

ACCESSIBILITIES CHECKLIST For Meetings and Groups

How accessible is your meeting? This is a guide to help reduce the physically based access barriers that a person may encounter when attending meetings in your location. Accessible meeting locations are physically accessible so that anyone may arrive on site, approach the building, and enter the meeting without barriers.

Introduction. Following are some questions your group can answer to determine the overall accessibility of your meeting space.

PARKING:

- Are an adequate number of accessible parking spaces available? (9 feet wide for car, plus 5-foot-wide access aisle).
- Are spaces close to accessible entrances?
- Are spaces marked with identification signs?
- Is the parking area or street clear of snow, ice, or other debris?
- Is a path of travel by wheelchair accessible from the street or parking area?
- Are the sidewalks even and in good repair?
- Are there curb cut-outs to facilitate access to the sidewalk?

ROUTE OF TRAVEL:

- Is the meeting place accessible to public transportation?
- Is there a clear route of travel that does not require the use of stairs?
- Can any potential obstacles along pathways (including hanging objects) be detected by a person using a cane or other mobility device?
- If the meeting is at night, is the pathway well lit?

ENTRANCE:

- Does the entrance have steps, a threshold, or other physical barriers?
 - If so, is there a ramp, lift, or an alternate entrance that is accessible?
 - Is the ramp excessively steep? Does it have railings?
 - Is the lift in good working order? If the lift is operated by a key, does someone on location have possession of the key or know where the key is kept?
 - Is there signage indicating the location of the alternate accessible entrance?
- Does the entrance door have adequate width (32") and clearance to accommodate a wheelchair?
- Can the doors be opened by someone in a wheelchair or would he or she need assistance?
- Is the door with the closest access to a ramp unlocked at the same time as the main entrance?
- Does the greeter ensure the visually impaired or blind are escorted to the meeting room?

INSIDE THE BUILDING:

- Is there level access from the wheelchair accessible entrance to the meeting area?
- If not, are there ramps to enable someone in a wheelchair to reach the meeting? (Lifting someone over steps or stairs is not an acceptable solution for access.)
- If there is an elevator or a lift, is it in good working order?
 - If the elevator or lift is operated by a key, does someone on location have possession of the key or know where the key is kept?
- Are corridors and door widths (32") adequate for passage of a wheelchair?
- Are corridors reasonably clear to allow safe passage for everyone?
- Does the facility have Braille signage?
 - If so, is it posted in the meeting schedule?

RESTROOMS:

- Is at least one fully accessible restroom available?
- Are the stall doors operable?
- Is there adequate space for a person in a wheelchair to maneuver within the stall? (44" for forward movement and a five-foot diameter or T-shape of clear space to make turns.)
- Are there grab bars on the walls behind and to the side nearest the toilet?
- Is there a Family Restroom or unisex restroom available at your facility with changing table? (For those who require assistance in the restroom, this can pose difficulties if the person helping them is not of the same sex.)
- Can the faucet be operated without grasping, twisting, or turning?

THE MEETING ROOM:

- Are chairs set up with adequate aisle space for a wheelchair?
 - Are chairs arranged in a circle, so faces can be seen making it easier to read lips.
- Is the lighting adequate for those that read lips to "hear" the speaker.
- Is there a designated section for members who are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing?
 - If so, is there adequate space for a sign language interpreter to sit with easy access to that group?
- Is someone available to welcome people and orient them to the meeting space as needed?
- Is the coffee service accessible to a person in a wheelchair or with another type of mobility device?
- Is A.A. literature available to address the needs of individuals with diverse abilities?
 - Is AA video available in closed captioned or in American Sign Language format?
 - Is AA literature available on CDs, in Braille, and large print?
 - Is AA literature easy to read for those with intellectual or cognitive processing difficulties? (Such as "Is AA for me?," "Twelve Steps Illustrated," "Too Young," etc.)
- Does the local intergroup/central office know that the meeting space is available to people with diverse accessibility needs?

- Does the group have a signup sheet for service work volunteers to:
 - Give rides to the meeting?
 - Provide childcare during the meeting time?
 - Take AA meetings to members of the group when they become house/hospital bound?
 - Assist AA members who are blind?
 - Provide a list of temporary sponsors who know ASL or another language?

THE CYBER WORLD:

- Does the group host Internet meetings for those having difficulty getting to a meeting room? (This may meet the needs of those not having access to public transportation, the visually impaired, single parents, caregivers, the elderly in hospital, assisted living, or skilled nursing facilities, those in an institutional setting due to mental or chronic health issues, and those with PTSD who find group settings difficult.)
- Does the group provide a hyper-access (face to face and virtual access to the group conscience so these communities are connected to the whole of A.A. .
- Does the group offer service and sponsorship opportunities for the members who attend virtual meetings only.
- Does the group offer non-verbal interaction for those who can't verbalize or have difficulty hearing such as chat rooms or text as an alternative to closed captions or ASL formats.
- Does the group ensure there is an A.A. presence in underserved areas — consider starting meetings in communities where none exist or adding additional meeting opportunities?
- Does the group provide virtual beginners' packages to newcomers?
- Does the group provide regular reports in accessible formats of service workshops, district meetings, and other service information to help keep these communities connected to the whole of A.A.

Additional information about Accessibilities and setting up your meeting space may be available from your district or area Accessibilities Committee or your local intergroup/central office. You may also want to search the Internet for a variety of Accessibilities Guides and information. In addition, the following accessibilities materials are available on our A.A. website at www.aa.org.

1. A.A. Guidelines — Accessibility for All Alcoholics (MG-16)
2. A.A. Guidelines — Sharing the A.A. Message with the Alcoholic Who Is Deaf (MG-13)
3. Serving All Alcoholics (F-107)
4. Access to A.A.: Members Share on Overcoming Barriers (P-83)
5. Accessibilities Workbook (M-48i)