



City of Boston
Mayor Michelle Wu
Disabilities Commission

January 10, 2023

Dear Valued Business Partner,

In December 2022, the City of Boston passed an [Ordinance Related to Closed Captioning](#) in places of public accommodation. This ordinance requires TVs that are visible in the public areas of your business to have the “closed captions” (CC) feature enabled.

Closed captioning is a service delivered by programming providers that puts text of the dialogue and other audible information on the screen. The signal that creates captions is included with the movie or TV show, and it needs to be decoded in order to be displayed. All televisions manufactured after 1993 are equipped with this decoder. With the onset of cable and satellite set-top boxes, the decoding is often done by those boxes. More recently, streaming service apps provide both the captioning signal and the decoding ability within their service.

The City passed this ordinance in order to ensure that all customers and patrons of businesses in Boston have equal access to the information that is being broadcast on TVs in public areas. Captions provide access to the audible TV content for people who are Deaf or hard of hearing, older adults with hearing difficulties, people who speak a language other than English, and many others.

Compliance with this new ordinance is easy! If you have a TV in your business, simply turn on the closed captioning feature and you will be in compliance. This may be done on your TV's remote control, through your cable settings, or through the streaming service provider you are using. You do not need to buy, install, or pay for anything!

The City of Boston Disabilities Commission has created resources to support businesses so they can come into compliance with this ordinance. You can view those resources on [Boston.gov](#).

If you have any questions about this ordinance or how to be in compliance, please contact Andrea Patton at the Disabilities Commission at disability@boston.gov.

Sincerely,
The City of Boston