



## EVENT AND PROGRAM ACCESS: ACCESS MATTERS

The following checklist provides a best practice guide to enable you to invite and involve the widest possible audience. Your ability to accommodate the broadest swath of people with varying abilities will depend mostly on your commitment to do so. Let the list guide you; *not* intimidate you. Whatever you cannot do this time, you might be able to do next time. We just ask you to use this checklist each time you plan a program or organize an event. "It is not your duty to complete the work. But neither are you free to desist from it." *Pirke Avot* (Ethics of the Fathers) 2:16.

### EVENT PREPARATION

- The event will be held in a wheelchair accessible location.
- Event information and advance and on-site registration materials are accessible to a broad range of potential participants. Online material and forms should meet website accessibility standards. Go to <http://www.afb.org/section.aspx?SectionID=57&TopicID=167> for information about increasing user access to your website, blogs, and forms.
- Your marketing materials and ads note that the venue is wheelchair accessible *and* that reasonable accommodations will be provided upon request.
- Registration materials invite registrants to request reasonable accommodations (such as large print, sign language, captioning, Braille, or dietary alternatives).
- Registration fees are waived for personal care assistants going with registrants.
- Service animals are welcome.
- Funds have been allocated in the budget to cover the cost of reasonable accommodations. [These costs may be covered by event fees, sponsorships, donated services, grant funds, savings, etc. If sign language is requested, two (2) sign language interpreters (not one) are required for most presentations and group meetings. Rates for reasonable accommodations often vary.]
- Presenters have been asked if they need accommodations for equal access.
- Food options are given for participants with dietary restrictions/allergies.
- A fragrance-free or fragrance use limitation policy is established and publicized to protect those who have environmental/chemical sensitivities.
- Signs to elevators, accessible pathways, accessible bathrooms, and for meeting rooms are designed in large, bold font with sharp contrast. Braille or raised lettering is a plus.
- Volunteers are recruited and assigned, upon request, to escort participants with vision or mobility disabilities to travel from place to place during the event.
- Sign language interpreters or real-time captioning consultants are reserved.
- Someone is assigned to greet the sign language interpreters or real-time captioning consultants and introduce them to the deaf participants.
- Someone is assigned to set up the assistive listening system, hand out ear pieces at each session, and provide hands free adjustable microphones.
- Members of the event execution team are knowledgeable about communicating with people with various disabilities in a NON-condescending manner.
- A room or space with seating is set aside for people who need privacy.



### **PATHWAYS AND PARKING [WHERE APPLICABLE]**

- Curb ramps to sidewalks are in place.
- Pathways are smooth and unobstructed and are at least 48" (inches) wide, with slopes of no more than 5 percent.
- Level resting spaces are around entrance doors, 5 x 5 feet.
- Accessible parking spaces are marked and are close to accessible entrances.
- Signs direct people to alternate wheelchair accessible entrances.

### **ENTRANCE AND DOORS**

- At least one of the primary entrances is wheelchair accessible.
- Door openings are 32" wide or more.
- Non-accessible entrances have signs giving directions to the accessible entrance.
- The entrance door is automatic *or* the pull force on door is 5 pounds or less.
  - If not, the door will be kept open or a door assistant will be assigned.

### **PUBLIC AREAS**

- The path to the registration area is wheelchair accessible.
- The registration table is accessible from a seated position.
- All pathways are slip resistant and free of protruding objects so that persons who use crutches, canes, and walkers do not fall.
- An elevator is available for event activities on other floors including *minyanim*.
  - If not the activity can and will be moved to a wheelchair accessible location, upon request. (Advance registration will help plan for this.)
- Signs to elevators and accessible bathrooms are placed in several obvious places leading to each and can easily be seen from a seated position.

### **PUBLIC RESTROOMS**

- Accessible restrooms are located on accessible, unobstructed route(s) of travel.
- Restroom floors are slip-resistant and unobstructed.
- Signage at inaccessible rest rooms direct people to accessible restrooms.
- The doors to restrooms provide a minimum of 32" of clear opening width.
- Restroom doors have levered handles.
- There is an accessible toilet stall, with a door at least 32" wide that swings outward.
- The toilet seat is 17" to 19" above the floor.
- Toilet paper can easily be reached from the toilet seat by someone with minimal arm extension.
- Grab bars are located at the side and back of the toilet.
- The sink provides knee clearance of 29".
- Soap, a paper towel dispenser and other amenities are located at or below 48" from the floor.



## AUDITORIUM, MEETING ROOM, TELECONFERENCE, AND WEBINAR SET-UP

- Meeting rooms and the auditorium are on accessible, unobstructed pathways.
- Doors provide at least 32" clear width.
- There is at least one clear pathway (at least 36" wide) going through the room.
- The stage or elevated area is wheelchair accessible.
- Height and angle suitable lecterns, tables, and hands-free microphones are available for speakers with physical challenges.
- Large print, electronic, and Braille handouts are available as per prior request.
- Scattered seating spaces are provided for wheelchair users who prefer to be seated in the main body of the "audience", not in the front or back of the auditorium or room, nor in the passageway aisles
- There is adequate lighting for persons with low vision.
- A sign language interpreter or CART (real time captioning system) is in place as per prior request.
- An assistive listening system for people with hearing aids or cochlear implants is set up as per prior request. Hands free and adjustable microphones are present.
- Seating near the presenter(s) is set up and designated for the sign language interpreters and participants who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have low-vision.
- If you're holding a webinar or teleconference, accommodations have been made for participants with hearing, vision, or speech disabilities.

## PROGRAM CONTENT AND ACTIVITIES

- Presenters know to read PowerPoint and writing-board content aloud.
- Live or recorded video content is captioned for people with hearing disabilities.
- Live or recorded video is described for people with vision disabilities.
- Wheelchair users and others with compromised mobility are able to participate in each activity. Organizers will explain how, if it's not apparent.
- Activity-related writing assistance is provided upon request.
- If a trip is planned using group-transport, accessible transportation is arranged.
- For overnight lodging, accessible guest rooms are available upon request.
- If food or drinks are provided,
  - Tables less than 34" high are set up with all food and drinks within reach.
  - Food and drinks for people on restricted diets are presented.
  - Straws are available.

## EMERGENCY PLANNING

- Exits are clearly identified and accessible.
- Fire and emergency alarms have both audible and visible signals.
- There is an evacuation plan for persons with disabilities.

For further information about and resources for accessible events please contact [access@yadempowers.org](mailto:access@yadempowers.org) or 646-723-3955. [www.yadempowers.org](http://www.yadempowers.org)