

Restroom Access

The Challenge

There are not enough public restrooms in America, and those businesses with restrooms that are potentially available to the public are often hard to find or discourage non-customer access. Even in states where legislation has been passed to require businesses to open access to the public, we have found that awareness and compliance with the law is very low, with few or no enforcement mechanisms.

While everyone occasionally needs access to a restroom while they are away from home, those who live with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) experience the need to use a restroom more urgently and more frequently than the general public.

IBD is the term used to refer to Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis. Both of these diseases cause inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract and are characterized by abdominal pain, diarrhea and frequent bowel movements. Patients with IBD can have unexpected and urgent needs to find a restroom at a moment's notice. This causes many IBD patients to worry about whether they will have access to a restroom whenever they leave home.

Finding Solutions

I Can't Wait

For years the Foundation has provided our members with an “[I Can't Wait](#)” card, which patients can present to help explain to businesses why they are urgently requesting access to a private restroom. These cards are available through our website.

We Can't Wait: Restroom Finder App

The We Can't Wait app offers patients—or any app user—a simple way to locate publicly accessible restrooms and helps identify sympathetic establishments.

Talk to Your City Council About Increasing Access

The Foundation has created a toolkit to help individuals talk with their local elected officials about creating tax incentives for local businesses who open their restrooms to the public and list them in a restroom finder app.

Thanks to the generous support of **Eli Lilly**, we have created a robust [toolkit](#) that includes everything you need for talking with your local elected officials about creating a law to increase access to restrooms in your community.