

# Accessibility Checklist



Creating physical spaces that are welcoming and result in a sense of belonging is an important aspect of the Community Conversation. Each choice that we make matters when it comes to creating an inclusive space.

## PLANNING AN IN-PERSON GATHERING

When planning a gathering of people who will be in a physical space together, there are many considerations to ensure that people will feel welcome and safe. As you consider different aspects of your event, use the following checklist to guide your preparations.

### 1. Ensuring the Space is Accessible for All People:

- The meeting space itself is accessible for mobility device users.
- Everyone should have a choice of where they would like to be in the space. Make sure that all parts of the room and all tables are able to be accessed by anyone using a mobility device. That means that there should be spaces between tables and isles of chairs.
- Make sure that power cords and cables are not in a space that people will need to navigate to avoid tripping hazards and clearing floor space for people using mobility devices.
- The lighting can be adjusted, either dimmed or reduced.
- Leave space in the room where people could choose to pace or stand.
- Be certain that parking spaces and restrooms are ADA accessible.
- Ensure that service animals are welcomed in the space.

### 2. Planning for an Inclusive Event:

- Before setting a date for the event, check the calendar and be mindful of significant cultural holidays, there are many online calendar resources to guide planning.
- Ensure that any breaks are long enough for all people to meet their needs. Typically, 15 minutes is adequate but consider if longer breaks are needed.
- Assure that microphones are available and are used by all speakers. This is critical to be certain that everyone has the opportunity to hear what is being said in the space.
- Advise attendees what accommodations are being provided ahead of time and let people know that they can request others as needed. Allow people to request preferential seating if appropriate for your venue.
- Partner with your school district to provide interpreters for language access supports and plan for the following:
  - Share information about the event with the interpreter ahead of time including subject matter and number of participants.
  - Ask interpreters how they would like to communicate with the presenter.
  - Be sure the seating is arranged appropriately for the participant and interpreter.
  - If you are serving food be certain that dietary restrictions are taken into consideration.

### 3. Making Materials Accessible:

- Use dark text on white backgrounds or white text on a dark background for electronic materials. This holds true for presentations (i.e. PowerPoint) or for websites as well.
- Make certain that any links in electronics materials are clearly identified.
- If you have printed materials, make some available in a large font size (22 or larger) and PowerPoint slides should be printed full page.
- Use a sans serif font (e.g. Arial)
- Find ways to make your materials available electronically during your event. As an example, making presentations accessible on a website.
- Videos should be accessible with closed captioning.
- Visual cues on a printed or electronic agenda can be helpful.
- If using nametags, encourage participants to include their preferred pronouns (i.e. she/her, he/him, they/them)
- Consider if materials need to be translated to make them accessible to people attending your event. Partner with your school district to make certain that you understand the needs of your community and are providing accessible materials.

### 4. During the Event:

- Avoid activities that exclude people. For example, asking people to stand or to raise their hands may exclude some in attendance.
  - o Consider ways to elicit participation of the group that are inclusive of everyone. As an example, have someone who will circulate with a wireless microphone to allow people to comment or ask questions. This person could also convey questions or answers from participants.
- Be mindful of people who may use a device for communication.
  - o Allow time for responses and discuss ahead of the meeting beginning how they would like to signal that they have something to say.
  - o Make the agenda and questions available ahead of time.
- Use real time captioning if it is available to you.
- If interpreters are being used for language access during the event consider the following:
- Presenters Allow time for participants to process critical information.
- Avoid jargon, acronyms and metaphors.
- Provide an opportunity to offer feedback to you regarding the accessibility of the training including feedback from interpreters.

## PLANNING A VIRTUAL GATHERING

If you are planning an online or virtual event, there are some **additional** accessibility principles that you should keep in mind.



### 1. Ensuring the Space is Accessible for All People:

- Evaluate the accessibility features of online platforms. Some things to look for include the following:
  - Allows you to customize the font size in the chat.
  - Allows for use of a screen reader.
  - Platform can be navigated with just the keyboard.
  - The platform allows for closed captioning (either internally or third party).
  - An interpreter can be visible no matter who is speaking.
- Make certain the links to join the meeting are available in the meeting invitation.
- Send the invitation early enough to plan for accommodations for participants, including captioning.

### 2. Making Materials Accessible for a Virtual Meeting:

- Any documents or video shared on a screen should follow the principles of accessibility of materials.
- Consider distributing slides and other materials in advance of the meeting.

### 3. During the Event:

- Make certain the meeting starts and ends on time.
- Encourage everyone to use their video when possible.
- Model use of pronouns in name displayed (i.e. Jane Smith (they/them) )
- Facilitators should avoid lighting that limits participants ability to see you clearly (i.e. lamp or window light).
- Ensure that everyone can hear all participants and speakers. Ask people to mute their microphones when not speaking.
- Ask participants to state their names before speaking.
- Explain accessible ways of participating (i.e. using raise hands feature on the platform).
- Have someone assigned to monitor the chat
- Describe any visuals that were not provided ahead of time.

*Note: This accessibility checklist is not intended to be exhaustive. It is intended to provide guidance about how to make events more accessible to a broad group of stakeholders. Collaboration with your community is critical and through those relationships you will learn what additional supports are important for your events.*