

Provide Access to Meetings With Advance Planning

Since you don't always know who will attend an event, plan to provide accessibility for people with disabilities and other access and functional needs. Anticipate and address accommodation needs through adequate planning. As training events are planned, use these important principles and resources to help make all meetings accessible to any participant who wants to attend.

- **Realize that disabilities affect people in different ways.** Disabilities can show up in different ways — some you can notice, while others you can't see. They can be permanent, or they might only last for a little while. Disabilities affect people of any age with different levels of severity. It's important to be prepared to welcome everyone,
- **Invite participants to make requests for accommodation on all communications.** Include a simple statement like the following on invitations, brochures, registration forms, programs, and websites.

*For questions about accessibility or to request accommodations, please contact **(insert name)** at **(include phone and email address so those with a hearing or verbal disability can make inquiries)**. **(insert number)** weeks advance notice will allow us to provide seamless access.*

- **Promote accessibility with universal symbols.** Simple symbols promote and publicize accessibility for people with disabilities. All symbols are available on the Graphic Artists Guild website for free download as TIFF files with explanations for their use.
- **Remove barriers to participation.** Making any event accessible to participants starts with the identification of potential barriers. States, agencies, and institutions provide excellent guides to this process.

Provide Access to Meetings with Advance Planning, continued

More Resources

If you need more information about accommodating participants with disabilities and other access and functional needs or meeting the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), many resources are available through Federal and State agencies, as well as through institutional ADA offices. Visit these sites for additional resources.

- **U.S. Department of Justice:**
<http://www.ada.gov/business/accessiblemtg.htm>
- **National Network of ADA Centers:**
www.adata.org/Provides links to ADA Centers in every region & state in the United States
- **Graphic Artists Guild:**
<https://graphicartistsguild.org/downloadable-disability-access-symbols>
- **North Carolina ODH-FEA:**
[https://fpg.unc.edu/sites/fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/curricula NCODH-FEA-guide.pdf](https://fpg.unc.edu/sites/fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/curricula%20NCODH-FEA-guide.pdf)
- **Office of Disabilities – Program Areas:**
<http://www.disability.gov>

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For more information and the nondiscrimination statement in other languages:
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/civil-rights/usda-nondiscrimination-statement-other-fns-programs>

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