fig. 3**) can be granted for short-term mobility impairments. Written medical certification from a qualified practitioner is required. Temporary Placards are valid for six months, renewable once at the discretion of the issuing authority, and issued by the chief of police of each municipality.(N.J.S.A.39:4-206)

- Parking motor vehicles in accessible spaces without special vehicle identification is prohibited and punishable with an initial fine of \$250 and subsequent fines of at least \$250 and up to 90 days of community service. (N.J.S.A.39:4-197(3)c)
- Municipalities may establish accessible spaces in front of residences, schools, hospitals, public buildings, and in shopping and business districts. (N.J.S.A.39:4-197.5)
- Municipalities may establish accessible parking zones in front of residences occupied by people with disabilities, unless such parking interferes with the normal traffic flow. (N.J.S.A.39:4-197.6)
- Law enforcement officers may enforce accessible parking laws on both public and private property. (N.J.S.A.39:4-138.(o))
- Municipalities may set up parking enforcement units that concentrate on shopping centers and malls. (N.J.S.A.39:4-197.9)
- Eligible individuals with a disability may request law enforcement officers to arrange for the removal and storage of motor vehicles unlawfully parked in accessible parking spaces or zones. (N.J.S.A.39:4-207.7)
- Access to parking spaces, curb cuts, or other improvements designed to provide accessibility, shall be unobstructed. Owners or controllers of public parking areas must remove snow or ice from these areas within 24 hours after the weather condition causing the snow and/or ice ceases. Violation of this act is punishable with penalties of \$500 to \$1,000. (N.J.S.A.39:4-207.9)
- No penalty shall be imposed on those with valid “Person with a Disability Identification Cards” for overtime parking in one location for up to 24 hours, as long as the person with the disability is either the driver or passenger of the vehicle. (N.J.S.A.39:4-207)

*(Note: metered parking is delegated to local municipalities by N.J.S.A. 39:4-197; The 24 hour limit is set forth in N.J.S.A. 39:4-207)*



## ADA Standards Outline the Following:

- Accessible parking spaces must be identified by signs that include the International Symbol of Accessibility.
- Access aisles must be marked.
- An accessible route must adjoin each access aisle serving accessible parking spaces. The accessible route connects each access aisle to accessible entrances.
- Accessible parking spaces must be located on the shortest accessible route of travel to an accessible entrance.
- Accessible parking spaces and the required accessible route should be located where individuals with disabilities do not have to cross vehicular lanes or pass behind parked vehicles to have access to an accessible entrance. If it is necessary to cross a vehicular lane - for example, perhaps local fire access requirements prohibit parking immediately adjacent to a building - then a marked crossing running perpendicular to the vehicular route should be included as part of the accessible route to an accessible entrance.
- One in every six accessible parking spaces must be van accessible.

## Person with a Disability ID Card and Placards

**FIGURE 1:** Person with a Disability Identification Card



**FIGURE 2: Permanent Person with a Disability Placard**



**FIGURE 3: Temporary Person with a Disability Placard**



## Placard or Plate Holder Cannot Park in the Following Areas:

- Striped access aisles adjacent to accessible parking spaces.
- Parking meters without depositing a coin.
- Parking meters beyond a 24-hour period.
- Other areas prohibited by law including within an intersection, on a crosswalk, in any area appropriately marked “no parking,” within 50 feet of a stop sign or within 10 feet of a fire hydrant.

**Remember:** Restricted parking placards and plates are to be used solely by the individual with the qualifying disability. If someone without a disability uses another person’s placard or plates, the Motor Vehicle Commission or issuing locality may revoke the placard/plates, deny renewal, and issue fines of at least \$250.



## What are Business or Facility Owners and Operators Required To Do?

Owners or operators of any facility that provides public parking, whether an indoor or outdoor garage or parking lot, are required to provide accessible parking in accordance with federal and state laws. Enforcement of motor vehicle laws, including parking privileges, is a local matter.

## Complaints About Illegal Parking... What Can Be Done?

- Ask a state, county or municipal law enforcement officer to ticket an illegally parked car and to arrange for the removal and storage of the vehicle.
- Complain to a shopping center manager or business owner. Ask them to inform the local authorities.
- File a complaint with your local municipality.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Q:** How many accessible parking spaces are required?

**A:** The number of accessible parking spaces required depends on the total number of parking spaces in the lot or garage.

In accordance with the ADA standards of accessible design, when there is new construction or an alteration of previously constructed parking spaces, it is required that at least one accessible space in every parking lot and one in every six accessible parking spaces be van accessible, with increased dimensions of at least 11 feet and an access aisle of at least 5 feet.

Total # spaces	Required # of accessible spaces	Required # of accessible van spaces if constructed or altered prior to 3/15/2012	Required # of accessible van spaces if constructed or altered on or after 3/15/2012
	At least 1 in each lot	1:8	1:6
1-25	1	1	1
26-50	2	1	1
51-75	3	1	1
79-100	4	1	1
101-150	5	1	1
151-200	6	1	1
201-300	7	1	2
301-400	8	1	2
401-500	9	2	2
51-1,000	2% of total	1 in every 8	1 in every 6
Over 1,000	20 + 1 for each 100 over 1,000	1 in every 8	1 in every 6

**Q: How must accessible parking spaces and access aisles be marked?**

**A:** The parking spaces and access aisles must be painted in a color (most often blue) contrasting with other spaces. Signage with the International Symbol of Accessibility and the penalty sign must be provided at each accessible parking space and must be permanently installed 5 to 7 feet above the ground. Signs identifying van parking spaces shall contain the designation “van accessible.” The required “van accessible” designation is intended to be informative, not restrictive,

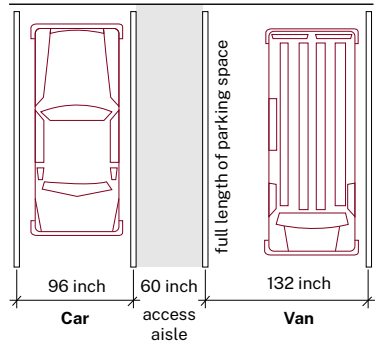




in identifying spaces that are better suited for van use. The access aisle for both accessible car and van spaces is required to be a minimum of 5 feet wide. Access aisles shall adjoin an accessible route, shall be marked to discourage parking in them, and shall extend the full length of the parking spaces they serve. Also, two parking spaces may share a common access aisle.

**Q: Can accessible parking spaces be the same size as non-accessible spaces, as long as the appropriate signs are placed in front of the space?**

**A:** No. Accessible car parking spaces must be at least 8 feet wide. Accessible van parking spaces must be at least 11 feet wide. The access aisle for both accessible car and van spaces is required to be a minimum of 5 feet.



**Q: If a parking lot does not have spaces designated for people with disabilities because it was paved a long time ago, before these requirements were in place, does it now have to provide accessible parking spaces?**

**A:** Yes. The ADA requires private entities to remove barriers to become compliant. Therefore, even if business owners are not planning any type of construction, they are still obligated to remove barriers that are readily achievable.

**Q: Is my wheelchair symbol license plate/placard valid when traveling outside of New Jersey?**

**A:** Not always. Check with the state you intend to visit. Reciprocity is standard for some but not all states. For example, a New Jersey placard/pate is not valid on New York City streets, as NYC requires their own accessible parking permit. However, a motor vehicle with a special license plate, placard or parking permit issued to a person with a disability by another state,



district or territory of the United States or by Canada shall be entitled to accessible parking privileges in New Jersey. (39:4-207.5)

**Q: Store owners and other businesses often receive complaints from patrons about other customers who illegally park in the accessible parking spaces or misuse the spots by parking in the striped area next to the space. What should they do?**

**A:** Instances in which individuals illegally park in a space marked for accessible parking should be reported to the proper law enforcement authorities. In your area, if the local police are responsible for addressing violations, they should be notified as soon as possible. If a local security company staff patrols your parking area, they should be notified.

**Q: Is a person with a wheelchair symbol license plate/placard required to deposit money when parking at a metered space?**

**A:** Yes. When parking at a metered space, a driver with a disability placard/license plate must put the appropriate amount of money in the meter. If the vehicle will occupy the space for more than the maximum amount of time allotted on the meter, the driver must fill the meter to the maximum amount allowed. This will permit the vehicle to occupy the space for up to 24 hours without having to come back and refill the meter. A municipality may require the vehicle to vacate the space after 24 hours.

*(Note: metered parking is delegated to local municipalities by N.J.S.A. 39:4-197; The 24 hour limit is set forth in N.J.S.A. 39:4-207)*

**Q: Are Disabled Veteran placards and Purple Heart placards the same as Person with a Disability placards?**

**A:** No - Disabled Veteran and Purple Heart placards do not give the holder authorization to park in accessible parking spaces.

New Jersey law (N.J.S.A. 39:4-207.10) permits exemption from payment of municipal parking meter fees, for up to 24 hours, for disabled veterans and Purple Heart recipients under certain,



specific circumstances:

- The parked vehicle is owned by the disabled veteran or the Purple Heart recipient.
- The disabled veteran or Purple Heart recipient is the driver or a passenger in that vehicle.
- The vehicle displays a unique placard issued by the MVC.

The holder of a disabled veteran or Purple Heart recipient placard can also be issued a Person with a Disability (PWAD) placard, if eligible. However, these unique placards do not replace a Person with a Disability Placard.

**Q: How can I apply for a person with a disability license plate or permanent placard?**

**A:** The application and instruction checklist can be obtained on the Motor Vehicle Commission website at: [www.state.nj.us/mvc/vehicles/disability.htm](http://www.state.nj.us/mvc/vehicles/disability.htm); by visiting your nearest Motor Vehicle Commission facility; or by calling the Motor Vehicle Commission at 609-292-6500, Special Plates x5061 and requesting that they be mailed to you. The same application is used for first-time (initial), renewal, and replacement plate and permanent placard requests. A “Person with a Disability Identification Card” will be issued following an initial application and must be used in conjunction with a plate and/or permanent placard. Qualified applicants receive one set of wheelchair symbol license plates for a vehicle registered either to the qualified person with a disability OR to one family member who provides the qualified person with transportation (aka driver).

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

NEW JERSEY HUMAN SERVICES



### **New Jersey Human Services Division of Disability Services**

PO Box 705 Trenton, NJ 08625-0705

1-888-285-3036

[www.nj.gov/humanservices/dds](http://www.nj.gov/humanservices/dds)



### **New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission**

Special Plate Unit

225 East State Street

PO Box 15

Trenton, NJ 08666-0015

609-292-6500 Special Plates x5061

[www.nj.gov/mvc/vehicles/disability.htm](http://www.nj.gov/mvc/vehicles/disability.htm)

### **ADA Information Line**

1-800 514-0301 (Voice)

1-800-514-0383 (TTY)

[www.ADA.gov](http://www.ADA.gov)





**PARKING THERE FOR “JUST A MINUTE . . .”  
is 60 SECONDS TOO LONG!**

Never park in a space reserved for people with disabilities **UNLESS** you have a Person with a Disability Identification Card and identifying placard/plates. It's the courteous thing to do - - and it's the law.

**REMEMBER:** Do not park in the striped access aisles next to spaces reserved for people with disabilities, even if you have a placard or plates. The access aisles provide room for wheelchair users to transfer safely to and from their vehicles.

This publication is designed as a resource only; it is not a substitute for the law or statute related to accessible parking.



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