



**New Jersey's  
Snow Removal Law**  

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**A Guide for Advocates**

## About this Booklet

This booklet has been created to assist disability advocates in educating their towns and municipalities about New Jersey's Snow Removal Law. The New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities'



grassroots advocacy project, "Monday Morning," was instrumental in getting the law passed. Included in this booklet are a copy of the law, a sample letter to the mayor and tips for writing editorials for newspapers and other media outlets. The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs website provides a Mayors Directory which contains information about all of New Jersey's 566 mayors. You can access the directory at [www.state.nj.us/dca/mayors](http://www.state.nj.us/dca/mayors)

For more information on the Snow Removal Law, log on to [www.njcdd.org/mondaymorning.htm](http://www.njcdd.org/mondaymorning.htm)

**Any obstruction to accessible parking is ILLEGAL!**

Governor Christine Whitman signed the "Snow Removal Bill" into law on August 16, 1999. This legislation penalizes the owner or controller of a parking area for failing to remove snow, ice or other obstacles from



accessible parking spaces, curb cuts and other improvements designed to provide accessibility. Ice or snow must be removed from the parking space, curb cut or other improvement **within 48 hours after snow has stopped falling. A violator of this provision would be subject to a penalty of not less than \$200 or more than \$500.** This law is NOT limited to WINTERTIME! All year round debris, shopping carts, and other obstacles in the

handicapped parking spaces or blocking curb cuts make it very difficult and dangerous for people with disabilities to get out of their vehicles and to their destination.

# NEW JERSEY SNOW REMOVAL LAW

## CHAPTER 182

**An Act concerning parking spaces for handicapped motorists and supplementing chapter 4 of Title 39 of the Revised Statutes.**

**Be It Enacted** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

**C.39:4-207.9 Parking spaces for handicapped; requirement for snow removal.**

1. a. A person who owns or controls a parking area which is open to the public or to which the public is invited and which contains special parking spaces for the use of persons who have been issued a placard or wheelchair symbol license plates pursuant to P.L.1949, c.280 (C.39:4-204 et seq.) shall be responsible for assuring that access to these special parking spaces and to curb cuts or other improvements designed to provide accessibility for handicapped persons is not obstructed.



b. If snow or ice is obstructing the special parking space, curb cut or other improvement designed to provide accessibility for the handicapped, it shall be removed within 48 hours after the weather condition causing the snow or ice ceases.

c. A person who violates this act shall be liable for a penalty of not less than \$200 or more than \$500.

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

—Approved August 16, 1999

# SAMPLE LETTER TO YOUR MAYOR

[Date]

Dear Mayor [Name]

In 1999, then Governor Whitman signed into law P.L. 1999, Chapter 182, (N.J.S.A. 39:4- 207.9). Also known as the “Snow Removal Law,” it requires owners and operators of parking lots to remove snow, ice and other obstructions from accessible parking spaces, access aisles, ramps and other improvements designed to provide accessibility for persons with disabilities. The owners and operators must remove the snow and ice within 48 hours of occurrence or be fined \$200 to \$500. Enclosed please find a copy of the law.

The New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities and various disability advocacy groups were instrumental in the Snow Removal Law’s passage and have been working to inform businesses of their obligations under it. Despite our efforts, however, this important law is largely ignored by businesses, while many local police departments are not enforcing it.

Seven years after the passage of the law, people who use wheelchairs and walkers still must negotiate, at the risk of their own safety, around dangerous icy ramps, snow covered curb cuts and accessible parking spaces filled with plowed snow.

Your support is vital as we continue to work with New Jersey’s municipalities to ensure that the right to full access for people with disabilities is not hampered by inclement weather.

We welcome the opportunity to meet with you and your staff regarding implementing the law. In the meantime, please contact [Your name] at [your phone number], if you have any questions or need further information. You can also find more information on the NJCDD website at [www.njddc.org](http://www.njddc.org)

Thank you again for your consideration into this matter.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

# How to Write a Letter to the Editor

Letters that are intended for publication should usually be drafted more carefully. Here are some tips to keep in mind:

- Make one point (or at most two) in your letter or fax. State the point clearly, ideally in the first sentence.
- Make your letter timely. If you are not addressing a specific article, editorial or letter that recently appeared in the paper you are writing to, then try to tie the issue you want to write about to a recent event.
- Familiarize yourself with the coverage and editorial position of the paper to which you are writing. Disprove or support specific statements, address relevant facts that are ignored, but do avoid blanket attacks on the media in general or the newspaper in particular.
- Check the letter specifications of the newspaper to which you are writing. Length and format requirements vary from paper to paper. (Generally, roughly two short paragraphs are ideal.) You also must include your name, signature, address and phone number. Look at the letters that appear in your paper. Is a certain type of letter usually printed?
- Support your facts. If the topic you address is controversial, consider sending documentation along with your letter. But don't overload the editors with too much info. Keep your letter brief. Type it whenever possible.
- Share a personal story or account if you had tried to use an accessible parking space, only to find that it hadn't been plowed.
- Monitor the paper for your letter. If your letter has not appeared within a week or two, follow up with a call to the editorial department of the newspaper.
- Write to different sections of the paper when appropriate. Sometimes the issue you want to address is relevant to the lifestyle, book review or other section of the paper. An increasing number of broadcast news programs (60 Minutes, All Things Considered, etc.) also solicit and broadcast "letters to the editor." Don't forget these outlets.
- Please sign your letters as an individual or representative of a community group.

The following municipalities have responded to the campaign to enforce the Snow Removal Law:

Port Republic  
Ridgewood  
Little Falls  
Manville  
Carteret  
Chatham  
Montgomery  
Montvale  
Ocean Township  
Perth Amboy  
Raritan Township  
West Paterson  
Ventnor City  
Franklin Lakes  
Camden  
Trenton

**What can I do?** If your town is not listed above, contact your mayor's office (*For contact information, log on to the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs' mayor's directory at [www.state.nj.us/dca/mayors](http://www.state.nj.us/dca/mayors)*). Speak with local businesses and law enforcement about the snow removal law. Contact the Chamber of Commerce and offer to do a presentation to their members.

# NJCDD

New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities

[www.njddc.org](http://www.njddc.org)