



# Federal Bar Association



## Manual for Planning Accessible Meetings & Events

*Prepared by The FBA's Committee on  
Diversity and Inclusion*



## DIVERSITY STATEMENT

The Federal Bar Association (FBA) supports the full and equal access to, and participation by, all individuals in the Association, the legal profession, and the justice system regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, national origin, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or any other unique attribute. The FBA recognizes that achieving diversity in the legal profession requires the Association's continued effort and commitment. The FBA is committed to diversity throughout the Association.

The FBA is committed to ensuring that all people can equally access and enjoy the benefits of this organization and the legal profession. This manual is a product of that commitment. It is a guide to help leaders inside and outside of the organization understand what accessibility for people with disabilities means—and how to achieve it. Recognizing that regulations, best practices, and our shared experiences continue to evolve, we will update this manual over time to include those advancements and actual real-world examples of inclusion for people with disabilities.

Thank you for your service as a bar leader and for your commitment to ensuring that people with disabilities are able to fully and meaningfully participate in bar association leadership, membership, meetings, and events. And a very special thanks to the extraordinary leaders—William Goren (chair), Jordan Berger, Bethany Drucker, Steven Miller, and Katherine Earle Yanes—who have dedicated their expertise and countless hours to prepare this resource for our legal community.

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Chair (2021), FBA Diversity and Inclusion Committee

The ABA CDR’s Planning Accessible Meetings and Events: A Toolkit (<https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/commission-disability-rights/accessible-meetings-toolkit.pdf>) was used with permission as the basis for this manual.

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# Overview

This manual is intended to provide guidance to Federal Bar Association (FBA) affiliates, members, and planning professionals in planning meetings, conferences, and events that are accessible to individuals with disabilities. To recognize the diversity of its members, and to promote a more inclusive legal profession, the FBA is deeply committed to ensuring that all meetings, conferences, and events are accessible to individuals with disabilities and to those with conditions that may not rise to the level of an Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) disability but still need accommodations. (In light of the amendments to the ADA, this group of individuals needing accommodations but not having an ADA disability is likely to be small.)

This manual provides a framework for current best practices under Title III of the ADA as well as recommendations and checklists for all phases of meetings and events, including venue inspections, handout materials, websites and mobile applications, presentations, meals and social functions, trainings, and communication.

This manual is a living document, and the FBA will keep it up to date and amend it over time. We encourage readers who find any language objectionable or offensive to share your perspectives so that we may consider them for future updates to this manual.

# Best Practices for Interacting With People With Disabilities Under the ADA

Title III of the ADA applies to places of public accommodations. Places of public accommodations are found in 42 U.S.C. § 12181(7) and include:

- Places of lodging
- Establishments serving food and drink
- Places of exhibition and entertainment
- Sales or rental establishments
- Service establishments
- Specified public transportation (terminals and depots)
- Public displays or collections
- Places of recreation, such as parks, zoos, and amusement parks
- Places of education
- Social service centers
- Places of exercise or recreation (athletic in nature)

In a separate section of the ADA, private entities offering certain examinations and courses are covered as well. *See* 42 U.S.C. §12189.

Title III is meant to ensure that people with disabilities can equally enjoy places of public accommodations regardless of whether the place of public accommodation takes federal funds. Aim high when making reasonable accommodations/modifications for individuals with disabilities so that they can enjoy the participation/benefits of being in the FBA. But, before protections can be offered and provided on a case-by-case basis, an interactive process should occur. While you will not find much case law mandating an interactive process for Title III of the ADA, failure to do so is a surefire recipe for litigation. Also, Title III of the ADA demands that reasonable modifications/accommodations be provided to a person with a disability. Whether a potential modification is a reasonable one necessarily logically presumes the occurrence of an interactive process.

Title III of the ADA at 42 U.S.C. § 12182(b)(2)(A)(ii) & (iii) includes the obligation to provide reasonable modifications of policy, practices and procedures unless to do so would fundamentally alter operations. Auxiliary aids and services for those with communication disabilities must be provided unless an undue burden or fundamental alteration exists. Undue burden is very difficult to show because it looks to the entire resources of the entity. More likely, the question will become whether providing the reasonable accommodation is a fundamental alteration to the nature of the business, which is also not easy to show.

On rare occasions, a situation may arise where an individual is a direct threat to others. However, in the context of the FBA and its chapters, this would be very unlikely. Direct threat is a term of art and comes from *School Board of Nassau County, Florida v. Arline*, 480 U.S. 273 (1987). It was further expanded upon in *Chevron v. Echazabal*, 536 U.S. 73 (2002). The Department of Justice (DOJ) final implementing regulations very closely follow Supreme Court precedent. Determining whether a person with a disability poses a “direct threat” must be done without prejudice, stereotypes, or bias. It also must be based on a reasonable medical judgment relying on the most current medical knowledge and/or the best available objective evidence, and it must be an individualized assessment. Again, in the context of the FBA and chapter operations, it would be rare for direct threat to be involved. Also, in the context of the FBA and its chapters (nonemployment context), the question of direct threat is only a question of whether the person is a direct threat to others and not a question of whether they are a direct threat to self. Finally, even if a direct threat exists, reasonable modifications must be made up to the point of direct threat.

Although Title III does not spell out “interactive process” within the statute, it does state in 28 CFR 36.201-36.213 that “No individual shall be discriminated against on the basis of disability in the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations of any place of public accommodation by any private entity who owns, leases (or leases to), or operates a place of public accommodation.” Hence, and as also mentioned above, the best course of action is to engage in the interactive process. Ignoring the need for a reasonable modification is discriminatory.

Another reason to engage in the interactive process is that the DOJ final implementing regulation for Title III contains effective communication obligations for persons with disabilities having communication issues, 28 C.F.R. §36.303. That system strongly encourages an interactive process. While the final regulations talk about how the place of public accommodation gets to make the final call on the reasonable modification, that may not always be the case as a practical matter with respect to certain disabilities, such as a person who is culturally deaf (Deaf) and requires American Sign Language (ASL). Two other things to keep in mind are: 1) case law has said that when it comes to complex information, anything that hinders the person’s ability to understand the information is not effective communication. *Silva v. Baptist Health South, Florida*, 856 F.3d 824 (11th Cir. 2017); and 2) at least one court, the Ninth Circuit, has held that effective communication obligations extend beyond the interactive process. *Tauscher v. Phoenix Association of Realtors Inc.*, No. 17-17218 (9th Cir. July 25, 2019).

A place of public accommodation must reasonably modify its policies, practices, and procedures to avoid discrimination. If the public accommodation can demonstrate, however, that a modification would fundamentally alter the nature of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations it provides, it is not required to make the modification. Think of a fundamental alteration, as mentioned above, as something that fundamentally interferes with the ability to run your operations.

Most reasonable accommodations are easily attainable with little expense in time or money. Be open, creative, and compliant and engage in the interactive process.

A definitional issue to keep in mind is that Title I of the ADA uses the term “reasonable accommodation,” while Titles II and III used the term “reasonable modification.” While the terms are different, their meanings are identical.

Finally, it is clear that organizations' websites need to be meaningfully accessible to persons with disabilities. Make sure that a person with a disability can seek assistance if they are having trouble accessing the website. Another excellent preventive approach is to make sure that any websites are consistent with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 level AA et. ff.

# The Basics: “Dos and Don’ts” for Reasonable Accommodation Requests

## *What Not to Do With the Interactive Process:*

1. Fail to act on a reasonable accommodation request unless it is explicit, as magic words are not required.
2. Make a biased and/or uninformed decision that the person in need of the reasonable accommodation is a “direct threat.” As mentioned above, in the context of the FBA and its chapters, a direct threat situation is very unlikely to occur.
3. After receiving a reasonable accommodation request, immediately call a vendor or other third party instead of talking to the person making the request.
4. Retaliate or interfere with respect to the person making the reasonable accommodation request.
5. Make clear to the person with the disability that you don’t want to accommodate them but that you have to.
6. Make clear that the process will be adversarial and not collaborative.
7. Ignore suggestions from the person with the disability as to what works and/or make it clear that you don’t care what works as your organization is primary.
8. Make unnecessary inquiries into the existence of a disability. Instead, keep any inquiries narrowly focused on the accommodations and how they are needed for the individual’s particular disability.
9. Attempt to charge the person with disabilities for the cost of the reasonable accommodation or make them feel like they owe you something for it. The ADA and its final implementing regulations prohibit charging a person with a disability for any reasonable accommodations.

## *What to Do With the Interactive Process:*

1. Value the individual with a disability making the reasonable accommodation request as an individual.
2. Conduct the interactive process in a manner in which the person requesting the reasonable accommodation can participate without issue. Businesses need to keep in mind that if discussions with a customer with a disability regarding auxiliary aids/services break down, businesses are still obligated to ensure effective communication unless doing so imposes an undue burden or a fundamental alteration.
3. Make clear that you are interested in a collaborative rather than adversarial process.

4. If you get stuck determining what might work, call the Job Accommodation Network, review the ADA Technical Assistance Manual <https://www.ada.gov/taman3.html>, and/or contact knowledgeable ADA legal counsel. Keep in mind when talking to legal counsel that the statutory provisions for Titles I, II, and III of the ADA are all different and each one comes with its own regulatory scheme. An attorney familiar with one of the titles of the ADA may not be familiar with the others.
5. Involve the person with a disability in the process immediately and keep them posted throughout.
6. Remember that you will have to make the accommodation unless you can show an undue burden or fundamental alteration, which is a difficult task to demonstrate and may further alienate a person with disabilities from enjoying the public accommodation. If the request is genuinely an undue burden or a fundamental alteration, you are obligated to work with the person with the disability to come up with reasonable accommodation/modifications that are not an undue burden or a fundamental alteration.
7. Remember, think of a reasonable accommodation/modification as whatever gets the person with a disability to the same starting line as someone without a disability.
8. Document the entire process.

# Choosing a Venue

When selecting a venue, plan an onsite visit to determine whether barriers to accessibility exist. Plan the visit far enough in advance so as to find an accessible venue without the time pressures created by an impending event.

Planners should evaluate the accessibility of the venue itself as well as the surrounding area. Ask whether the venue has participated in an audit to determine its compliance with the accessibility requirements of the ADA. Also inquire as to whether the venue staff has been trained in disability awareness and etiquette. In addition, check whether the venue is located in close proximity to airports, rail stations, taxi or shuttle services, paratransit services for persons with disabilities, and public transportation routes with accessible public transit stops nearby. Are there accessible hotels, restaurants, shops, theaters, and tourist attractions nearby?

Prior to the onsite visit, prepare a checklist of specific accessibility items. For assistance, get in touch with individuals with various types of disabilities; even better, ask them to accompany you on the visit, as they can be helpful in identifying barriers.

Below are some sample checklists for the exterior and interior features of the venue as well as the meeting/event rooms. Exact measurements (e.g., height, weight, requisite number) can be found in the DOJ's regulations implementing title III of the ADA at [https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/titleIII\\_2010/titleIII\\_2010\\_regulations.htm](https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/titleIII_2010/titleIII_2010_regulations.htm). Note that some items, such as ramps, temporary Braille and tactile signs, detectable warning devices, and additional parking spaces, may need to temporarily be added to make the venue fully accessible.

## Exterior Features Checklist

### *General*

- Close proximity of venue from airport, train and bus stations, paratransit services, and public transportation with accessible options.
- Close proximity of venue to accessible hotels, restaurants, theaters, shops, and other attractions.
- Barrier-free/step-free paths of travel.
- Slip-resistant, level surfaces.
- Clear and descriptive signage.
- Tactile ground surface indicators that signal stairs and ramps for individuals who are blind or have visual impairments.
- 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, and level landings.
- Curb ramps/cuts for people who use mobility aids or devices.

- Crosswalks with visual and audible signals.
- Toileting, watering, and walking areas for service animals.

### *Entrance*

- Barrier and step-free, clearly marked (Braille and tactile signage), well-lit, slip-resistant, accessible main entrance at street level so that all individuals can use this entrance.
- Direct access from the main entrance to the lobby, main floor, and elevators.
- Clearly marked (Braille and tactile signage), covered drop-off and pick-up points adjacent to the main entrance, with curb cuts.
- Alternative accessible entrances used during same hours as main entrance.
- Signs (Braille and tactile) indicating 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 or lifts.

### *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 doors (no more than 5 pounds); no revolving doors.
- Glass doors with contrasting door frames, stickers, or bright signs.

### *Parking/Transit*

- Accessible, clearly marked (symbol of accessibility) parking spaces (at least one handicap space for every 25 total spaces) located on the shortest accessible route of travel from adjacent parking to an accessible entrance.
- Accessible transit services (private and public).
- Available paratransit services.

## Interior Features Checklist

### *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).
- Venue free of strong smells (e.g., perfume, cleaning agents), loud noises, and flashing/bright lights.
- Designated quiet rooms with no talking; no noise; low light; and no flashing lights, images, or objects.
- Designated rooms with plenty of space to allow people to talk, shout, clap, make noises, jump around, and do whatever they need for stimulation.

### *Doors/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 along an accessible route.
- Elevator doors that reopen automatically when obstructed by an object or person.
- Elevator interiors 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.

### *Rooms and Amenities*

- Accessible sleeping rooms (check on number available) with roll-in showers.
- Accessible fitness center, including restrooms and showers.
- Accessible restaurants (including ability to provide for dietary restrictions and large print/Braille menus), bars/lounges, and shopping.
- Doorknocker or bell so that a light consistently flashes in room when door is knocked on or bell is rung.
- Close captioning on TV.
- Strobe light for fire alarm.
- Strobe light for smoke alarm.

- Device that increases the amplification on hotel room phone.
- Device that allows a person to use an alarm clock by either having the alternatives of having a light flash or vibration. Both options should be available.
- Device that flashes a light when hotel room phone rings.
- Easily accessible electrical outlet within 48 inches of the phone. This particular section is designed for a TTY user. Although TTYs are rarely used nowadays, they are particularly useful in rural areas, and the outlet makes it easy to set up an accessible alarm clock near the phone.

## Meeting/Event Rooms Checklist

### *General*

- Barrier-free, slip-resistant path to rooms.
- Proper air circulation with temperature controls.
- Rooms large enough to allow people 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.
- Easy-to-open lightweight doors (no more than 5 pounds) with lever handles or automatic/push-button openers.
- Doors wide enough (32 inches with door open 90 degrees) for mobility devices to enter/exit and maneuver.
- Doors propped open at start and end of each session, with attendants or automatic mechanism to open the doors during session.
- Multiple sets of power outlets for laptops and other electronics.
- Well-secured covered cables, wires, cords, and microphones placed outside of paths of travel.
- Tables for materials and food/beverage at a height (28 to 34 inches) reachable by mobility device users and in an accessible location.
- Quiet rooms in close proximity to rooms, cell-phone free space.
- Rooms with plenty of space to allow people to talk, shout, clap, make noises, jump around, and do whatever they need for stimulation.
- Space for service animals.

## *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 rooms and adjacent areas.

## *Auditory*

- Good acoustics and a functioning auxiliary sound system.
- Public address (PA) 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 Deaf, 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.

## *Seating*

- Seating that is accessible for people of all body types (chairs that are not attached to desks, easily movable).
- Seating rows that are wide enough for attendees to move through.
- Accessible, integrated seating throughout the row.
- Preferred seating in the front rows for individuals with visual and hearing impairments.
- 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.

# Meeting and Event Materials

## Promotional and Registration Materials

### *Alternative Formats*

Promotional and registration materials are fundamental for communicating about the accessibility of your meeting or event. Most importantly, offer all these materials in alternative formats that are accessible to persons with disabilities, such as Braille, large print, and electronic files. Printed and digital text should be in sans serif fonts, such as Helvetica, Verdana, or Arial. Include a statement in your registration materials that lets attendees know that alternative formats are available upon request. Here is a sample statement: “The materials are available in alternative formats upon request. Please contact [name, email address, telephone number (including TTY)] by [deadline date].” Or, “The materials are available in alternative formats. Please check the format you need:

- Braille
- Large Print: Font Size \_\_\_\_
- Audio
- Digital File: Format \_\_\_\_
- Other”

### *Accessibility Statement*

Stating in these materials that your meeting or event is accessible is essential to attracting persons with disabilities. Example language: “We aim to host events that are accessible and inclusive for all participants.” Consider including images of persons with various disabilities, as well as universal access symbols (available at <https://graphicartistsguild.org/downloadable-disability-access-symbols/>). To further reach attendees with disabilities, identify and contact those organizations that advance the rights of, or are led by, persons with disabilities.

### *Registration*

Provide a range of registration 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. Include a paper registration for people with light-sensitivity.

### *Accommodations and Accessibility*

Be sure to include in your promotional and registration materials a statement that invites persons with disabilities to request accommodations, as well as a deadline that gives you enough time to respond to

the requests and provide the accommodations. Please also include a contact person for individuals who are requesting accommodations. Doing so provides a wonderful opportunity to establish a relationship with attendees and make them feel welcome and included. Asking questions beforehand about accommodations allows planners to identify attendees' needs, find local service providers, make all the arrangements in advance, budget for these accommodations, and minimize any last minute "surprises." Of course, always be prepared for accommodation requests made a few days before, or the day of, the meeting or event.

Here is a sample statement: "For questions about accessibility or to request an accommodation, please attach your requirements to this form or contact [name] at [voice and/or TTY phone numbers]; [fax]; or [email]. Requests should be made at least [specific time period] prior to the event." You may want to have one contact person for accessibility and another for accommodations. For registration materials, planners may want to include a more specific statement, such as "I will need the following accommodations:

interpreters (ASL, Oral, Voice, Signed Voice, Other [blank space]); intervenors (trained in sign language that involves touching client's hand in a two-hand, manual alphabet or finger spelling); CART; assistive listening devices; hearing or induction loops; captioned videos; sighted guide; Braille; large print; notetakers; readers; digital files; audio; computer disk [format]; audio CD; scent-free environment; wheelchair access; accessible transportation; orientation to the facility; dietary restrictions (e.g., vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free, dairy-free, sugar-free); and other [blank space]." Ask whether attendees have any food allergies (e.g., milk, soy, egg, wheat, peanuts, tree nuts, fish, shellfish) or chemical sensitivities and allergies (e.g. latex, perfume). To accommodate attendees with multiple chemical sensitivities, you can request that all attendees refrain from wearing perfumes and use fragrance-free, unscented personal care products. Here is a sample statement: "To be respectful of individuals with allergies and environmental sensitivities, we request that all attendees refrain from wearing fragrances and use scent-free toiletries."

Offer a range of accommodation options since not all individuals with the same disability use the same accommodations. What works for one person may not work for another. As a preventive law matter, strongly consider giving primary consideration to the option preferred by the person with a disability, unless doing so is an undue burden as defined by the ADA. Listening is key to determining each person's unique needs.

Some persons with disabilities may bring their personal care attendants or service animals to the meeting or event. On the registration form, ask about these issues. Here are sample statements: "A personal care attendant will be accompanying me:  Yes  No." Provide a service space in seating areas for service animals as well as break and relief areas. It is recommended that you not charge personal care attendants the full registration fee but rather that a food/drink-only fee be added to the attendee's registration. Note that you must accept service animals regardless of whether or not the service animal was noted on the registration form for the event. Service animals can only be removed if they pose a danger to others or if the individual cannot control them (see also Persons Who Use Service Animals Checklist section in this manual).

Designate an individual to handle all accommodation and accessibility issues and list them with their contact information (phone/text, email) in all materials. Ensure that they are trained and educated on

the expected duties. They must respond to accommodation and accessibility requests promptly. Note that it may take several communications to work out the details. In addition, the contact people should notify the venue of the accommodations needed and accessibility issues that are within its control. In turn, the venue should notify these individuals of any accommodation and accessibility requests it receives.

## 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 an individual to handle accommodation and accessibility requests.
- ✓ Ensure that your website and mobile apps are accessible.
- ✓ Include an accessibility link for meeting/event in a prominent place on your website.
- ✓ Identify any barriers that cannot be eliminated and ways they have been mitigated.
- ✓ Offer materials in alternative formats (e.g., Braille, large font, electronic).
- ✓ Ensure that fonts used are sans serif.

## Meeting/Event Materials

Planners must ensure that all attendees have equal access to the meeting materials provided, whether in print or digitally, so they can fully participate. Accordingly, it is essential to offer all materials in alternative formats. Doing so will not only expand the pool of potential attendees but also demonstrate your commitment to accessibility. When setting the deadline for receiving all materials, remember to factor in the time that it will take to produce the alternative formats.

### *Individuals With Visual Impairments Checklist*

#### **Text Format**

- ✓ Use a 16-point font size when possible, but if that is not practical, at least 14 point should be used.
- ✓ Avoid highly stylized typefaces.
- ✓ Use easy-to-read fonts with clearly defined letters and clear spacing between the letters (e.g., sans-serif fonts such as 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.

## Layout

- ✓ Align all text on the left rather than centered or right justified.
- ✓ Use 1-inch margins.
- ✓ Avoid columns.
- ✓ Avoid lines of text longer than 6 inches (for individuals using magnifiers).
- ✓ 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.

## Contrast and Color

- ✓ Ensure good contrast between the text and background colors.
- ✓ Use black text.
- ✓ Use cream instead of white paper for printed materials.
- ✓ Use a single solid color for documents with a colored background.

## Paper

- ✓ 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.

# Digital Accessibility

## Website

Many organizations include a website page or portal for their meetings and events, through which individuals can register and obtain all relevant information and materials. Be sure to place an accessibility link in a prominent place. On that linked page, include all details about the meeting or event that are relevant to persons with disabilities. In addition, include the name of the person to contact for accommodations and accessibility issues (e.g., accessibility of the sleeping rooms and a list of amenities, accessible parking, paratransit services, nearby public transportation, description (oral and electronic) and map of the venue, accessible restaurants and shopping, accessibility barriers that cannot be eliminated, and availability of materials in alternate formats). Ask whether the venue has a sensory map and, if not, consider collaborating with the organization to create one. For inspiration, see the Kennedy Center’s sensory maps at <http://www.kennedy-center.org/visit/accessibility/sensory>. Publish logistical information such as locations, schedules, and maps early to ensure that interested individuals can be informed on what to expect.

Ensure that the website is accessible and compatible with the range of assistive technologies used by persons with disabilities (e.g., screen readers and magnifiers, special keyboards, voice dictation alternative pointing devices). Include a statement requesting that individuals experiencing accessibility issues contact a particular person via telephone or email. The current website accessibility gold standard is WCAG 2.1 et. ff. level AA. The WCAG are regularly revised to keep up with changes in technology and as the needs of persons with disabilities are better understood, so web authors should check frequently to ensure that they are complying with the latest WCAG standard. While WCAG 2.1 level AA is currently the gold standard and excellent preventive law, remember the legal standard is meaningfully accessible to the individual to the person with a disability. Being proactive is extremely important. This area of the law is both extremely complicated and rapidly developing.

All images used (including in linked PDFs and Word documents) should include descriptive “alt text” (alternative text attribute). At a minimum, alt text should describe the content of the image so that people who are blind or have low vision can still glean the necessary information. A useful set of guidelines can be found here: <https://accessibility.psu.edu/images/alttext/>. Images should not feature text in the body of the image itself.

### *Website Checklist*

- ✓ Ensure your webpage complies with the current WCAG Level AA at <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, images).
- ✓ Ensure that the alt text 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 with just a keyboard by individuals with limited dexterity or mobility impairments.
- ✓ 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 without difficulty.

## Mobile Applications

Mobile applications (apps) have become much more prevalent in recent years. Some organizations design mobile apps for their meetings and events, and many others use third-party apps (such as guidebook apps). Many attendees find that using apps is both easier and more accessible than relying on physical media. Ensuring that your app (either a proprietary one or one you have contracted with a vendor to use) is accessible enables you to reach a much broader audience. Follow the WCAG 2.1 et. ff Level AA guidelines for mobile accessibility at [https:// www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/mobile/](https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/mobile/).

Accessibility must be incorporated in the design stage of the app rather than as an add-on later—universal design is key from both a design perspective and a user perspective. If you do use a third-party app, or if you create content that you expect people to interact with through third-party apps and mobile devices, be sure to apply the same checklist, and ensure that the apps are fully accessible.

### *Applications Checklist*

- ✓ Follow the WCAG 2.1 et. ff guidelines for mobile accessibility.
- ✓ Resize text at least 200% without using assistive technology.
- ✓ Enable zooming within the app without having to tilt the device for horizontal panning.
- ✓ Ensure that browser pinch zoom is not blocked.
- ✓ Provide on-page controls to resize the text rather than having to go into the app’s settings.

- ✓ Use appropriate contrast ratios for large and small text.
- ✓ Provide different color options for people with colorblindness.
- ✓ Enable keyboard support with Bluetooth and other technologies.
- ✓ Make touch targets large and noticeable, with adequate spacing.
- ✓ Keep touchscreen gestures (e.g., directional swipes, singular taps) as simple to implement as possible.
- ✓ Include on-screen indicators of how and when gestures should be used.
- ✓ Ensure that buttons are easy to access.
- ✓ Enable speech recognition software and voice commands.

## Videoconferencing Platforms

To ensure accessibility for the Deaf, deaf, and hard of hearing, the following questions should be considered.

1. How accurate is automatic speech recognition if that is what is being used for captioning?
2. What is the delay between the spoken word and the captioning?
3. Does the captioner know what to do to minimize any delay between the spoken word and the captioning?
4. Can the font size of the captioning be adjusted?
5. Can the meeting be recorded and accessed later?
6. Can a transcript of the meeting be generated?
7. If an ASL interpreter is requested by a Deaf individual, how will you retain an interpreter?
8. Is dial-in access available for the videoconference? Many hard of hearing individuals prefer dial-in access over captioning. Some deaf individuals use both captioning and dial-in access. Deaf individuals will use either captioning or ASL interpreters.
9. Does the platform have dark mode and high contrast mode?
10. Are keyboard shortcuts intuitive (two key preferred)?
11. Is it compatible with jaws, voiceover, NVDA?
12. Do remote control feature allows for control of the screen share by the host (preferred)?
13. Can a transcript be provided at the end of the meeting?
14. Can the size and color of font be changed in the platform?
15. Does it have a spotlighting feature?

# Presentations

It is crucial that planners communicate with all speakers/presenters well in advance to ensure that their presentations and materials will be accessible for individuals with a wide range of disabilities. Incorporating universal design into presentations ensures maximum inclusion and benefits everyone. Explain both the types of disabilities that attendees have and their requested accommodations. Ask presenters to submit their materials a month before the meeting or event to allow enough time to produce alternative formats, and to provide the materials to interpreters and other service providers and attendees. Make the materials available to attendees in advance; posting them on your website is optimal.

The presenters themselves may also have disabilities. Ask each presenter well in advance whether they require any accommodations. Also ask about the type of microphone (table, headset, lapel) and presentation environment (e.g., floor level, stage, podium, table) the presenter prefers. If there are multiple presenters, including one or more with a disability, ensure that all presenters are seated together, whether at floor level or on a stage, to ensure that they are viewed as equals. Avoid podiums and putting presenters who use mobility aids or devices at the end of the table.

Prepare an accessibility checklist well in advance. We have provided a sample checklist below. Schedule a briefing session with the presenters to go over the items on your checklist. Communicate your expectations from the start.

## Presentations Checklist

### *General*

- ✓ Announce when the meeting begins and ends.
- ✓ Build multiple breaks into the schedule, preferably 5-10 minutes every hour.
- ✓ Avoid the use of flashing lights and loud sounds.
- ✓ Ensure that the presentation area and screens are viewable from all areas of the room.
- ✓ Allow space for interpreters.
- ✓ For large events, allow people who need extra time in finding seats to enter the room and find seats before the general audience.
- ✓ Provide all materials (papers, PowerPoints, agendas, slides) in alternative formats (e.g., large print, Braille, electronic, audio CDs) and in advance of the meeting/event.
- ✓ Make electronic versions of materials available in plain text, rich text, or Microsoft Word formats and post on the website.
- ✓ Make materials available to interpreters and other support personnel in advance to allow them to become familiar with the materials and ask any questions.

## *Structure*

- ✓ At the start of the meeting, orally describe the room layout and location of restrooms, emergency exits, break rooms, and food/beverages.
- ✓ Provide an overview of the presentation at the start and a summary of the key points at the end.
- ✓ Build in sufficient time for attendees to get from session to session.
- ✓ Allow for regular breaks (about every hour) for attendees, service animals, and access service providers such as interpreters, CART providers, notetakers, and readers.

## *Presenter*

- ✓ Always face the audience; never turn away.
- ✓ Use a microphone.
- ✓ Keep hands and other objects away from your mouth when speaking.
- ✓ If interpreters are being used, do not walk while speaking.
- ✓ Provide a visual description of yourself before speaking.
- ✓ Be visible to everyone; stand in good light.
- ✓ 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.
- ✓ Keep the presentation clear, simple, concise, and organized.
- ✓ 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).
- ✓ Check in with attendees to ensure that presentation is understood and clarify if needed.
- ✓ Avoid using gestures and visual points of reference.
- ✓ When reading directly from text, provide an advance copy in print and digital format and pause slightly when interjecting information not in the text.
- ✓ Describe verbally all visual materials (e.g., slides, charts, PowerPoints).
- ✓ Provide captioning for all videos.
- ✓ Provide CART for all sessions.

### *Q&A/Audience*

- ✓ Instruct attendees to wait to be called on, to not interrupt, to speak one at a time, and to speak clearly into the microphone.
- ✓ Provide attendees with a chance to submit questions electronically before and during the event.
- ✓ Repeat questions posed by people in the audience before responding.
- ✓ Reserve seats in front of the presenter for individuals with visual, hearing, and processing impairments

# Meals and Social Functions

Planners must ensure that meals and social functions, such as receptions, are accessible to persons with disabilities. These networking opportunities can be as important to attendees as the substantive meetings and presentations.

## Meals and Social Functions Checklist

### *General*

- ✓ Do not overfill the venue.
- ✓ Ensure sufficient room for everyone to maneuver safely and independently.
- ✓ Ensure an accessible route of travel to the food and entertainment and between tables.
- ✓ Ensure that any entertainment is accessible.
- ✓ Arrange for accessible transportation to and from the social event.
- ✓ Avoid self-serve meals or buffets; otherwise, have personal assistants on hand.
- ✓ Include finger foods that do not require people to use utensils or hold plates.
- ✓ Be aware of any airborne allergies that attendees have.
- ✓ Avoid common allergens like nuts and shellfish.
- ✓ Provide food and drink options that are vegan, vegetarian, gluten-free, dairy-free, and allergen-free.
- ✓ Make sure all staff/event coordinators know where allergen-friendly food is located.
- ✓ Set up more than one food and beverage area.
- ✓ Avoid setting up food and beverages in tiers.
- ✓ Have separate alcoholic and nonalcoholic bars.
- ✓ Clearly mark food and beverages and label all food with ingredients.
- ✓ Provide a choice of cutlery and crockery (e.g., straws, lightweight plastic cups, plates).
- ✓ Provide bendable straws (either by default or upon request).
- ✓ Avoid long, billowy tablecloths.
- ✓ Have personal assistants and interpreters on hand.
- ✓ When appropriate, allow people with disabilities to enter the room before the general audience to minimize any maneuvering difficulties.

## *Layout*

- ✓ Make tables and chairs available.
- ✓ Ensure that tables and bars are at a correct height (28 to 34 inches) for individuals using mobility devices.
- ✓ Avoid counter-top high tables and chairs.
- ✓ Avoid fixed seating attached to tables.
- ✓ Ensure adequate room under dining tables for mobility devices to roll under.
- ✓ Ensure sufficient space between seating areas for mobility devices and service animals.
- ✓ Avoid seating persons with disabilities in one area or on the fringes of the venue.

# Training

Staff (both event and venue) and volunteers (e.g., readers, notetakers, guides, and personal assistants) are critical to holding an accessible meeting. Thus, planning accessible meetings and events will require the commitment of staff and volunteers to identify and remove barriers to full participation. Make sure that service providers, like interpreters and CART operators, have the proper certification and licensure.

In the planning stage, appoint a point person for accessibility and accommodations who will be responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the event are accessible. This person should be listed as the contact on all materials and the website and be the one to answer accessibility questions. Make sure all staff members or event coordinators and leadership know who the accessibility point person is and where to find them during the event. Make sure that all staff and volunteers know that hosting an accessible event is part of their responsibility. It is not just on designated people. Create a plan for accessibility problems that may arise during the conference. For assistance with developing or providing training, contact one of the 10 previously mentioned regional ADA National Network Centers.

Make sure to train those individuals responsible for registering attendees and answering questions about the event. They should be knowledgeable about the available accommodations, the use of assistive devices, emergency procedures, and the accessibility features of the venue and meetings. Educate event coordinators on emergency procedures as they relate to the evacuation of people with disabilities. They should also be trained in etiquette for communicating and interacting with persons with disabilities and service animals. They should also be trained in the do's and don'ts of the interactive process.

Before the meeting or event, hold an orientation for all staff and volunteers that addresses how to best assist and communicate with individuals with disabilities. Emphasize that accessibility and creating a welcoming and inclusive environment are priorities and then set forth expectations. Discuss both visible disabilities and nonvisible disabilities, such as learning, cognitive, and mental health impairments. Review all meeting and event activities, including social events, to ensure they are accessible.

Similarly, hold an orientation for interested attendees with disabilities. Assure them that trained staff and volunteers will be on site. Review the accessibility features of both the venue and the meetings and provide a tour. To help attendees with visual impairments find the meeting and event locations, tactile maps or prerecorded instructions can be very helpful. In addition, identify the location of aides such as assistive listening devices. Make sure staff and volunteers are clearly visible and identifiable through signs, uniforms, or highly visible buttons/nametags. Also, take care of any additional accommodation requests. For instance, people with visual impairments may need a guide to go from one meeting or event to another. People with cognitive impairments may need an explanation of what meetings and events will be going on and where.

Furthermore, in the days prior to and on the day of the meeting or event, the point person—accompanied by the appropriate staff and volunteers and persons with disabilities—should do a walk-through of the facility and the meeting/event rooms. All technical equipment should be tested upon its arrival, as well as on the day of the event.

## Staff and Volunteer Training Checklist

- ✓ Create a plan for accessibility problems that may arise during the event.
- ✓ Contact regional ADA National Network Centers for assistance with training.
- ✓ Appoint a “point person” for accessibility issues and list as contact on all materials and the website.
- ✓ Train staff/volunteers about accommodations, use of assistive devices, emergency procedures, and accessibility features of the venue and meeting/event.
- ✓ Hold orientations for staff and volunteers on types of disabilities and disability etiquette.
- ✓ Hold orientation for attendees with disabilities to review accessibility features, location of meetings/ events, and accommodations, including explaining the location of a sensory room.
- ✓ Do a walk-through of the venue a few days before and on the day of the meeting/event.
- ✓ Test all technical equipment when it arrives and on the day of the meeting/event.
- ✓ Ensure that staff and volunteers are clearly visible through their uniform, signage, or other notable features.

# Communication and Disability Etiquette

Communicating with individuals with disabilities should be no different from the same respectful, clear communication deserved by everyone. This is especially important to remember given that the majority of disabilities are not obvious. Below are some general guidelines.

## *Every Person Checklist*

- ✓ 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; do not assume the person needs it.
- ✓ Address the person directly rather than through the sign language interpreter, reader, or other access provider.

## *Individuals Who Use Mobility Devices Checklist*

- ✓ 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. Only move the mobility device if requested by the user.

## *Individuals Who Use Service Animals Checklist*

- ✓ Service animals are not required to wear a vest.
- ✓ If it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal, then two inquiries can be made:
  1. Is the animal required because of a disability?
  2. What work or tasks has the animal been trained to perform?  
The work or task must relate to the disability.

- ✓ 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 it and stop it from performing its duties.
- ✓ Walk on the side of the individual and not on the side of the service animal.

### *Individuals Who Are Blind or Have Visual Impairments Checklist*

- ✓ Ask the person their name.
- ✓ Introduce yourself and others if present.
- ✓ Identify your job or role.
- ✓ Avoid touching someone without permission; to get a person's attention, say their name or "excuse me."
- ✓ Avoid shouting.
- ✓ Be descriptive when giving directions.
- ✓ Offer your arm if person needs guidance.
- ✓ 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 them a seat.
- ✓ Let the person know when you are leaving.

### *Individuals Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing*

- ✓ 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 Deaf, deaf, or hard of hearing person.
- ✓ Have pen and paper on hand or a device for texting as alternative communication methods.
- ✓ 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 Deaf, deaf, or hard of hearing attendees can see signing and/or lipreading.
- ✓ If you have any doubts, ask whether the person understood you.
- ✓ Do not pretend to understand if you do not. Instead, ask for clarification.
- ✓ Be aware of situations involving announcements or calling out names so that you can notify people who are Deaf, deaf, or have other hearing loss

### *Individuals 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 a person's sentences or interrupt.
- ✓ Do not pretend to understand if 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 to recommend an alternative method of communicating.
- ✓ Consider writing as an alternative means of communicating.

### *Individuals With Learning/Cognitive Difficulties*

- ✓ Ask each person what will make them most comfortable.
- ✓ Ask the person how they prefer to communicate (e.g., written, 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.

### *Individuals 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 rather than abstract concepts.
- ✓ Break down complex concepts into small parts.
- ✓ Verify responses by repeating questions in a different way.
- ✓ If you are not sure whether the person understood you, ask them to repeat the information.

### *Individuals With Psychosocial Conditions*

- ✓ Ask if there is a preferred time to communicate.
- ✓ 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-Meeting/Event Survey

All meetings and events should include a survey for attendees to provide their feedback. 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:

	Very	Somewhat	Not Very	Inaccessible	N/A
Registration Process					
Registration Materials					
On-site Registration					
Promotional Materials					
Website/App					
Meeting/Event Site					
Hotel Rooms					
Transportation					
Parking					
Meeting/Event Rooms					
Presentations					
Presentation Materials					
Reception/Social Activities					
Meals					
Additional Comments					

# Conclusion

We recognize that the sheer volume of information provided in this toolkit can be daunting if tackled all at once. Organizing accessible events and meetings will take some time and may require training. By following the advice laid out above, however, you will provide a space for people to share new ideas and learn from one another. By incorporating universal design principles into your own programming, you will benefit everyone involved.

# Appendix A: Language

Language with respect to persons with disabilities can get very complicated because each group of disabilities has its own preferences. On a general level, there are two possibilities: 1) people first, i.e., “person with a disability”; and 2) identity first, i.e., “disabled.” In general, start with people-first language and then switch to identity first if that is the individual’s preference. This manual also talks about Deaf, deaf, and hard of hearing individuals, and the terms have different meanings. A Deaf (culturally deaf) individual is one 1) whose first language is ASL or some other sign language; 2) who went to a state school for the deaf; and 3) who has a severe to profound hearing loss of 65-90+ db. A deaf individual is someone with a severe to profound hearing loss. A hard of hearing individual is anyone with a hearing loss.

## Additional Resources

### *Guides to Consult When Writing or Speaking about Disability*

- Disability Language Style Guide published by the National Center on Disability and Journalism: <https://ncdj.org/style-guide/>

### *Checking If Your Materials are Accessible*

- Web Content Accessibility Guideline Standards: <https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/>
- Simulators to Check PDF Accessibility: <https://it.cornell.edu/accessibility/use-simulator-check-your-pdf-accessibility>
- Explanation of Color and Contrast: <https://webaim.org/articles/contrast/>
- Checker: <https://webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/>

### *Interactive Process*

- You can also call the ADA Information Line at (800) 514-0301 (voice) or (800) 514-0383 (TTY) to speak to an ADA specialist if you have questions about a specific situation or learn more at <https://www.ada.gov/reachingout/intro3.htm>.

## *Misc.*

- The National Disabled Law Students Association is an organization that supports the unique needs of disabled law students before, during, and after their legal education by creating a sense of community through advocacy, peer network facilitation, and disability diversity education. You can visit their website at <https://ndlsa.org> or contact them at [info@ndlsa.org](mailto:info@ndlsa.org).
- The Deaf and Hard of Hearing Bar Association organization of deaf, hard of hearing, late-deafened, and deafblind attorneys, judges, law school graduates, law students, and legal professionals. Their website is <http://www.deafbar.org>.
- Live Captioning:
  - Live Transcribe (app available for iOS and Android)
  - Otter.ai: <https://otter.ai>
  - TypeWell: <https://typewell.com>
- ASL Interpreters:
  - Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf: <https://www.rid.org>
  - You might also want to ask a participant/panelist if they have a preferred interpreter that you can hire for the event.

# Committee Biographies

Since 2014 **Bethany Drucker** has served as General Counsel for ASG Staffing, Inc. Each day, Bethany is entrenched in employment law, contract matters and business compliance as a one-person legal team for this light industrial staffing company that issues out approximately 13,000 W-2's a year and is in four states. Bethany works hand in hand with all facets of the business to ensure that diversity and inclusion is a reality amongst the workforces. As a person with disabilities herself, Bethany works hard to educate ASG's host clients on the joint responsibility of reasonable accommodations

**William D. Goren** is an attorney/consultant whose law and consulting practice focus entirely on understanding the ADA so that the client understands how to comply with that law and related laws. His blog is Understanding the ADA, and his blog/website is [www.understandingtheada.com](http://www.understandingtheada.com) . Mr. Goren is deaf but functions entirely in the hearing world with Bluetooth, hearing aids, and lipreading. Interesting fact, he trained his miniature poodle to be a hearing dog while he practices virtually.

**Katherine Earle Yanes** is a partner in the Tampa, Florida law firm Kynes Markman & Felman, P.A. She concentrates her practice in the areas of criminal defense, appeals, and postconviction relief and has successfully represented defendants at the trial, appellate, and postconviction phases of criminal litigation in federal and state courts, as well as in government investigations.

The mission of the Association is to strengthen the federal legal system and administration of justice by serving the interests and the needs of the Federal practitioner, both public and private, the federal judiciary and the public they serve.



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