

Best Practices for Accessible Meetings

Face-to-Face Meetings

Event Communications:

- All materials provided to attendees prior to, during, and after the event should meet the ADA standards of [effective communication](#).
- Web access - communicating conference details prior to, during, and after should meet the WCAG standard of accessibility. A [simplified checklist](#) can be found at Web AIM.
- Registration and event materials should address accommodation requests.
- Event communications should highlight availability of accommodations such as Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART.) For example, a statement might read: This event will have CART available for main sessions, unless otherwise requested. Or, “For the wellbeing of all attendees, this is a fragrance-free event.
- Make presentation materials available ahead of time; for example, send in an email to all participants or provide a link to where presentation materials can be found.
- Accessible materials should be used for all event communications.
 - [Creating accessible MS Word documents](#)
 - [Creating accessible PDF documents](#)
 - [Creating accessible Power Point presentations](#)
 - [Accessibility considerations when using Google products](#)
 - [The importance of accessible video](#)

Physical Space

Conference Space:

- Event locations should meet the [ADA standards for being barrier free](#).
- All rooms including main ballrooms, break-out space, exhibit areas, etc. should meet the [ADA standard for space requirements](#). *This would also need to account for any social distancing guidelines.
- Be certain that seating for individuals using wheelchairs and walkers is available throughout the room – not just in one area, if possible.

- Multiple seating options should be available. For example, chairs with and without arms.
- All rooms should include the [use of mic's for attendees with difficulties hearing](#). Mics should be available for audience members if presentation is interactive.
- Any posted [signs should meet the ADA standard](#). Alternative solutions could be considered for temporary signs relating to the event such as directions to another room, event details that all attendees would need access to, etc.
- To ensure all participants are included in the event, be certain to provide a fragrance-free event. This would include being aware of any chemicals that are in cleaning/disinfecting products.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as facemasks, gloves, and hand sanitizer provided to attendees of the event should be located in accessible locations.
- Alternatives for PPE provided to attendees should be available. For example, non-latex gloves for individuals with allergies to latex.
- Also have a plan for individuals with disabilities whose disability prevents them from wearing a facemask – for example if a facemask would prevent them from being able to breathe safely.

Lodging Accommodations

- Account for [accessible overnight accommodations](#) when planning an event that takes place over a period of more than one day.
- Event materials may wish to highlight any amenities that offer accessibility to swimming pools, spas, etc.

Virtual Meetings

Event Communications:

- All materials provided to attendees prior to, during, and after the event should meet the ADA standards of [effective communication](#).
- Web access - communicating conference details prior to, during, and after should meet the WCAG standard of accessibility. A [simplified checklist](#) can be found at Web AIM.
- Registration and event materials should address accommodation requests.
- Event communications should highlight availability of accommodations such as Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART.) For example, a statement might read: This web conference will have CART available for all participants.
- Include links to accessibility features of the web conference software prior to the meeting.

- Make presentation materials available ahead of time; for example, send in an email to all participants or provide a link to where presentation materials can be found.
- Accessible materials should be used for all event communications.
- [Creating accessible MS Word documents](#)
- [Creating accessible PDF documents](#)
- [Creating accessible Power Point presentations](#)
- [Accessibility considerations when using Google products](#)
- [The importance of accessible video](#)

Facilitator Guidelines:

- Before the meeting begins, provide a brief overview of the web conference software features such as how to use the chat box, how to raise your hand, etc.
- When CART is being provided, be sure to note any additional instructions on how participants can access these services.
- Inform participants if the meeting is being recorded and how and when it will be available following the meeting.
- Describe any visuals that are being shown on the screen; this will not only benefit individuals with disabilities, but also those joining over the phone.
- Announce presentation slide numbers or when moving to the next slide.
- Read all comments in the chat out loud.
- Before speaking announce your name; this is especially important if there are multiple people contributing to the discussion and if CART or American Sign Language (ASL) is being provided.
- Mute your microphone when you are not speaking.
- Request that participants turn video off if it is not needed; this can limit visual distraction.
- Have the video turned on for only those who are presenting, this may make it easier for individuals to follow along.

If interested in learning more about accessibility, contact Kellie Blackwell, MA, CRC at 517-999-7524 or kblackwell@dncap.org.