


Accessibility at Outdoor Events

The City of Chicago strives to be the most accessible and inclusive city in the nation for people with disabilities. Please take the following items into consideration when planning your event to ensure you comply with all applicable laws and regulations that protect the rights of people with disabilities.

Accessibility

- ✓ Pick-up and drop-off areas closest to main event should comply with passenger-loading zone requirements (people with disabilities want to be able to enter/exit the event in the same area as the rest of the patrons). Provide an address of this designated area for those who may be using paratransit services.
- ✓ Provide accessible routes to the event space, including interior and exterior elements. To enter/exit, there must be 36" minimum clear pathway for one wheelchair and 60" minimum clear pathway for two wheelchairs. Entrance width must be at least 32" wide, with doors requiring no more than 5 lbs of pressure to operate.
- ✓ When feasible, remove tripping hazards, changes in elevation and gaps greater than .5" (e.g., steps/thresholds).
- ✓ Ramps must have a maximum slope no steeper than 8.3%, with railing above floor 34" – 38" to the top of the railing, edge protection and railing extensions (12" on both sides).
- ✓ Event areas should have a minimum clear space of 30" by 48" in front of the transaction window or counter. A 60" by 60" clear floor area is preferable.
- ✓ Booth food counters and tables must be no more than 28" – 34" above the floor, 12" maximum depth and 36" width of usable space to allow access for people using wheelchairs.
- ✓ People using wheelchairs must have knee clearance under a table. This requires clearance that is at least 27" high, 30" wide and 17" deep under accessible tables and counters. Fixed-chair seating should have an option that includes wheelchair-accessible spaces.

Signage and Materials

- ✓ Directional signage and written materials must use high-contrast colors and indicate accessible features –above counters/booths, restrooms, curb cuts, accessible parking and ramps. The surface of the sign should be well lit and have a matte or other non-glossy finish using the International Symbol of Access:
- 
- ✓ When sharing information, printed documents should be accessible online before the event and with adequate notification to all patrons. Link useful resources to a website or mobile app, when possible (e.g., itinerary of performance times).
 - ✓ Websites should be accessible, by using captions and tag to describe images (to improve auditory readability), and by prominently displaying event accessibility information.

Additional Strategies

- ✓ Do not block curb cuts with trash cans, vehicles, barricades, or event signage.
- ✓ Have "companion seating" -- accessible seating next to typical seating options for people who use wheelchairs and/or other mobility devices to be seated next to friends/family.

- ✓ Event areas must have accessible portable restrooms, kiosks, and drinking fountains available on site. A combination of foot levers and push button handwashing machines (the kind that requires light pressure and leaves the water running for a while) is generally preferred.
- ✓ Expect to accommodate service animals that are specially trained to perform essential tasks to assist people with disabilities. Service animals cannot be denied entrance to any public event or facility and should be provided with an accessible animal relief area.
- ✓ Designate on-site personnel familiar with the accessibility features to serve as a point-of-contact when, or if, issues arise. Provide this person's contact information in event materials.
- ✓ Video recording live events help people with disabilities and all patrons who may not be able to attend to access the information later. Be sure that the video is captioned – audio described, as well (if possible).

Resources

- ✓ Real-Time Captioning: This service converts spoken word into written format projected onto a screen during events and is typically read by those who are Deaf or hard of hearing.
 - Chicago Hearing Society (<https://chicagohearingsociety.org/>)
- ✓ American Sign Language Interpreters: A person who signs spoken word into sign language to be accessible to those who are Deaf or hard of hearing
 - Chicago Hearing Society (<https://chicagohearingsociety.org/>)
 - Language Line (<https://www.language.com/interpreting/on-demand/video>)
- ✓ Accessible Materials: Materials should be able to be provided in Braille, enlarged print (at least 18 font or larger), PowerPoint presentations should be verbally described (e.g., announcing percentages on a graphic).
 - Braille
 - Horizons for the Blind (<https://www.horizons-blind.org/>)
 - The Chicago Lighthouse (<https://chicagolighthouse.org/>)
 - Assistive Listening Device (Rental): An amplifying device that brings sound directly to a person's ears. They can separate speech from background noise to make the information clearer.
 - <https://www.assistivelistingrentals.com/>

Suggested Wording

Unacceptable → *Acceptable*

Handicapped → Person with a disability

Handicapped parking/entrance/restroom → Accessible parking/entrance/restroom

An epileptic → A person with epilepsy