



Accessibility & Inclusion at Chemonics-Washington

Chemonics highly values accessibility and inclusivity. The opportunity to design Chemonics-Washington from the ground up enabled Chemonics to shape the plans for the building—from its overall structure to its small details—to ensure that the needs of our staff, partners, clients, and visitors are supported. Following are some of the steps the team took to promote accessibility and inclusivity at Chemonics-Washington.

Application of inclusive design principles. We selected a design firm, Gensler, that is known for embracing inclusive design, and Gensler prioritized its [Inclusive Design Principles](#) in the plans for Chemonics-Washington. In addition, Gensler was required to design the entire building to support inclusivity as well as to meet code regulations, which include (and exceed) compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Consultation with experts. We engaged accessibility consultants from [Disability:IN](#), the leading nonprofit resource for business disability inclusion worldwide, and [Studio Pacifica](#) to inform our decision-making around the design and built environment of our new headquarters. In addition, the [ChemYards Council and Workstreams](#) (groups of staff focused on specific areas of the project, such as furniture, technology, and security) included members of [Chemonics' D&I team](#) and/or [ChemABLE](#). These representatives provided input along the way to Chemonics-Washington's design and operations with the perspective of accessibility and inclusion.

Incorporation of accessible and inclusive elements. Chemonics-Washington includes:

- Ramps and doors designed for people with different levels of mobility. The building's front entrance offers accessible door controls (push plates) and Chemonics' reception area includes a ramp as well as stairs. Elsewhere in the building, door sizes, shapes, and weights account for all needs and are in line with the American National Standards Institute's specifications for Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities ([ANSI A117.1 2003](#)). For example, doors are operable with a single effort by hardware that does not require tight grasping, pinching, or twisting of the wrist. In addition, floor surfaces are slip resistant and carpet thickness does not exceed one half inch.
- "Working booths" throughout the building, both in workspaces and in the café, where groups can sit together in a partially enclosed area around a table for a semi-private meeting or conversation. All booths are at floor level. Tables are appropriate height for wheelchair users.
- A gender-neutral restroom with a shower near the fitness center. This was not in the original base-building design and Chemonics committed to the additional investment needed to incorporate it.

- Private (single-stall) restrooms designated for all genders on every main workspace floor. These are in addition to men’s rooms and women’s rooms. Amenity floors, such as the conference center, have different configurations. All restroom signage/displays were recommended by our accessibility consultants.
- Restroom elements that account for all needs and are in line with the American National Standards Institute’s specifications for Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities ([ANSI A117.1 2003](#)). For example, grab bars are provided; sinks and lavatories are mounted to comply with knee space requirements; and mirrors, flush controls, and dispensing and disposal fixtures—such as those for towels, sanitary napkins, and waste—are mounted at accessible heights. Faucet controls and operating mechanisms are operable with one hand and do not require tight grasping, pinching, or twisting of the wrist. The force required to activate controls is less than five pounds, and self-closing controls remain open for at least 10 seconds. All restrooms are ADA compliant and wheelchair accessible.
- Design, functionality, and spacing of furniture that accounts for all needs. Accessibility and inclusion considerations were factored heavily in the evaluation and selection of the furniture suppliers. The standard furniture at every workstation includes a sit/stand desk, ergonomic chair, and an ultrawide monitor (that accommodates dual-screen requirements) mounted on an adjustable monitor arm. Chemonics also invested in chairs with wider bases, which are more comfortable for a range of body types.
- A hybrid seating arrangement, where staff with approved accommodations or special work/desktop technology requirements have assigned seating and other staff may sit anywhere in the building that meets their needs. More information about ADA Accommodations at Chemonics-Washington is available from [HR](#).
- Large varieties of meeting and open collaboration spaces that accommodate different workstyles, navigation preferences, and needs. For example, couch and lounge seating designs were discussed in detail to ensure users with mobility considerations can get in and out of the seating with increased flexibility. Some seating has back support and arms; others are open. All conference room tables meet ADA requirements. There are also small, reservable rooms available for private calls or focused work.
- Six wellness rooms, one prayer/remembrance room, and other relaxation/quiet spaces spread throughout. The wellness rooms are small, private, reservable rooms that can be used for wellness activities, such as meditation or resting, and for pumping by nursing parents. Each includes lounge furniture, as well as a refrigerator, sink, and microwave to support nursing parents. The prayer/remembrance room was designed as a space for prayer and/or remembering Chemonics colleagues and others we have lost. The prayer/remembrance room faces east and has shoe storage spaces.
- Assistive-listening technology in Chemonics’ Conference Center. Via [Listen Everywhere](#), staff and visitors are able to stream an audio broadcast through an application on their own device (smartphone or tablet). The app is available for free from the [Apple](#) and [Android](#) app stores.
- Hallways designed to support wheelchair navigation. The width of walkways enables a person to walk side by side with a person in a wheelchair.
- Lockers at varying heights for storage of personal items.
- Six passenger elevators that meet code requirements.
- Accessible signage, including high-contrast and Braille, as well as digital signage integration.
- A designated Quiet Zone as an option for those who prefer that environment. The Quiet Zone, which includes 40 reservable workstations, may be used by any Chemonics employee, partner

employee, or visitor. Personnel in the Quiet Zone are asked to respect the area's library-like atmosphere; no phone calls or conversations are allowed.

- Privacy film on some office and conference room windows/doors. This film helps those working or meeting inside to focus.
- Technology and design elements for acoustic control, such as white/pink noise systems, slab-to-ceiling walls, smart layout decisions, fabric wrapped panels, use of sound-deafening flooring, and acoustic ceiling tiles and sprays.
- Varying light levels. Different workspaces in the building offer different levels of light.
- Information about the building, its features, and equipment available on-the-spot via personal devices. Staff and guests can access job aids, guides, and more, optimized for accessibility, by scanning posted QR codes with their own devices (smartphone or tablet). All signage and materials were vetted by our accessibility consultants.
- Custom artwork by local artists. Accessible transportation and commuting options, including proximity to Metro and slug lines. In addition, the building's parking garage includes handicapped spots, and all parking spots are accessible by elevator. Please see the [Parking and Commuting Quick Reference Guide](#) for more information.

Other considerations. The project team incorporated diversity, accessibility, and inclusion throughout the project process

- When reviewing and rating supplier/consultant bids for various project components, the diversity of the bidders' teams and their mission and values were considered.
- The pilot of Monumental Markets in our previous DC and Crystal City office locations provided an opportunity for Chemonics to give feedback to the vendor. For example, we noted that the height of controls and the food shelving didn't support accessibility. Therefore, the honor market was redesigned for Chemonics-Washington.
- The project team encouraged feedback, and provided regular transparent project updates to staff.