



Resolution 2016-01 Regarding Accessibility Requirements in State and Local RFPs and Contracts

WHEREAS, the State of New York, local governments, and their agencies contract with private entities on a regular basis, and these contracts often involve information and communication technologies (ICT); and

WHEREAS, whenever new technologies are implemented through the State or any of its agencies, Federal and state law requires that those technologies be usable by all; and

WHEREAS, unless explicit and robust accessibility requirements are built into the language of a request for proposal and subsequent contract, accessibility of the resulting information and communication technology cannot be assured; and

WHEREAS, ICT that is inaccessible excludes people with disabilities from activities of employment, education, civic responsibility, and other activities supported by technologies which the State procures; and

WHEREAS, including robust, explicit accessibility requirements in RFP's provides an incentive for businesses to create ICT that is meaningfully accessible; and

WHEREAS, building accessibility into ICT from the outset of a project carries little inherent additional expense: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind, in convention assembled this first day of November, 2016 in the city of Albany, New York, that this organization work with New York State and its municipalities to ensure, through whatever means necessary, that all requests for proposal and subsequent contracts entered into by the State or local governments or any of their agencies require that all information and communication technologies be accessible.

Resolution 2016-02

Regarding Requirements for Drivers of For-Hire Vehicles

WHEREAS, blind people rely on verbal communication as an alternative to visual communication in obtaining and conveying information; and

WHEREAS, when traveling in a for-hire vehicle a blind person must be able to obtain information from the driver as to his or her location, and must be able to provide the driver with directions in order to reach his or her destination safely and efficiently; and

WHEREAS, New York City has recently eliminated the requirement that individuals seeking a license from the Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) to operate for-hire vehicle within New York City pass an English proficiency examination; and

WHEREAS, blind people already encounter barriers in communicating with drivers of for-hire vehicles whose English proficiency is limited, resulting in harrowing experiences when blind passengers try to explain to drivers where they wish to go, and how to get there; and

WHEREAS, allowing drivers without English proficiency to operate for-hire vehicles renders those vehicles inaccessible to blind people: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind, in convention assembled this first day of November, 2016 in the city of Albany, New York, that this organization call upon the TLC to reinstate the requirement that drivers of for-hire vehicles pass an English proficiency examination in order to obtain a license from the TLC.