

# Meeting Guide

## INTRODUCTION

This Guide is created to assist City Agencies and their Disability Service Facilitators in preparing notices, posters, and other publicity materials that provide information about access for people with disabilities to New York City government events and meetings. Ensuring that information concerning accessibility is readily available takes careful planning. This Guide will assist with that planning, including information concerning meeting notices, effective communication at the event, access to the event or meeting location, and accessible materials available at the event or meeting.

Access for people with disabilities to government events and meetings open to the public is critical to New York City. We want to be inclusive and facilitate the participation in government programs, services and activities for the one in eight New Yorkers who have identified as having a disability according to the US Census 2014 Community Survey.

## EVENT NOTICES AND MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS

City law requires that all advertisements, posters, invitations, notices, and other publicity materials for events and meetings open to the public --whether in print or via electronic means -- contain information about the accessibility of the facility and other accommodations for people with disabilities provided. The materials must provide the name of the person to contact to request accommodations, along with the person's telephone number and e-mail address, and a timeframe in which to contact the person. A reasonable timeframe for making the requests is 48 to 72 hours prior to the meeting or event, which gives the City Agency sufficient time to arrange for the accommodations.

City law requires that notices of events, to the extent practicable for the selected form of media, include information regarding the availability of:

- wheelchair accessibility;
- communication access real-time translation;
- sign language interpretation;
- assistive listening systems, and when available, the specific kind of system, including, but not limited to, induction loop assistive listening systems; and

- any other accommodations for people with disabilities that will be available at the venue or venues for the event.

The law requires that international symbols shown in this guide be used when providing information about available accommodations.

## REASONABLE MODIFICATIONS

A City Agency should conduct public meetings in accessible facilities. If this is not possible, the agency needs to provide reasonable accommodations to an individual who could not access the meeting location such as providing remote access by video. Also, if an agency provides written materials at a public meeting, the materials need to be provided in alternate formats such as large print, Braille or in audio format upon request.

## EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

When choosing a communication aid or service, the City Agency is required to give primary consideration to the aid or service requested by the person with a disability. The City Agency must honor the person's choice, unless it can demonstrate that another effective means of communication is available, or that the use of the means requested would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of a service, program, or activity or in an undue financial and administrative burden. If the choice expressed by the person with a disability would result in an undue burden or a fundamental alteration, the public entity still has an obligation to provide an alternative aid or service that provides effective communication if one is available.

In determining whether a particular aid or service would result in undue financial and administrative burdens, the City Agency should take into consideration the cost of the particular aid or service in light of all resources available to fund the program, service, or activity and the effect on other expenses or operations. The decision that a particular aid or service would result in an undue burden must be made by a high level official, no lower than a Department head, and must include a written statement of the reasons for reaching that conclusion.

## PRINTED MATERIAL

All print notices and other materials should be in at least 18 point font. Use bold type because the thickness of the letters makes the print more legible. Provide color contrast using either light background with dark print or a dark background with light print. Avoid decorative cursive fonts including italics, and avoid using all capital letters, since these forms of print make it more difficult to differentiate among letters.

## ELECTRONIC MATERIAL

All electronic materials must be in a format that is accessible to individuals who have a visual disability or use a screen reader. Examples of accessible formats include, Word documents, Accessible PDF or basic html. Electronic materials should be available on CD's, thumb drives or by email at the time of the event.

## SAMPLE NOTICES

Notices must be tailored to reflect the accessibility of the facility and the accommodations provided.

1. The meeting will be held at [insert address]. All entrances into the building are accessible to persons using wheelchairs and others with disabilities, accessible restrooms are available and the meeting room is equipped with an Induction Loop System. Materials in alternative formats, ASL interpreters, real-time captioning and other accommodations will be made available upon request. Please contact [insert person's name, telephone number and e-mail address] to make your accommodation requests. Provide at least 72 hours' notice prior to the meeting or event to ensure availability.

In order to accommodate persons with severe allergies, environmental illness, multiple chemical sensitivity or related disabilities, attendees at public meetings are requested to refrain from using perfume, cologne, and other fragrances.

2. The meeting will be held at [insert address]. The accessible entrance is [insert address or location – such as on the 53rd Street side of the building]. Accessible restrooms are provided. ASL interpreters and assistive listening devices are available. Agendas are available in large print. Materials in alternative formats, real-time captioning and other accommodations will be made available upon request. Please make your request for alternative format or other accommodations, to [name, telephone number, and email address]. Provide at least 72 hours' notice prior to the meeting or event to ensure availability.

In order to accommodate persons with severe allergies, environmental illness, multiple chemical sensitivity or related disabilities, attendees at public meetings are requested to refrain from using perfume, cologne, and other fragrances.

Additional information that may be provided in notices includes:

- Providing the location of the nearest bus stop;
- Providing the location of the nearest accessible subway station;
- Providing information on nearest parking facility; or
- Providing information on service animal relief areas.

Sample notice where space may be limited including posters, flyers, or other items -

[Insert address] is wheelchair accessible (including entrance and restrooms). Assistive listening devices and [any other provided accommodations] will be available at the meeting. To request real time captioning, ASL interpreters or other accommodations, please contact [person's name, telephone number and e-mail address] at least 72 hours in advance.

Note: Providing more information on the accessibility of the facility and the accommodation available will limit the number of inquiries prior to the event.

## SYMBOLS

When providing information about accommodations already in place, it may be more efficient to use universally recognized symbols in lieu of words as follows:



Location is accessible to individuals using wheelchairs and other mobility devices



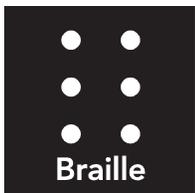
Sign Language Interpreters are provided



Induction Loop System is in place



Assistive Listening System is in place (indicate the type of system Infrared, FM, or Induction Loop)



Printed materials are provided in Braille



Printed materials are provided in large print



Real Time Captioning is provided

[Download International Symbol of Access here](#)  
[Download all other accessible symbols here](#)

The following are some companies and organizations that provide sign language interpreters or CART transcription services in New York City:

Accurate Communication - 888-342-1650  
(Department of Citywide Services has a contract with this company)

Sign Language Resources, Inc. - 888-964-5553

Comprehensive Network - 718-382-2020

New York Society for the Deaf - 212-366-0066

Deaf & Hard of Hearing Interpreting Services Inc. - 212-647-1092

All Hands in Motion - Pro. Sign Language Interpreters, LLC. - 718-997-0472

If you have questions about your notices, please contact the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities at (212) 788-2830.

**I invite you to join the NYC Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities for a meeting to discuss accessibility. Monday, June 6, 2016 from 3 – 4pm at 100 Gold Street, 2nd Floor, New York, New York.**

**Please RSVP to [rsvp@mopd.nyc.gov](mailto:rsvp@mopd.nyc.gov) with the name and titles of attendees and their affiliated organization no later than close of business Thursday, June 2nd.**

**Access:**



**100 Gold Street's main entrance is accessible to persons using wheelchairs and others with disabilities including an automatic door, the meeting will be translated by an ASL interpreter, and CART and an Induction Loop System will be provided in the meeting room. Restrooms on the second floor are accessible including a single user restroom. For further information or additional requests regarding accessibility please email [disabilityfacilitator@mopd.nyc.gov](mailto:disabilityfacilitator@mopd.nyc.gov) or call (212) 555-5555 by June 2nd.**



**Mayor's Office for  
People with Disabilities**