



Events and Meetings Policy

Under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the City is responsible to ensure that its City sponsored events and meetings are accessible to everyone, including people with disabilities.

This policy upholds the commitment of the City of Philadelphia (City) to operate the policies, practices, procedures, services, buildings, and activities so that, when viewed in their entirety, they are accessible to and useable by people with disabilities.

Cultural festivals, craft fairs, music events, marathons, public meetings and rallies are but a few of the many events and meetings that take place every year in Philadelphia. People with disabilities must be able to obtain or enjoy the same programs, services, and activities that are available to non-disabled people.

At events and meetings sponsored by the City of Philadelphia, member of the public with disabilities must be able to:

- Obtain information about the meeting or event;
- Use meeting location via accessible route;
- Find and use accessible parking/loading zones;
- Be able to fully participate in the program; and
- Use public toilets, water fountains, first aid stations, and other amenities.

This policy will review the categories listed above and provide information to assist City employees, vendors, and subcontractors in making events or meetings that are sponsored by the City accessible to people with disabilities. 2010 ADA Standards (2010 Standards) are online at

<https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/2010ADAStandards/2010ADASTandards.htm#c4>

Under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the City is responsible for physical accessibility and program accessibility. Physical accessibility ensures that individuals can access the physical environment and program accessibility ensures equal access to programs, services, activities, and information provided by the City.

Access should be provided to all disabilities including, but not limited to, auditory, cognitive, physical, speech, and visual.

Obtain Information about the event

Organizers should plan for accessibility from the beginning to create an accessible event or meeting. Designate one or more Access Coordinators (AC) to oversee the event or meeting. The AC creates an access plan for the event, provides information on the location of accessible features, such as accessible parking or toilet facilities, where to obtain aids or services, such as materials in accessible formats or assistive listening devices and is prepared to respond to questions regarding accessibility. The AC must respond to all disability related inquiries quickly and effectively.

Notices of events/meetings must include information about wheelchair accessibility, sign language interpretation, and any other accommodations for people with disabilities that are available. Information shall contain the contact number for the coordinator of the event to obtain additional accessibility changes.

Include the location of accessible features (seating, parking, sign language interpreters, etc.) in advertisements of the event or meeting. For example:

The Merriam Theater is wheelchair-accessible from the main entrance. A curb cut at the corner of Broad Street and Spruce Street allows for access to the main entrance. Wheelchair-accessible restrooms are on the Mezzanine level. (Edited text from Kimmelcenter.org)

Create an accessibility statement indicating “We are committed to making our event/meeting accessible to everyone, including people with disabilities. Our goal is to comply with the Americans With Disability Act. If you need assistance accessing the event/meeting please contact the event Access Coordinator at: (Add in name, phone and email of Access Coordinator).”

Arrive at the site

Hold events and meetings in accessible locations with an accessible route that is at least 36 inches wide and is unobstructed. An accessible route connects site arrival points and parking with all exterior and interior event exhibits and activities, including public amenities, such as toilet rooms, water fountains, and telephones.

At least one accessible route shall be provided from public transportation stops, accessible parking spaces, passenger loading zones, and public sidewalks. The accessible route shall connect all accessible buildings, accessible facilities, accessible elements and accessible spaces that are on the same site and part of the event. Objects that protrude into circulation paths must have detectable warnings. Ground surfaces on accessible routes and in accessible spaces shall comply with 2010 Standard 302.

Elements and spaces of accessible facilities shall be identified by the International Symbol of Accessibility complying with 2010 Standard 703.7.2.1:

- Parking spaces designated as reserved for individuals with disabilities.
- Accessible passenger loading zones.
- Permanent rooms and spaces.
- Accessible entrances when not all are accessible.
- Accessible toilet and bathing facilities.
- Inaccessible entrances and toilets shall have directional signage to indicate the route to the nearest accessible entrance or toilet.

Barricades and vehicles are frequently used to temporarily block access in areas around events. Ensure that barricades do not block curb ramps and that there is at least a 36-inch space between each barricade so that a person with a wheelchair may pass through.

Find and use accessible parking and loading zones

When parking is provided, accessible parking shall comply with 2010 Standards 208. Provide passenger loading zones for vehicles to drop off participants safely outside the flow of traffic.

Attend performances, participate in activities, and enter exhibits.

Elements such the entrance gate, ticketing area, main desk, and information booth must be physically accessible and provide programmatic accessibility. Provide structural access to these elements by placing elements on an accessible route and ensuring that a section of the counter or service window is useable for people in wheelchairs. Provide directional signage to help people navigate around the event.

Provide programmatic access by ensuring that people with disabilities have equal access to programs, services, and activities.

Assembly and seating areas must be accessible, both in the design of facilities and in how the program is offered. Seating must provide a range of locations so people with disabilities can choose where to view activities or performances. Companions must be allowed in areas that are designated as reserved for people with disabilities. The number of wheelchair locations required is related to seating capacity. One percent of all seats shall be aisle seats with no or removable armrests on the aisle side. Each accessible seat shall be identified by a sign or marker. Signage notifying patrons of the availability of seats shall be posted at the ticket office.

Experience and enjoy activities

The ADA Standards do not cover the design of elements that are not attached to a structure. Thus, portable display tables or panels that are part of a space are not required to meet ADA Standards. However, under the ADA, it is expected that participants will be able to experience full enjoyment of the event or meeting.

- To provide programmatic access ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to participate in all events and meeting.
- Ensure that assembly and seating areas can be accessed, used and meet the requirements for design of facilities and in how the program is offered. Locate seating on an accessible route.
- Locate display tables, cases, and shelves on an accessible route.
- Provide video and audio tours of exhibits that are inaccessible for people with disabilities.
- Allow people the opportunity to touch and handle objects to perceive weight, texture, shape, etc.
- Provide spoken narrative or an audio component to describe the content of images and visual presentations.
- People with hearing disabilities must have access to the content of audio/visual presentations, such as slide shows and videos. Provide captions, subtitles, or a written script of the audio component.
- Vendors and presenters may need to take items down or carry an object to a person to view.

- Be inclusive to people with sensory disabilities and autism spectrum disorder by designating low-sensory or quiet spaces, allow people to move unrestricted if safe, relax rules, and allow stress relief items.

Effective Communication

Providing equal access to communication is fundamental to program accessibility. Ensure that communications with people with disabilities are as effective as communications with others.

- Provide a sign language interpreter for events, if needed.
- Spoken narrative can be displayed in a variety of ways, including projection, captions or subtitles.
- A script of a performance can be provided before the performance.
- Audio descriptions should be provided for performances that are mostly visual or where key information is visually presented.

Access public toilets, water fountains, first aid stations, and other amenities

- Support services and amenities that are provided to the public, such as restrooms and portable toilets, telephones, and drinking fountains must be provided in an accessible manner to people with disabilities. If providing first aid, resting booths, or other amenities, these spaces must be accessible to people with disabilities.
- Toilets shall comply with applicable 2010 Standards.
- For single user portable toilet clustered at a single location, at least 5% but no less than one toilet unit shall be installed at each cluster.
- Accessible units shall be identified by the International Symbol of Accessibility.
- Drinking water must be readily available to all people. If water fountains are not present, consider providing water in an alternative accessible manner.
- Ensure that amenities available to the public are available at an accessible height and on an accessible route.