

Accessible EV Charging Act

Model Legislation Guide

For the 2026 Legislative Year



*Removing barriers so every disabled individual has the
opportunity to live, work, and thrive.*

INTRODUCTION

Recently, a disabled resident of Chicago purchased a Tesla electric vehicle (EV), had the vehicle modified to accommodate their disability, and discovered that there was not a single accessible charging station available to them for use near where they lived. Faced with the inability to charge the car, they eventually were forced to sell it.

Since it was enacted in 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) has evolved to address many barriers in everyday life for those with disabilities. However, addressing the needs of the disabled can lag far behind when new technologies emerge.

Tesla helped kick off the current EV market when it introduced the Roadster in 2008. According to the Argonne National Laboratory, 7.6 million EVs have been sold in the United States since 2010¹ and currently account for 7.9% of new vehicle purchases.² Despite the increasing number of EVs on the road, few EV charging stations across the country are accessible.

The Accessible EV Charging Station Act would enable the state to require increased accessibility of EV charging stations as new stations are built. By doing so, this barrier to transportation can be eliminated over time.

For more information or drafting assistance, please contact us at 847.238.2102 or Info@AccessibilityPolicyInstitute.org.

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¹ *Light Duty Electric Drive Vehicles Monthly Sales Updates*. Argonne National Laboratory . (n.d). <https://www.anl.gov/esia/light-duty-electric-drive-vehicles-monthly-sales-updates>

² Montoya, R. (2025, April 3). *How many electric cars are there in the U.S.?* | *Edmunds*. Edmunds. <https://www.edmunds.com/electric-car/articles/how-many-electric-cars-in-us.html>

Accessible EV Charging Act

HOUSE/SENATE BILL No. _____

By Representatives/Senators _____

Section 1. Title.

This Act may be cited as the “[*Insert name of State*] Accessible EV Charging Act”.

Section 2. Legislative Findings and Purposes.

(a) The [*Legislature*] of the State of [*Insert name of State*] finds that:

- (1) EV charging stations are not accessible to wheelchair users, nor are they required to be accessible.
- (2) The cords on EV charging ports are often too short to be accessible to wheelchair users.
- (3) The parking spots at EV charging stations are often too narrow for a wheelchair user to navigate.

(b) Based on the findings in subsection (a), the [*Legislature*]’s purposes in promulgating this Act are to further the important and compelling state interests of:

- (1) Ensure that wheelchair users can access an EV charging station without difficulty.
- (2) Eliminate a barrier to transportation for people with disabilities.
- (3) Ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to operate any vehicle they desire.

Section 3. Definitions.

For the purposes of this Act only:

(a) “**Accessible**” means adapted for use by people with disabilities.

- (b) "**Charging station**" means one or more chargers at a common location. "Charging station" includes a large site, such as a parking lot or parking garage, that has multiple charging stations.
- (c) "**Charging port**" means the system within a charger that charges an electric vehicle. A charging port may have multiple connectors, but it can only provide power to charge one electric vehicle through one connector at a time.
- (d) "**Charger**" means a device with one or more charging ports and connectors for charging electric vehicles. "Charger" also includes electric vehicle supply equipment.
- (e) "**Charging station operator**" means the entity that operates and maintains the chargers and supporting equipment and facilities at one or more charging stations. "Charging station operator" also includes a charging point operator.
- (f) "**Connector**" means a device that attaches electric vehicles to charging ports to transfer electricity.
- (g) "**Contactless payment methods**" means a secure method for consumers to purchase services using a debit, credit, smartcard, or another payment device by using radio frequency identification technology and near-field communication.
- (h) "**Department**" means the Department of Transportation.
- (i) "**Direct current fast charger**" or "DCFC" means a charger that uses a 3-phase, 480-volt alternating current electrical circuit to enable rapid charging through the delivery of direct current electricity to the electric vehicle.
- (j) "**Electric vehicle**" means an automotive vehicle that is either partially or fully powered by electricity.
- (k) "**ICT**" means information and communication technology.
- (l) "**Site**" means a parcel of land bounded by a property line or a designated portion of a public right-of-way.
- (m) "**Vehicle charging inlet**" means the inlet on a vehicle into which a connector is plugged. "Vehicle charging inlet" also includes a charging port or charging door.

- (n) **"Vehicle charging space"** means a space to park a vehicle for charging. A vehicle charging space can be a marked parking space or an unmarked area adjacent to a charger.
- (o) **"AC Level 2"** means a charger that uses a 240-volt alternating-current electrical circuit to deliver electricity to an electric vehicle.
- (p) **"ABA"** means the federal Architectural Barriers Act of 1968.
- (q) **"ADA"** means the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Section 4. Text of the Act

- (a) Accessible chargers; accessible routes.
 - (1) The Department shall ensure that charging stations in this State are sufficiently accessible to allow independent use by drivers with disabilities, including people who have limited or no hand dexterity, limb differences, or upper extremity amputations and use adaptive driving controls. A reasonable number of chargers, as determined by the Department, must have physical access for people who use mobility devices, such as wheelchairs, scooters, walkers, and canes. Chargers must have accessible communication features and operable parts. All chargers containing ICT that are developed, procured, maintained, or used by any entity within the State must comply with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and have accessible ICT, including accessible hardware, software, and operable parts.
 - (2) Chargers designed to serve people who use mobility devices must be located on an accessible route and must provide:
 - (A) a vehicle charging space that is at least 11 feet wide and 20 feet long;
 - (B) an adjoining access aisle that is at least 5 feet wide;
 - (C) a clear floor or ground space at the same level as the vehicle charging space and positioned for an unobstructed side reach; and
 - (D) accessible operable parts, including parts on the charger and connector.

- (3) The Department shall adopt the technical requirements for accessible routes established by the ADA and ABA standards, including walking surfaces, curb ramps, and ramps.
- (b) Electric vehicle charging space; access aisle.
- (1) Charging spaces with mobility features must provide a vehicle space with a minimum width of at least 11 feet and a minimum length of at least 20 feet. Adjacent to the vehicle charging space shall be an access aisle that is at least 5 feet wide and the full length of the vehicle charging space. Where vehicle charging spaces are marked, access aisles shall also be marked to restrict parking in them. The width of the vehicle charging spaces and access aisles is measured to the centerline of markings, but it can include the full width of lines where there is no adjacent vehicle space or access aisle.
 - (2) One access aisle may be shared by 2 vehicle charging spaces, or a charging space and a parking space, but the overlap of the aisle shall be limited to 5 feet.
 - (3) Access aisles shall not be blocked or obscured by curbs, wheel stops, bollards, or charging cable slack. Floor or ground surfaces of vehicle charging spaces and access aisles must comply with Section 302 of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
 - (4) The access aisle shall be connected by an accessible route to the clear floor or ground space at the charger. When charging cables are less than 10 feet, the charger must be positioned so that the operable parts and clear floor or ground space are on the same side as the access aisle.
- (c) Clear floor or ground space.
- (1) There shall be a clear floor or ground space adjacent to each charger. Clear floor or ground spaces must meet ADA requirements for ground and floor surfaces, including criteria for firmness, stability, and slip resistance. The clear floor or ground space must be free of changes in level and not sloped more than 1:48. Grass, curbs, wheel stops, and bollards shall not be located within the clear floor or ground space. Clear floor or ground space at chargers must be a minimum of 30 inches by 48 inches. Additional space may be required where the clear floor or ground space is confined on 3 sides and obstructed for more than half the depth. Chargers shall be installed at the same level as the vehicle charging space and access aisle so that the clear floor or ground space can be placed as close as

possible to the charger. If chargers must be installed on a curb, such as at on-street parking, the charger must be placed as close to the edge of the face of the curb as possible and no farther than 10 inches away from the face of the curb.

(d) Operable parts within reach range.

- (1) A reasonable number of chargers, as determined by the Department, shall comply with Section 309 of the Americans with Disabilities Act operable parts requirements, including technical requirements for clear floor or ground space, reach ranges, and operation. Operable parts on chargers shall include, but are not limited to, the connector, card readers, electronic user interfaces, and switches and buttons, including the emergency start or stop button. All operable parts shall also meet the ADA requirements for an unobstructed side reach and be no higher than 48 inches above the clear floor or ground space and no farther than 10 inches away. An exception for a fuel dispenser shall not be used. Operable parts shall be placed at a reasonable height, as determined by the Department, but not less than a minimum of 15 inches from the base of the charger.

(e) Connectors; charging cables.

- (1) Connectors must allow operation with one hand and no tight grasping, pinching, or twisting of the wrist, and they must require no more than 5 pounds of force to operate.
- (2) Lightweight charging cables, including, but not limited to, AC Level 2 and DCFCs, shall be of sufficient length, as determined by the Department, to charge a vehicle with various charging inlet locations. Heavier and shorter DCFC cables shall be able to charge a vehicle positioned at least 5 feet away and shall be installed so that users can access the vehicle charging inlet, access aisle, and charger. Charging cables shall not block or obstruct accessible routes when stored or when connected to vehicles.

(f) Accessible communication features; user interface.

- (1) All chargers that are procured or maintained within the State must comply with the technical requirements for hardware under Section 508 Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
- (2) Display screens shall:

(A) be visible from a point located 40 inches above the clear floor or ground;

(B) avoid bright and rapid flashing lights;

(C) include at least one mode with text characters in a sans serif font and have an adjustable text size or a minimum character height of 3/16 inch;

(D) enable speech output that includes:

(D.1) an option for display screens to provide speech output that is capable of full and independent use by individuals with vision impairments;

(D.2) coordination with information displayed on the display screen;

(D.3) capabilities that allow for pausing and repeating; and

(D.4) volume controls; and

(E) include Braille instructions for initiating the speech output function.

(3) Input controls shall include:

(A) a label on keys and visual controls with high contrast;

(B) a control that is tactically discernible;

(C) a QWERTY layout when alphabetical keys are provided;

(D) a 2-second delay before the input of a key is repeated; and

(E) a visual, auditory, or tactile alert that notifies the user when a timed response is required and gives the user an opportunity to indicate more time is needed.

(4) If the charger requires the user to have an NFC keychain card or other physical token that requires a particular orientation for its use, then the card or token must provide a tactically discernible orientation.

(g) Contactless payment systems; customer service.

- (1) Registration and payment card readers shall be compatible with contactless payment systems, shall be tactically discernible, and shall provide visual and audible feedback.
 - (2) Charging station operators shall provide customer service, help support, or other mechanisms to report outages, malfunctions, obstructed chargers, and other issues.
- (h) Electric vehicle charging station location within a site.
- (1) A charging station must connect to an accessible route that leads to an accessible entrance of the building or facilities on the same site. Additionally, the accessible chargers shall be on the shortest accessible route to the accessible entrance relative to other chargers at the same charging station.
 - (2) Charging stations in parking garages must provide an accessible route that connects to the accessible pedestrian entrance of the parking garage. Additionally, a minimum vertical clearance of 98 inches must be maintained throughout the vehicular route to the accessible vehicle charging space and access aisle.
 - (3) Sites with charging stations as the primary purpose shall include accessible routes that connect to any amenities on the site and, if provided, a sidewalk in the public right-of-way.
 - (4) Charging stations added to existing sites must comply with the ADA and ABA requirements for alterations and additions. In alterations, compliance with the ADA and ABA standards is required to the maximum extent feasible. If charging stations are added to an existing site, they must connect to an accessible route, and a reasonable number of chargers, as determined by the Department, must comply with Section 309 of the Americans with Disabilities Act and have a clear floor or ground space and operable parts within reach range.
- (i) Electric vehicle charging stations at residential facilities.
- (1) Shared or common-use chargers located at residential facilities in the State must be accessible. Chargers that are designated to specific residential units shall provide the appropriate accessibility features. When residential facilities designate parking spaces to each residential unit, the parking space for a mobility accessible residential unit must be an accessible parking space. A charger provided for a mobility accessible residential unit must have a charging space with accessible

mobility features. A charger provided for a communication accessible residential unit must have a charger with accessible communication features.

(j) Enforcement.

(1) The *[Insert State Name]* Attorney General shall have the authority to enforce this Act. The Attorney General may investigate any complaint or reported violation of this Act and, if necessary to ensure compliance, may do any or all of the following:

(A) Conduct an investigation to determine if a violation of this Act exists. This includes the power to:

(A.1) require an individual or entity to file a statement or report in writing under oath or otherwise, as to all information the Attorney General may consider;

(A.2) examine under oath any person alleged to have participated in or with knowledge of the violations; and

(A.3) issue subpoenas or conduct hearings in aid of any investigation.

(B) Bring an action for an injunction to halt construction or alteration of any electric vehicle charging station or to require compliance with this Act by any electric vehicle charging station that has been or is being constructed or altered in violation of this Act.

(C) Bring an action for mandamus.

(D) Bring an action for penalties as follows: any owner of an electric vehicle charging station in violation of this Act is subject to civil penalties in a sum not to exceed \$250 per day, and each day the owner is in violation of this Act constitutes a separate offense.

(E) Bring an action for any other appropriate relief, including, but not limited to, in lieu of a civil action, the entry of an assurance of voluntary compliance with the individual or entity deemed to have violated this Act.

(k) Rules.

(1) The Department shall adopt rules to implement and administer this Act.

Section 5. Effective Date.

This Act takes effect on [*Insert date*].

For further information regarding this or other Accessibility Policy Institute guides, please contact:

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