

Guide to Planning Accessible & Inclusive Events at MSU Denver

Access is one of the core values of MSU Denver. For individuals with disabilities, access means designing an event that is free of barriers so that they can participate fully in any campus events. The purpose of this guide is to provide information for event planners about the elements of accessibility that will foster full participation. Planning for access in advance will optimize the opportunity for a well planned accessible event and minimize the need to make any last minute changes.

What Programs must be Accessible?

Every type of program, meeting, exhibit, tour and event, whether held for the MSU Denver community or open to the public, must consider the access needs of individuals with disabilities. This includes all MSU Denver sponsored activities held off campus.

Who is responsible for providing an accessible event?

It is the obligation of the event planner to consider event accessibility for persons with disabilities. Taking the necessary steps to make an event accessible for all of the participants can be easy when done in the early stages of planning. Pre-planning for accessibility can often reduce the need for individual accommodations.

Who is responsible for any expenses associated with providing an accessible event?

The costs associated with disability access are considered part of the overall expense of the event. Event planners should include the expense of any anticipated accommodations as a budget item in the event planning. Most accommodations can be made at little or no cost, such as choosing a wheelchair accessible venue for the event. Accommodations such as sign language interpreting and real-time captioning services will incur a cost. Event planners who think the cost of the accommodations cannot be supported by the event should discuss alternative funding sources with their supervisor. Before denying any accommodation requests, event planners should consult with a member of the Access Center staff.

Accessible Event Planning Guidelines

Event Advertisement:

Pre-event publicity should include the following *Event Access Statement* on all websites and event announcements:

[Name of your organization/organization sponsoring event] welcomes individuals with disabilities and will provide reasonable accommodations upon request. If you need reasonable accommodations to attend this event, please contact [person in charge of the event at (xxx) xxx-xxxx or person@msudenver.edu] by [date: at least 10 days before event]. The event coordinator will do their best to provide requested accommodations received after this date.

Choosing a physically accessible location:

- Events must take place in wheelchair-accessible locations, which include step-free paths of travel and public elevators if held on higher floors.

- Room set-up should include spaces and tables that allow for wheelchair access. Rooms with moveable furniture are preferable to allow for flexibility in seating.

Information Access Best Practices:

- When emailing posters/announcements of events as attachments, copy the text out of the attachment and paste it into the body of the email.
- As much as possible, make slideshows and handouts available to participants in digital format in advance of the event, via email, Blackboard and/or other method in 16-point Calibri font.
- Materials that are disseminated in hard copy should also include some copies available in large print 16-point Calibri font.
- Use captioned multimedia. Please contact the presenter to confirm. If it is not captioned and it is not possible to caption the video within the specified timeframe, a written transcript should be provided.
- Ask presenters to use the provided microphone and to repeat questions asked from the floor before they answer, to assist audience members who cannot hear questions.
- If flip charts, easels, or dry erase boards will be used, read aloud the information to assist audience members who cannot see the board. Verbally describe any visual aids or graphical information.
- Be mindful of planning inclusive participant activities. (i.e. think about attendees with mobility, sensory and learning differences)
- Provide an online program evaluation option which includes a section for participants to comment on the accessibility of the event.
- Information on creating accessible documents can be found at the following link, <https://msudenver.edu/ctld/programs/instructionalaccessibility/documentaccessibility/#d.en.157820>.

Additional Considerations:

- Service dogs are welcome on campus and they do not have to be identified by a vest, nor does the individual have to show any certification. Distributive behavior can be addressed with the handler and if corrective instruction does not work then handler can be asked to remove the dog from the event.
- Food items and beverages should be placed in a wheelchair-accessible location.
- Be familiar with where the nearest wheelchair accessible restrooms are located.
- Avoid using high-top tables (above 34 inches) for registration. An accessible table has a surface height of no more than 34 inches and no less than 28 inches above the floor. Most tables provided for events by AHEC meet these standards.
- If transportation is provided, it should be accessible to individuals with disabilities and there is an accessible route from the transportation stop to the event space.

For additional information on how to plan an accessible event, please contact:

Access Center

Plaza Building, Suite 122

303-615-0200

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