



Everyone's Invited!®

EVERYONE'S INVITED TO YOUR FESTIVAL

A Checklist for Outdoor Festivals

Developing a Comprehensive Access Program for Your Patrons with Disabilities

Consider this a *place to start*, though it is neither an all-inclusive nor an all-required list of possible aspects of your Access Program. You will have to customize the Access Plan for your event based on your facilities, resources, the needs of your patrons, and any applicable legal requirements. It may seem complicated but don't expect to do it all at once; just *prioritize and get started!*

Why is it important to develop an Access Program?

- Inclusion, good for morale, positive PR
- Expand audience, requirement for grants
- Risk management, it's the law, legal costs, it's safer

Getting Started

1. Name an Access Coordinator

- Someone who cares about accessibility and who is respected in the organization
- Invest in education or hire pro
- Access Advisory Board – local organization

2. Select a Site for Accessibility

- An often-neglected aspect of choosing a site, leading to added expenses

3. Perform Access Assessments

- Venue
- Website and mobile app: access page, ticketing, merchandise, all information

4. Prioritize and Plan, Short-Term and Long-Range

- DOJ, Title III priorities:
 - Getting to and into event
 - Goods and services
 - Restrooms
 - Other
- What can you do this year?
- What will you do in years to come?

5. Meet with Department Heads

- Almost all departments are involved in planning an accessible festival
- Provide training: Access Awareness, Universal Design, information specific to each of their areas, find out their questions

6. Getting the Word Out – PR about the Access Program

- Include in existing public relations
- Target PR to groups that serve people with disabilities
- Detailed access info on website; map showing accessible features with distance indicator

7. Responding to Inquiries and Requests for Accommodation

- Contact information listed on website, press releases, PR materials
- Post request for accommodations deadline e.g. sign language interpreter, braille, assistive listening device, etc.

Festival Grounds

1. Getting to the Event

- Any transportation supplied by event must include accessible service
- On website, describe how to get to event via various forms of public and private transportation: train, subway, bus, shuttle, paratransit, taxi, etc.

2. Arriving at Event

- Drop off location
- Designate accessible entrance, “Access Lane,” unless all entrances lead to accessible parking/camping.

3. Accessible Facilities on Event Grounds

- Box office
- Parking/Camping:
 - Policies, who may use this area? Modify policies: those who are not able to walk long distances yet do not qualify for accessible parking tag; pregnant; service animals; Deaf; blind/low vision...?
- VIP
- RV
- Power source for recharging chairs/scooter, powering CPAP and other medical devices
- Restrooms
- Water stations
- Showers
- Service animal relief area

4. Access Center

- Information regarding Access Program
- Wristband request system giving permission to use accessible facilities
- Wheelchair/scooter rental or loan
- R&R area for patrons: shade, water, chairs
- Code to locked toilets
- Check out assistive listening devices
- Braille, Large Print
- Administration of Access Program Survey
- Sign Language Team HQ
- Access volunteer check-in, training, and HQ
- Quiet Room, accommodating people with sensory sensitivities

Inside The Venue

Make sure that all facilities, services, activities, and programming are accessible. Revise policies and practices as needed.

1. Accommodating People with Mobility Disabilities

- Designated accessible entrance to venue – long lines can be difficult
 - Training for entrance workers and security staff
 - Signage

- Accessible routes of travel to all facilities, services, activities, programming
- Ramps, threshold ramps to all raised facilities
- Wheelchair, scooter loan or rental
- Policy re what mobility devices are allowed (bicycles, Segways, etc)
- Shuttle service, within and/or outside of venue
- Accessible restrooms, some locked or staffed
- Accessible luxury VIP toilets
- Drinking water, wash stations
- Counter tops at accessible height: concessions, vendors, bars, etc
- Reserved seating, raised platforms, front of stage, side/back stage
 - Determine policies as to who may use reserved areas
 - Security, staff, and volunteer staffing
 - Accessible restroom nearby

2. Accommodating People who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

- Sign Language Interpreters
- Assistive Listening Devices
- Open Captioning for video/films
- TTY/TDD Telecommunications Device for the Deaf
- Permission to camp in Accessible Camping and use platforms

3. Accommodating People who are Blind or Have Low Vision

- Braille program guide
- Braille map
- Large print program guide, signage
- One-time guide service
- Permission to camp in Accessible Camping and use platforms
- Audio description
- Enhanced night lighting

4. Accommodating People with Brain-based Conditions such as Learning, Cognitive, or Psychiatric Disabilities

- Signage as simple as possible – use symbols and images when possible
- Training for security and other staff – don't jump to conclusions
- Quiet place of refuge, noise cancelling headphones, soft seating, soft lighting, fidget devices, advance information about what to expect, programming for those with sensory sensitivities, information about strobes and fireworks
- Allow use of platforms

5. Medical considerations

- Power to recharge medical devices such as CPAP, power chairs, scooters
- Policy modification allowing otherwise banned items (see below)
- Refrigeration or ice for medication
- First aid, EMT services and facilities
- Sharps and medical waste disposal
- Oxygen tank policy

Behind The Scenes

1. Signage

- Wayfinding and identification of accessible features
- Accessible sign design: contrast, size of lettering, font, height
- New wheelchair symbol: www.accessibleicon.org and other accessibility symbols:

<https://graphicartistsguild.org/downloadable-disability-access-symbols/>

2. Access Training

- Department heads, pre-event
- All personnel, training document pre-event and on site
- Job-specific training: Security, entrance to event, service animal check-in, gates to venue, dispatch, parking, information booth, Access Center, platform ushers...
- Vendors: accessible booth design, serving patrons with disabilities

3. Access Team Staffing

- Access Program Coordinator
- Access Team
- Sign Language Interpreter team

4. Emergency Planning

- Training for all staff and emergency personnel, how to assist people with disabilities
- Emergency communications for Deaf: ASL, flashing lights, video screen messaging, texting
- Emergency communications for blind: audible alarms and info, texting or audio messaging
- Develop transportation plan for people with mobility disabilities
- Assisting people with brain-based conditions: locate companion, patience, do not rush, remain calm, short and simple sentences
- Seizure training
- Remember people with non-apparent conditions

5. Service Animals

- Research local and state regulations
- Training for all staff and for service animal screeners
- Service animal relief area
- Policies: close camping, reserved seating, animals in training, emotional support?

6. Revising Admission and Security Policies

- Some people with disabilities need to bring syringes, medication, vitamins or supplements, special foods and beverages, chairs of a certain height, umbrellas, and other needs

7. Access Program Survey

- Develop and administer survey
- Track responses and suggestions

8. Contractual Arrangements

- Concessions, vendors... agree to comply with ADA
- Musicians, agree to comply with ADA (provide set list for interpreters)

Just Get Started!

1. Make a plan
2. Show you care and are making an honest effort
3. Listen and respond to your patrons
4. Improve every year

Go to www.EveryonesInvited.com for a list of helpful resources.