University of Rhode Island Event Planning Accessibility Toolkit

The University of Rhode Island is committed to maintaining an environment free from discrimination. Consistent with this commitment, the University prohibits all forms of illegal discrimination in all University programs and activities. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Office of Equal Opportunity offers this Accessibility Toolkit to assist the University community in promoting accessibility in a manner that is consistent with our legal obligations.

This toolkit has been adapted from the American Bar Association's Accessible Meetings and Events Toolkit and provides general guidance regarding accessible elements to consider when planning virtual, in-person, small, and large-scale events. The American Bar Association and the Office of Equal Opportunity recognize that the volume of information in this toolkit may seem daunting if addressed all at once. Planning accessible in-person and virtual events takes time and may require staff training. By following the guidance in this toolkit, you will create a space where people can share new ideas and learn from one another.

The Office of Equal Opportunity encourages University personnel to incorporate universal design into planning practices whenever possible and thanks each member of our community for continuing to make efforts to promote accessibility.

Best,

Dorca P. Smalley
Director, Office of Equal Opportunity

Qualified individuals with disabilities who need to access this document in an alternative format may email equalopportunity-group@uri.edu or call 401-874-4009. For TTY assistance, contact R.I. Relay Services at 711.

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Internal Partners

While the amount of information contained within this toolkit may be daunting, there are several offices and individuals on campus available to consult, advise, and assist with planning and preparation. Below is a list of internal partners you can contact if you have questions when planning an event.

The Office of Equal Opportunity coordinates enterprise compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Office of Equal Opportunity is responsible for investigating complaints of discrimination or harassment on the basis of disability (and other protected categories) in employment and service delivery.

Visit the Office of Equal Opportunity website for more information, or contact equalopportunity-group@uri.edu or call (401) 874-4009.

The Office of Community, Equity and Diversity is tasked with promulgating University-wide diversity initiatives that directly align with the University's transformational goals and academic strategic plan. As a member of the President's Leadership Council, the Vice President of Community, Equity, and Diversity is responsible for promoting critical consciousness, cultural humility, and compassion for a socially just and equitable campus community. To contact the Division of Community, Equity and Diversity uriced@etal.uri.edu or call (401) 874-7077.

The Office of the General Counsel has designated Lauren Jensen, Esq., Deputy General Counsel, as the liaison for any questions relating to compliance with the ADA, Section 504, and any other state and federal laws that provide protection for individuals with disabilities. The General Counsel is the chief legal officer of the University and is responsible for the coordination and management of all legal issues affecting the University. She can be contacted by emailing ljensen@uri.edu or by calling (401) 874-4491.

The Office of Disability, Access, and Inclusion representative is Paige Ramsdell, Assistant Dean, who is responsible for promoting compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act by accepting, reviewing, and approving reasonable accommodation requests made by students in their role as students. For more information regarding the student reasonable accommodation process, please email dai@uri.edu, call (401) 874-5694.

The Office of Human Resources Administration has designated Mary Previte, Coordinator, Absence Manager, as the person responsible for approving and monitoring reasonable accommodation requests made by University personnel and applicants, in alignment with Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act and Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Requests for work accommodations are made in writing to the Office of Human Resources, which consults with appropriate officials to consider the request. Once an accommodation is granted in the employment context, its effectiveness is periodically monitored by both the employee and the Office of Human Resources, in collaboration with the supervisor. If, at some point, the accommodation ceases to be effective in enabling the person to perform the job or is no longer deemed to be necessary (upon medical documentation), alternative accommodation is sought if appropriate. To contact the Coordinator, email mary.previte@uri.edu or call (401) 874-2684.

The Facilities Group team is responsible for ensuring Americans with Disabilities Act standards for accessible design are met in accordance with Title II and Title III regulations, which require that people with disabilities have access to spaces to allow equal participation in University events. To submit a work request to the Facilities Group, please click the button below or call (401) 874-4060. If you need to follow up on the status of a work order previously submitted, email equalopportunity-group@uri.edu. The Office

of Equal Opportunity works closely with the Facilities Group to monitor and assess requests that require immediate attention.

Communications and Marketing has designated Brandon J. C. Fuller, Manager of Web Communications, is responsible for coordinating website accessibility compliance efforts in accordance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act's new regulations for digital accessibility. For questions regarding website accessibility resources at the University, email bjcfuller@uri.edu, call (401) 874-2258.

Transportation and Parking has designated Cody Ochs, Coordinator, Transportation and Parking, as the person responsible for working with the Office of Equal Opportunity to coordinate the response to requests made by members of the public with mobility needs. Transportation and Parking provides safe, sustainable, reliable, and cost-effective transportation and parking services that facilitate convenient access. Additionally, Transportation and Parking monitors and directs vehicles to appropriate public parking areas, including accessible spaces.

Achieving full participation and integration of people with disabilities is the responsibility of all of the University's departments, offices, and personnel.

Exterior Features
General

☐ Barrier-free/step-free paths of travel for persons who use mobility aids or devices

☐ Stairs with continuous handrails on both sides; no open risers (space between steps)

☐ Ramps for inaccessible areas, with handrails on both sides if the rise is greater than 6 inches

☐ Curb ramps/cuts for persons who use mobility aids or devices

☐ Crosswalks with visual and audible signals

☐Toileting, watering, and walking areas for service animals

Exterior Features
Entrance

☐ Barrier and step-free, well-lit, slip-resistant accessible main entrance at street level so that all individuals can use this entrance

☐ Alternative accessible entrances

☐ Signs (Braille and tactile) indicating the location of accessible entrances

☐ Entrance connected by an accessible route to public transportation stops, accessible parking, and passenger loading zones, and public streets or sidewalks

☐ Other entrances that are at street level or accessible by ramps, lifts, or golf carts

Exterior Features
Doors

☐ Main entrance/exit doorways that are wide enough (32 inches with the door open 90 degrees) to accommodate mobility devices and aids

☐ Easy-to-open (automatic/push button door openers, lever handles), operable with one hand, within reach for mobility device users, lightweight (no more than 5 pounds) doors; no revolving doors. If you notice a University building has an automatic/push button door opener that is not working, report it by completing this form: https://web.uri.edu/facilities/work-order-request-form/

☐ Glass doors with contrasting door frames, stickers, or bright signs

Exterior Features
Parking

☐ Does the venue have sufficient accessible parking? The Americans with Disabilities Act Standards requirement has been outlined in the chart below

☐ Is there a straight pathway from the parking lot to the entrance of the venue? The pathway must have curb cuts, elevated ramps or a level path of travel must be established

☐ Should you consider providing accessible paratransit services? (e.g., accessible golf cart)

☐ Accessible, clearly marked (symbol of accessibility) parking spaces (at least 1 accessible parking space for every 25 total spaces). Data source: https://www.ada.gov/topics/parking/

Total Number of Parking Spaces	Minimum Number of Required Accessible Parking Spaces Permitted
1-25	1
26-50	2
51-75	3
76-100	4
101-150	5
151-200	6
201-300	7
301-400	8
401-500	9
501-1000	2% of total
1001 and over	20, plus 1 for each 100, or fraction thereof, over 100

Interior Features
General

☐ Well-lit areas; adjustable lighting

☐ Even, stable, regular, slip-resistant, non-sloped paths of travel

☐ Sufficiently wide (64 inches for two-way traffic), barrier-free hallways and corridors to allow everyone to move about freely

☐ Securely attached edges of carpets or mats

☐ Clearly marked (Braille and tactile signage) accessible exits

☐ Clearly marked (Braille and tactile signage) accessible restrooms located on an accessible route

☐ Video screens with closed captioning

☐ Registration/concierge at a height accessible by mobility device users that allows for a frontal approach and provides adequate knee clearance

☐ Emergency procedures for persons with disabilities (audio and visual alarms in halls and sleeping rooms)

☐ Designated quiet room(s) with no talking, no noise, low light, and no flashing lights, images, or objects

☐ Designated room(s) with plenty of space to allow people to talk, shout, clap, make noises, jump around, and do whatever they need for stimulation/sensory needs

Interior Features
Doors and Elevators

☐ Easy-to-open, lightweight (no more than 5 pounds) doors with lever handles that are easy to grasp with one hand or automatic/push button openers

☐ Wide (32 inches with the door open 90 degrees) doorways for mobility devices to enter/exit

☐ Clearly marked (Braille and tactile signage) elevators

☐ Elevator doors that reopen automatically when obstructed by an object or person

☐ Elevator interiors that are adequately illuminated and wide enough for wheelchairs/ scooters/mobility devices to enter, maneuver within reach of controls, and exit

☐ Elevator call buttons with visual and audible signals, reachable by mobility device users

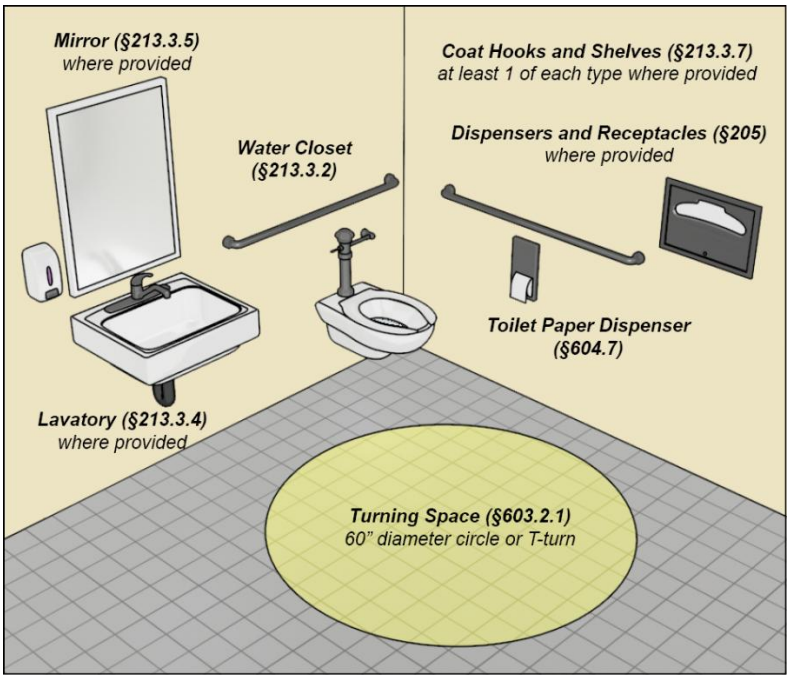
☐ Elevator control buttons that are designated by Braille and tactile characters or symbols and are reachable by wheelchair/scooter/mobility device users

☐ Elevator voice and visual display two-way emergency communication

Interior Features
Restrooms

☐ Accessible restrooms

The ADA Standards do not address the number of toilet rooms or fixtures required for a facility, but instead, specify which ones must be accessible where provided. Where existing single-user toilet rooms are clustered in one location, at least half for each use must comply (§213.2., Ex. 4). In the case of single-user portable units, access is required to at least 5% at each cluster, excluding those on construction sites for construction personnel which are fully exempt (§213.2, Ex. 3, §203.2).



Venue
General

☐ Barrier-free, slip-resistant path

☐ Proper air circulation with temperature controls

☐ Space large enough to allow all persons to move about freely

☐ Clearly marked (Braille and tactile signage) accessible restrooms located on an accessible route in close proximity to rooms

☐ Elevators in close proximity to rooms and along an accessible route

☐ Accessible exhibit areas, if there are exhibits

☐ Easy-to-open, lightweight doors (no more than 5 pounds) with lever handles or automatic/ push-button openers

☐ Doors wide enough (32 inches with the door open 90 degrees) for mobility devices to enter/exit and maneuver

☐ Attendants or automatic mechanism to open the doors

☐ Well-secured, covered cables, wires, cords, and microphones placed outside of paths of travel

☐ Tables for materials at a height (28 to 34 inches) reachable by mobility device users and in an accessible location

☐ Tables for materials at a height (28 to 34 inches) reachable by mobility device users and in an accessible location

☐ Space for service animals

☐ Room(s) designated to allow people to talk, shout, clap, make noises, jump around, and meet stimulation needs

☐ Quiet room(s) in proximity (cell-phone-free space) to help individuals sensitive to overstimulation

Venue
Visual

☐ Signs (with Braille and tactile characters, sans serif or simple serif large type fonts, sentence case, and good contrast) that direct attendees to all rooms

☐ Mounted signs designating permanent rooms and spaces with tactile characters that contrast with their backgrounds and Braille

☐ Well-lit space and adjacent areas

Venue
Auditory

☐ Good acoustics and a functioning auxiliary sound system

☐ Location of all audio/visual equipment in an area that does not block paths of travel

☐ Assistive listening devices, hearing or induction loops, and Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) for attendees who are d/Deaf or hard of hearing

☐ Prominent, well-lit, visible space for interpreters to stand (e.g., raised platform with a dark, solid color background). Clear lines of sight to interpreters and real-time CART. Project interpreter live session into the large screen or provide mobile accessibility

Venue
Seating

☐ Barrier-free seating aisles that are wide enough (36 inches) to accommodate mobility devices

☐ If the event is outdoors in a field with grass, consider grass accessibility mats. https://www.accessrec.com/grassmat. Please contact Facilities Group to discuss potential options.

☐ Seating rows that are wide enough for attendees to walk through

☐ Preferred seating for persons with visual and hearing impairments in the front rows

☐ Reserved seating near the exits for attendees who are sensitive to crowds and need to take breaks

☐ Adequate number of spaces for mobility devices dispersed to allow location choices and viewing angles equivalent to other seating, with clear lines of sight

☐ Seats for companions accompanying persons with disabilities

☐ Space on side of or under seats for service animals

Live Streaming

☐ Include a statement on your website, registration, and all other communications asking attendees to specify their accessibility and accommodations needs. The statement should include a deadline for requests and provides the name, email address, and phone number of the individual to contact

Example:

> *The University of Rhode Island (URI) encourages all people to participate in its programs and activities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation or have questions about accessibility inclusion, please contact* ***[insert first and last name]*** *at* ***[insert telephone number or other contact information here such as an email address]****.*
>
> *We encourage all individuals seeking an accommodation to reach out as early as possible in advance of the event as the University's ability to provide a requested accommodation may be impacted by the timing of the request. Reasonable accommodations are offered at no cost and are available upon request.*

☐ Ensure that the individual hosting the meeting is trained on how to set up and implement the platform's accessibility features

☐ List in all event communications accessibility/accommodations that you will provide, such as captioning, without the need for attendees to request accommodations you plan to offer

☐ Provide materials that help orient participants to your chosen platform. Offer practice sessions in advance of the main event

☐ Consider your audience and language level. Use plain language when appropriate. Ask attendees if they can hear everyone or if anyone is speaking too quickly

☐ Have a staff person monitor the chat or Q&A function for accessibility issues that may arise during the event and read aloud the author and questions or comments to be addressed

☐ Advise everyone orally and in the chat or Q&A function about the accessibility features/ accommodations being offered and how to use them at the start of the event, including captions. Do a check of access features. Invite attendees to raise access concerns during the event and instruct them on how to do so

☐ If there are any barriers or extra steps to joining the event, such as passwords or requiring the user to input information to join, make sure all attendees know and understand how to do so

☐ Offer different ways that individuals can access the event, including via the Internet and dial-in

☐ Consider providing CART (real-time captioning) for all events even if the virtual platform generates automatic captions, as these are often unreliable. Captioning creates a transcript of the event that can be used by everyone, including those who attend the live event

☐ Describe all images and videos for blind/visually impaired individuals, as well as for those joining by phone. Some videos with descriptive audio can be found on YouTube or youdescribe.org

☐ Sharing a video is not accessible for blind and/or deaf and hard of hearing persons. Ensure that the video is captioned and also describes what is happening during the event

☐ For people who read lips, ensure that speakers have their cameras on and are well-lit, and cameras show a close profile

☐ Ensure that the environment behind presenters is not distracting. If it is, use a virtual background, but note that some can wash out faces

☐ Allow only one person to speak at a time. This will also help the captioner(s) and ASL interpreter(s) more accurately interpret

Materials
Promotional and Registrational Materials

Include a statement in your registration materials that lets attendees know that alternative formats are available upon request. Here are two sample statements:

1) The materials are available in alternative formats upon request. Please contact [name, email address, telephone number (including TTY)] by [deadline date].
2) The materials are available in alternative formats. Please check the format you need:

☐Braille

☐Large Print: Font Size ___

☐Audio

☐Digital File: Format ___

☐Other

Materials
Accessibility Statement

Stating in these materials that the University's in-person or virtual event is accessible is essential to encouraging persons with disabilities to participate. Here is a sample statement:

> The University of Rhode Island aims to host events that enable individuals of all abilities to participate fully and equally.

Consider including images of persons with various disabilities, as well as universal access symbols (available at http://www.aarts.net.au/resources/universalaccess-symbols). Consider using "people-first" language in your materials: a "person with a disability," rather than a "disabled person." Remember, the person, not their disability, is the focus.

Materials
Registration

☐ Provide a range of registering options: online, telephone (voice and text), and email.

☐ Make sure your registration forms are accessible for persons using assistive technologies such as screen readers, text readers, screen magnification software, speech input software, and alternative input devices for individuals unable to use a mouse or keyboard (e.g., head pointers, motion or eye tracking, single switch entry devices).

☐ Include explicit labeling for all form fields, as well as for other user inputs like drop-down menus and "submit" or "buy" buttons.

Materials
Accommodations and Accessibility Statement

The University of Rhode Island (URI) encourages all people to participate in its programs and activities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation or have questions about accessibility inclusion, please contact ***[insert first and last name]*** *at* ***[insert telephone number or other contact information here such as an email address]****.*

We encourage all individuals seeking an accommodation to reach out as early as possible in advance of the event as the University's ability to provide a requested accommodation may be impacted by the timing of the request. Reasonable accommodations are offered at no cost and are available upon request.

Materials
Personal Care Attendant Statement

Some persons with disabilities may bring their personal care attendants to events. On the registration form, ask about personal attendants and offer an extra admissions ticket for the attendant (this ticket should be provided in addition). Here is a sample statement to include in the registration form/website:

"A personal care attendant will be accompanying me: _Yes _No."

Materials
Promotional and Registration Materials Checklist

☐ Provide alternative registration options (online, telephone, text, email)

☐ Include a statement that meeting/event is accessible

☐ Include a request for accommodations statement

☐ Inquire about personal care attendants and service animals

☐ Designate staff to handle accommodation and accessibility requests

☐ Ensure that your website and mobile apps are accessible

☐ Include an accessibility link for meeting/event on your website in a prominent place

☐ Identify any barriers that cannot be eliminated and ways they have been mitigated

☐ Ensure that the fonts used are sans serif

Materials
Persons with Visual Impairments Checklist: Text Format

☐ Use a 16-point font size when possible, but if that is not practical, at least 14 point

☐ Avoid highly stylized fonts

☐ Use easy-to-read fonts with clearly defined letters and clear spacing between the letters, such as sans-serif fonts (e.g., Helvetica, Verdana, Arial)

☐ Avoid underlining or italicizing large volumes of text

☐ Avoid using blocks of capital letters for more than a couple of words

☐ Spell out numbers

Materials
Persons with Visual Impairments Checklist: Layout

☐ Align all text on the left, rather than centered or right justified

☐ Use one-inch margins

☐ Do not hyperlink URLs because underlining reduces readability

☐ Do not place text directly over or wrap text around an image

☐ Use at least 1.5 spacing between lines of text paragraphs

Materials

Persons with Visual Impairments Checklist: Contrast and Color

☐ Ensure good contrast between the text and background colors

☐ Use black text

☐ Use cream instead of white paper for printed materials

Materials

Persons with Visual Impairments Checklist: Contrast and Color

☐ Choose a matte rather than a glossy finish

☐ Avoid using thin paper, which can bleed images and text from the reverse

☐ Print on one side

Website Checklist

☐ Become familiar with Web Accessibility Resources at URI: https://www.uri.edu/wordpress/accessibility/

☐ Ensure your webpage complies with the current Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG): https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/#guidelines

☐ Ensure that foreground and background color combinations contrast

☐ Use a sans serif font like Arial or Calibri

☐ Provide color invert and magnification tools

☐ Ensure that any background images are not too "busy" (e.g., have many lines, patterns, or colors) that could make the foreground more difficult to read and understand

☐ Provide text equivalents to auditory and visual content (e.g., videos and images)

☐Ensure that the "alt text" (alternative text attribute) of the image tag conveys what is important or relevant about the image

☐Avoid flashing images

☐ Ensure that any moving text can be paused, stopped, and hidden

☐ For all videos, provide closed captioning in a readable font with high-contrast colors at a readable speed. Where the format allows, captions should be able to be turned on and off (toggled), and should feature controls for font size, color, and location

☐ Avoid drop-down menus that cannot be accessed by persons with limited dexterity or mobility impairments with just a keyboard

☐ If using CAPTCHAs (Completely Automated Public Turing Tests to Tell Computers and Humans Apart), ensure that there are multiple options (e.g., image and audio or "I'm not a robot" CAPTCHA options)

☐ Define page hierarchy with header tags and lists, and include "breadcrumbs" to assist in navigation where appropriate

☐ Ensure that all websites and pages are compatible with mobile devices, and can be viewed on them without difficulty

Live Event Checklist
General

☐ Announce when the meeting begins and ends

☐ Build multiple breaks into the schedule, preferably 5-10 minutes every hour

☐ Allow space for interpreters to comfortably do their jobs. If outdoors, identify a shaded area

☐ For large events, allow people with relevant disabilities to find seats before the general audience, you may provide a different check-in time or express check-in line

☐ If possible, provide all materials (papers, PowerPoints, agendas, slides) in alternative formats (e.g., large print, Braille, electronic, audio CDs, etc.) and in advance of the meeting/event

☐ Make electronic versions of materials available in plain text, rich text, or Microsoft Word formats and post them on the website

☐ Make materials available in advance to interpreters and other support personnel to familiarize themselves with the materials and ask any questions

Live Event Checklist
Structure

☐ At the start of the meeting, introduce the interpreter(s) and other service providers

☐ At the start of the meeting, orally describe the room layout and location of restrooms, emergency exits, break rooms, and food/beverages

☐ Allow for regular breaks (about every hour) for attendees, service animals, and access service providers such as interpreters, CART providers, notetakers, and readers

☐ Ensure that the virtual environment behind the presenters is not distracting. If it is, use a virtual background, but note that some can wash out faces.

☐ Allow only one person to speak at a time. This will also help the captioner(s) and ASL interpreter(s) more accurately interpret.

☐ Have each person say their name each time they speak so that attendees, captioners, and interpreters know who is speaking.

Live Event Checklist
Speakers

☐ Always face the audience or camera

☐ Use a microphone

☐ Keep hands and other objects away from your mouth when speaking

☐ If interpreters are being used, do not walk while speaking

☐ Be visible to everyone; stand in good light or make sure your camera is on you and well lit

☐ Do not stand in front of a window or bright screen in order to avoid the silhouette effect

☐ Speak in well-modulated tones and at a pace that allows interpreters to interpret accurately

☐ Use simple language; avoid acronyms, jargon, and idioms

☐ Give attendees enough time to process information by pausing between topics

☐ Use multiple communication methods to accommodate different learning styles (verbal information, pictures, and diagrams, text, auditory)

☐ Provide captioning for all videos

☐ Provide CART for all sessions

☐ Describe verbally all visual materials (e.g., slides, charts, PowerPoints, etc.)

Accessibility Etiquette
Staff, Volunteer, and Vendor Obligations

☐ Treat the person with the same respect that you extend to every person

☐ Focus on the person, not their disability

☐ Do not ask about their disability

☐ Do not make assumptions about the person's ability or inability to participate in an activity or perform a task

☐ Do not assume that the presence of one disability (e.g., a speech impairment) indicates the presence of another (e.g., a cognitive impairment)

☐ Do not make decisions for the person

☐ Ask each person what will make them most comfortable

☐ Always ask the person if they need assistance and how you can assist; do not assume they need help

☐ Address the person directly rather than the sign language interpreter, reader, or other access providers

Accessibility Etiquette
Persons Who Use Mobility Devices

☐ When speaking for more than a few minutes, bend to eye level or pull up a chair

☐ Never lean on, push, move, or touch the mobility device

Accessibility Etiquette
Persons Who Use Service Animals

☐ Service animals are not required to wear a vest when they are working

☐ You can ask two questions regarding a service animal: 1) is this a service animal? 2) what duties does it perform?

☐ Remember that service animals perform a variety of tasks, many of which may not be immediately visible; do not make assumptions, and remember to respect the handler's privacy

☐ Approach a service animal calmly and speak to the person, not the animal

☐ Do not touch, pet, feed, whistle, or make sounds at the service animal without asking permission; the service animal is working, and petting or otherwise engaging with it could distract and stop it from performing its duties

☐ Walk on the opposite side of the service animal

Accessibility Etiquette
Persons Who Are Blind or Have Visual Impairments

☐ Ask the person their name

☐ Introduce yourself and others if present

☐ Identify your job or role

☐ Avoid touching without permission; to get their attention, say their name or, "excuse me"

☐ Avoid shouting

☐ Be descriptive when giving directions

☐ Offer your arm if person needs to be guided

☐ Avoid using visually-oriented references

☐ Describe where you are going and any obstacles if you are serving as a guide

☐ Find a place with good lighting, but not too bright

☐ With permission, guide the person's hand to the back of a chair if you offer someone a seat

☐ Let the person know when you are leaving

Accessibility Etiquette
Persons Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

☐ To get their attention, wave to them; avoid touching them without permission, and only then tap lightly on their shoulder

☐ Ask the person how they prefer to communicate (e.g., sign language, gesturing, writing, or speaking)

❏ Face the person when talking

☐ Speak clearly, avoiding gum chewing or obscuring your mouth with your hand

☐ Use your normal tone of voice and volume

❏ Maintain eye contact with the d/Deaf or hard-of-hearing person

☐ Have pen and paper or a device to text on hand as an alternative communication method

☐ Address the person rather than their interpreter

☐ Avoid spaces with background noise

☐ Find a well-lit room, but avoid glare

☐ Ensure that the venue has an induction loop that stops background noise from interfering if the person is wearing a hearing aid

☐ When communicating with a person who reads lips, speak clearly in a normal way that does not overexaggerate words, use short and simple sentences, avoid blocking your face, and stand in a well-lit place

☐ If there is a window in the room, place the person with their back to it to avoid the silhouette effect

☐ In groups, request that people speak one at a time

☐ If communicating in a smaller group setting, arrange seating or stand in a circle so d/Deaf or hard of hearing attendees can see signing and/or lipreading

☐ Ask, if you have any doubts, if the person understood you

☐ Do not pretend to understand when you do not

☐ Ask for clarification if you do not understand something

☐ Be aware of situations involving announcements or calling out names so you can notify persons who are d/Deaf or have other hearing loss

Accessibility Etiquette
Persons with Speech Difficulties

☐ Ask each person what will make them most comfortable

☐ Give the person your full attention

☐ Find a quiet space

☐ Listen carefully

☐ Do not finish sentences for the person or interrupt

☐ Do not pretend to understand when you do not

☐ If you do not understand, ask the person to repeat; if you still are unable to understand, ask the person to write the information or recommend an alternative method of communicating

☐ Consider writing as an alternative means of communicating

Accessibility Etiquette
Persons with Learning and Cognitive Difficulties

☐ Ask each person what will make them most comfortable

☐ Ask the person how they prefer to communicate (e.g., written or verbal)

☐ Listen carefully

☐ Speak clearly

☐ Check for understanding

☐ Use clear, concrete language, avoiding abstractions

☐ Allow the person extra time to process the information and ask questions

☐ Don’t overload the person with too much information

☐ Find a quiet place without distractions

Accessibility Etiquette
Persons with Developmental Disabilities

☐ Ask each person what will make them most comfortable

☐ Keep to the person's schedule and routine

☐ Speak clearly

☐ Do not use "baby" talk, and speak at a normal volume unless asked to do otherwise

☐ Model your pace of speech and vocabulary on that of the person

☐ Ask neutral questions

☐ Allow time for decision-making

☐ Use simple words and concrete, not abstract, concepts

☐ Break down complex concepts into small parts

☐ Verify responses by repeating questions in a different way

☐ If you are not sure if the person understood you, ask them to repeat the information

Accessibility Etiquette
Persons with Psychosocial Conditions

☐ Ask if there is a preferred time to communicate

☐ Schedule communications in the late morning or early afternoon

☐ Keep the pressure of the situation to a minimum

☐ Use automated reminders to highlight times and locations of meetings

☐ Provide written instructions

☐ Allow for breaks

Post-Event Survey

If creating a post-event survey, you may incorporate some of the questions below into the survey.

These questions will allow planners to examine ways to both increase and improve the accessibility of your future meetings and events. For instance, how would you rate the accessibility of the items below, on a scale of one (1) to five (5): One (1): Very Accessible; Two (2): Somewhat Accessible; Three (3): Not Very Accessible; Four (4): Inaccessible; Five (5): Not Applicable or N/A					
	1 Very	2 Somewhat	3 Not Very	4 Inaccessible	5 N/A
Registration Process					
Registration Materials					
Accommodations Process					
Promotional Materials					
Meeting/Event Site					
Virtual Platform					
Parking					
Presentations					
Presentation Materials					
Staff and Volunteers					
Disability Etiquette					