

ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION GUIDE

University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire

EVENT PLANNING ITEMS TO CONSIDER

- Provide an appropriate space for attendees to request accommodations on any registration application materials and include directions for how to do so.
 - Example: “Persons with disabilities requesting accommodations for this event should contact (the sponsor’s contact information) at least 5 business days in advance of the event.”
- Check with the presenter(s) to determine if they require accommodations.
- Be mindful that attendees may need added time to move between rooms or sessions when planning the logistics and timeframe.
- Depending on the event's length, you may want to consider working in a break for all attendees.
- Service animals may be in attendance with their handler.
- A table that has an accessible height.
- Remember that accommodations can cost money, and the organizer of the event is responsible for providing them. Incorporate this into your planning and remember to budget accordingly.

SECTION 1: INFORMATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

- All advertising, invitations, and brochures have an access statement that includes multiple forms of contact. The contact should be the event coordinator.
 - Example: “If you are an individual with a disability and need accommodations, please contact (name, phone number, email).”
- All publications state that they are available in alternate formats upon request by including a statement that provides multiple forms of contact information.

- Example: *“This publication is available in alternate formats upon request. Please contact (name, phone number, email).”*
- Publications and materials are provided in alternate media when requested with appropriate notice (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotapes, etc.).
- All videos/films are shown with closed or real-time (live) captions:
- **Real-Time Captions:** Captions, composed of text, that provide access to content delivered by spoken words and sounds. These are created as an event takes place. Real-time captioning can be used for programs that do not have written scripts such as lectures, classes, and meetings.
- **Closed Captions:** Text is displayed, typically used as transcription of the audio portion of a program as it occurs, sometimes including descriptions of non-speech elements. “Closed” indicates that the captions are not visible until activated by the viewer, usually by a menu option. “Open” captioning means captions are available to all viewers.
- Marketing materials posted online should use a sans serif font (e.g., Arial, Calibri, Tahoma) that is no smaller than size 14.

SECTION 2: ATTITUDINAL ENVIRONMENT

- Ensure that an inclusive environment has been provided to assure the full participation and integration of individuals with disabilities.
- If you know a speaker or participant is disabled, ask how they would like to be referred to or introduced. Some people prefer person first language (“person with autism” or “person with a disability”) and others prefer identity-first language (“autistic person” or “disabled”).
 - Depending on if the person prefers person first language or identity first language, you should say “person who uses a wheelchair or wheelchair user” and not “wheelchair bound”, say “person with a mental health disability” and not “crazy”.
 - Some disability etiquette to remember- don't use accessible amenities if you don't need them; don't assume; don't help, without asking first.
- Presenters, facilitators, speakers, etc., should always introduce themselves to attendees and face the audience when speaking (e.g., name, pronouns, role). The presenter or facilitator should repeat audience questions through the microphone to facilitate hearing. This applies for both in person and virtual meetings.

- Use the same considerations in this checklist if you are planning post-event activities, off-site trips, overnight stays, or if you are moving around campus (such as residence halls, restaurants, recreation rooms, etc.).

SECTION 3: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS

Event Location (on-campus and/or off-campus)

- Event must be scheduled in an accessible location with directional signage to all event or meeting locations. Accessibility requirements must be checked for all areas which may include elevators, entrances, parking, restrooms, and seating. If the event is on an upper floor, there must be an elevator. At least one of the primary entrances must be accessible and located on a continuous, unobstructed path of travel from the street to the location.
- A clear pathway through the room must be provided, being mindful of hazards to individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Clear any objects (e.g., plant branches or public art) that overhang the pathway.
- For further considerations for accessible surfaces, consult UWEC Facilities: [Facilities UWEC](#)
- Inaccessible entrances must have directional signage to the accessible entrance.
- Ensure one of the primary entrances is accessible and automatic door openers are working and clear of any objects (snow removal). Submit a workorder to facilities if the automatic door openers are not working.
- Room signs should have raised or Braille characters for those with visual disabilities.
- Announce and provide a space for people to sit, stand or walk as needed and encourage people to take breaks as they need to.

- If seating is provided, seating placement should be considered (e.g., near the interpreter or in the front for those with sensory disabilities), and wheelchair and companion seating should be dispersed in multiple locations.
 - Consider the following chart when providing accessible seating:

Guidelines for Accessible Seating

1-25 regular seats = 1 accessible seat

26-50 regular seats = 2 accessible seats

51-300 regular seats = 4 accessible seats

301-500 regular seats = 6 accessible seats

Over 500 seats = 6 plus one additional space for each increase of 100

- If a stage or platform is used, be sure it is accessible and on an accessible route or provide a temporary ramp.
- Necessary equipment is in wheelchair accessible areas and most frequently used materials are placed on lower shelves.
- Displays or exhibits are positioned to provide an accessible route to navigate the space.
- Check equipment before beginning event to make sure it is working. Have a “Plan B” in the event of technical difficulties.
- If a microphone is provided for participation, be certain it is accessible, and assistance is provided.
- Ensure there is adequate lighting for persons with low vision or if a sign language interpreter is used.
- A quiet, scent-free, sensory friendly room should be available whenever possible. The location of this quiet space should be verbally announced and printed on event materials if relevant before a speaker or event begins.
- Be mindful of contact and scent allergies. Consider hosting a scent free event and eliminating potential contact allergens.

Restrooms

- Restrooms must be located along an **accessible route** and contain **accessible features** (e.g., grab bars in the stalls, wide

stalls, etc.). Include **directional signage** at inaccessible restrooms to direct individuals to accessible restrooms.

- For portable restrooms, the toilets and sinks must meet state and federal requirements for accessibility, be dispersed among the various locations on a level area on an accessible route and surface and have at least one at every location.
- An accessible restroom should be located within 200' of the event or meeting location. If multiple units are provided, a minimum of 1 unit with 10% of the total units provided must be accessible.
- Please note: This information is provided for situations where the general public is utilizing outdoor portable toilets but should never be the accessible toilet option if the general public is using indoor toilets.

Parking and Transportation

- If nearby parking is available, accessible spaces for parking are included and located on an accessible route. Provide multiple options for location. Check to see if the accessible spaces are near the accessible entrance.
- If transportation is provided, ensure it is accessible to individuals with disabilities and there is an accessible route from the transportation stop to the entrance (recommended distance not to exceed 200').
- For further considerations for parking, consult with Parking + Transportation Services: [Parking + Transportation | UW-Eau Claire \(uwec.edu\)](https://uwec.edu/parking-transportation)

Food and Drink

- If food and drink are provided, be mindful of restricted diets and allergies. Provide attendees with the opportunity to request alternate options. Label the food and have ingredients and nutrition facts available to inform decisions.
- Make food accessible from a seated position and include additional space for individuals using wheelchairs if using banquet-style seating.
- For additional considerations for food services, consult with Dining Services: [Dining | UW-Eau Claire \(uwec.edu\)](https://uwec.edu/dining)

Emergency Planning

- Exits are clearly identified and accessible.
- Fire and Emergency alarms have both audible and visual signs.
- Identify areas of refuge for individuals who may require rescue assistance.
- For additional considerations in emergency planning, consult with Risk Management, Safety, and Sustainability: [Risk Management, Safety, and Sustainability | UW-Eau Claire \(uwec.edu\)](https://uwec.edu/risk-management-safety-sustainability)
- [EmergencyGuide.pdf \(uwec.edu\)](https://uwec.edu/emergencyguide.pdf)

Summary

Informational Environment



- **Materials available in alternate formats**
- **Real-time or closed captioning used**
- **Contact information is provided**

Attitudinal Environment



- **Promote an inclusive and welcoming environment**
- **Use person-first language**
- **Speakers face audience and repeat questions**

Physical Environment



- **Location and seating are accessible with appropriate signage**
- **Restrooms, good and parking are accessible**
- **Have a plan in case of Emergencies**

Adapted from: AASE & Smith, ACCESSIBILITY CHECKLIST, 1990; Cornell University, Student Disability Services, Check List for Planning Accessible Events, 2013; UW-Stout, Accessibility Checklist for University Events, 2021