

# DISABILITY INCLUSION

## Event Planning Checklist

Planning and creating inclusive events advances the ideal of disability inclusion and strengthens our community. With the goal of making all event guests feel welcome, the **Event Planning Checklist** can be a reference to ensure all individuals with disabilities can fully participate.

For more Disability Inclusion resources, visit [shalomdc.org/disabilityinclusion](http://shalomdc.org/disabilityinclusion).

### COMMUNICATION

- Input:** Involve individuals with disabilities to help plan and lead programs.
- Inclusion Statement:** Add a general inclusion statement online and on all printed material.
- Accessible Event:** Include a statement that the event is accessible; that accommodations will be provided, that the venue is physically accessible, and if the venue is metro accessible.
- Accommodation Requests:** Include an email (e.g., [inclusion@organizationname.org](mailto:inclusion@organizationname.org)) and a phone number for individuals to request and ask questions about accommodations.
- Contact Information:** List and ask all who submit events on shared calendars to list who to contact for accommodations.
- Registration Options:** Provide alternative registration options (email, telephone and online).
- Staff Training:** Train greeters in disability etiquette; offer help to all and respect that everyone is an expert of their own needs.
- Print/Digital Material Accessibility:** Use alt-text, closed captioning, images that highlight inclusion for any online marketing materials.
- Attendee Request:** Add a request for attendees to be scent-free (allergy to scents is a disability under the ADA).
- Event/Program Disclosures:** Disclose any plans to use flash photography, strobe lights, theatrical fog, scents, etc.
- Individual Outreach:** Reach out to anyone requesting accommodations to confirm their attendance, provide contact info for their point of contact, and clarify any unclear requests.

### ACCOMMODATION OFFERINGS

- Offer preferential seating (aisle, front, near an exit)
- Seating for someone who uses wheelchair.
- Seating or complimentary tickets for a personal assistant or caregiver.
- Designate a staff point of contact for anyone requesting accommodations. (Can be one person for multiple individuals.)
- Share program materials in advance; electronic copies of materials.
- Additional information about location, room set up, agenda and presentation style.
- Support during transitions
- A buddy, to help ease first time attendance or to provide informal ongoing support.
- ASL interpretation (Request should be made at least two weeks prior.)
- Notetaker or copy of meeting notes.
- Captioning (for online meetings)
- Large print
- Dietary needs (kosher, dairy-free, vegan, gluten-free)
- Service animal
- Provide details for other needs: \_\_\_\_\_

For more information or questions, email [inclusion@shalomdc.org](mailto:inclusion@shalomdc.org).

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## VENUE CONSIDERATIONS

- ❑ **Site Visit:** A site visit in advance to determine whether barriers to accessibility exist, how they will be addressed and if familiar venues are undergoing modifications.
- ❑ **Parking & Transportation:** Availability of parking, shuttles, and public transportation
- ❑ **Venue Accessibility:** Accessible entrances, interior doorways, elevators, restrooms, drinking fountains, barrier-free paths to travel around the event.
- ❑ **Registration:** Registration at a height accessible by wheelchair/scooters
- ❑ **Technology & Equipment:** Ensure that the venue can provide hearing loop, microphones, screens, etc.
- ❑ **Signage:** Clear signage including location of accessible bathrooms, entrances, exits, etc.
- ❑ **Space Considerations:** Allow for extra room capacity and table space to accommodate wheelchairs and assistance animals, including in banquet/reception/meal areas (seating should be integrated with regular seating)
- ❑ **Seating:** Make sure those requiring an interpreter have a clear line of sight. Add seating for cocktail hour and/or receptions as needed
- ❑ **Food:** For buffets, have servers available to assist. Indicate allergen/dietary information on cards by food.
- ❑ **Room Accommodations:** Ensure a quiet room/space and build break times into the schedule for longer events. For overnight events/conferences, reserve accessible, appropriately equipped sleeping rooms.

## EXPECTATIONS FOR PRESENTERS

- ❑ **Presenter/Speaker Needs:** Check for the needs of speakers or presenters with disabilities.
- ❑ **Attendee Needs:** Expect that individuals with both hidden and visual disabilities will attend the event, let presenters know of any specific accommodation requests.
- ❑ **Materials:** All handouts and presentations, should be submitted in advance with the understanding the materials may be sent as an accommodation.
- ❑ **Videos:** All videos need to be close captioned, pictures, graphs, charts need alt-text and verbally described.
- ❑ **Microphones:** Presenters should use a microphone at all times, a roving microphone should be used for audience questions/participation. Repeat the questions asked by participants.
- ❑ **ASL Interpretation:** When working with an interpreter, please see below:
  - Address the participant, not the interpreter. Ask deaf participant what you can do to improve their language access.
  - Deaf participants need a clear line of sight to the interpreters and the speakers.
  - Interpreters often work in pairs. There is no need to stop speaking or wait when one interpreter is taking over for the other.
  - Using a microphone helps the interpreter hear the presentation.
  - Reserve seats for interpreters.
  - Share material with the interpreters ahead of time, especially any non-English words.
  - Speak naturally; speak slowly and clearly as you would for any presentation, there is no need to significantly slow down or insert long pauses.

## ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- ❑ **Budget:** Ensure the budget accounts for additional accommodation needs (e.g., ASL interpreter)
- ❑ **Staffing:** Have 1-2 staff members “on call” to support individuals as needed
- ❑ **Evacuation Plan:** Establish an emergency evacuation plan to involve individuals with disabilities.
- ❑ **Language:** Use language that recognize different abilities such as “stand if you are able”.
- ❑ **Survey:** Post-event, ask about accessibility, and if specific accommodation(s) were satisfactory.