San Francisco State University

STUDENT AFFAIRS & ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

Disability Programs & Resource Center

Accessible Events Checklist

Planning an event using Universal Design principals.

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DISABILITY PROGRAMS AND RESOURCE CENTER

1600 Holloway Avenue, SSB 110 | San Francisco, CA 94132
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Email: dprc@sfsu.edu | Web: http://access.sfsu.edu/

PLANNING AN ACCESSIBLE CAMPUS EVENT AT SF STATE

The Disability Programs & Resource Center (DPRC) recommends these best practices for planning accessible university-sponsored events for students, staff, faculty, and guests with disabilities. SF State endorses providing accessibility for all events, including, but not limited to: professional meetings, seminars, workshops, conferences, social and recreational programs, convocations, and graduation ceremonies. Our considerations are made with the SF State campus in mind, as most facilities and venues are accessible. If you plan to take your event off campus, we are happy to consult about how to ensure your venue is accessible. **Please note - Cox Stadium, the Second floor of GYM, and the Blakeslee Room in Thornton Hall are inaccessible event locations.** Please consult with the DPRC if you are considering hosting an event in one of these locations.

Event Access Statement

One of the best ways to ensure you are planning an inclusive event is to include the following DPRC-endorsed Event Access Statement on all websites, event announcements, and meeting notices:

> *"[Name of your organization/organization sponsoring event] welcomes persons with disabilities and will provide reasonable accommodations upon request. If you would like reasonable accommodations for this event, please contact [person in your organization at (xxx) xxx-xxxx or person@sfsu.edu] as soon as possible so your request may be reviewed."*

As the event authority, your organization or department is responsible for accepting and processing accommodation requests, however, the DPRC is here to consult with you regarding best practices for implementation. Potential accommodations are reviewed below in the *Possible Accommodation Requests and Definitions* section, including information on how to implement the accommodation if requested. As always, please contact the DPRC at (415) 338-2472 or dprc@sfsu.edu if you have any further questions. Thank you for your efforts in planning an accessible event for individuals with disabilities, and all constituents, at SF State.

UNDERSTANDING UNIVERSAL DESIGN

The case for making our campus more universally accessible and usable to all is compelling. Universal Design proposes a progressive and evolving approach to the development of

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inclusive environments that can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible. Not only does Universal Design make good sense, it also has many social and legal drivers. The human-centered approach to design that Universal Design supports is user-friendly and convenient, but is also respectful of user dignity, rights and privacy.

> *Universal Design assumes that the range of human ability is ordinary, not special.*
> *- Elaine Ostroff*

A Universal Design approach therefore requires an appreciation of the varied abilities of every person, and to design in such a way that the resulting product, service or environment can be used by everyone regardless of age, size, or ability. By considering the items listed in the *Event Planning Stage* section, along with the inclusion of the *Event Access Statement*, you will be employing Universal Design principles to create a more inclusive event for all.

EVENT PLANNING STAGE

The following are items to include while you are planning your event to ensure you are creating an event aligning with the principles of Universal Design and is welcoming for people with disabilities. While creating an inclusive event is the right thing to do, many of these items are also required by law to ensure access for people with disabilities. As a public university, any event open to the public must include these items.

☐ Conduct a site walk-through to inspect venue accessibility. See the next section for more specific information.

☐ When picking a venue, determine where seating of all guests and participants will be. Identify where accessible seating could be in every section, including in the audience and on stage. More information about accessible seating requirements, including accessible paths of travel is found below in *Possible Accommodation Requests and Definitions*.

☐ Determine seating location of Sign Language Interpreters and Real-Time Captioners, and the people using these services.

☐ If your event will be live streamed online:

   o SF State follows the [California State University Captioning Prioritization framework](). If the event is being live streamed on a public facing web page, real-time captioning must be provided for that event. If you do not make arrangements for real-time captioning in advance, you may not live stream the

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event. Providing a live video display of the event to an overflow room without real-time captioning is prohibited.

o As an alternative, if not open to the public, events may be recorded, edited, captioned and then uploaded as a captioned video to a public facing website after the event takes place.

☐ Post clear, easy-to-read signage for your event. Include signs to indicate where the accessible entrance is located, if not at the main entrance to the event. Consider designating accessible paths of travel throughout the event.

☐ Include the *Event Access Statement* on all advertising materials and confirm all requested accommodations will be met.

☐ Assure marketing materials are produced in an accessible format if disseminated online. Please contact DPRC to request basic training and consultation.

☐ While the DPRC assists in covering costs for certain billable items such as interpreters, captioners etc., for many campus events, there are events such as department graduations, events held by off-campus organizations for constituents other than SF State students or employees, or other situations where DPRC will recover costs from campus departments for these services.

POSSIBLE ACCOMMODATION REQUESTS AND DEFINITIONS

The following are some potential requests you could receive from guests to access and/or participate in your event. To ensure you solicit accommodation requests from all participants, include the *Event Access Statement* on advertising materials. In addition, if a registration form is used, we recommend including a question asking guests if they have any accommodation needs. As a reminder, your department is responsible for collecting accommodation requests, however, the DPRC is available for consultation.

Accessible Seating

Accessible seating includes, but is not limited to reserved spots for wheelchair or scooter users, seating for those who use other assistive devices such as canes, and reserved seating for those with visual impairments who may need to be closer to a screen. It is best practice not to bunch all accessible seating together. Rather, scatter accessible seats throughout the venue so guests have the autonomy to select where they want to sit based on their needs.

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Here are some specific seating needs to consider:

- If your event primarily requires individuals to stand, have chairs reserved for individuals who may need to take a seat.
- Accessible seating must be situated in a place that the individuals sitting can view the event over other seated or standing participants.
- Seating for persons who are deaf or hard-of-hearing must be provided in a location near the stage/presentation area with direct view of the sign language interpreters and/or the real-time captioning screen.
- At least one companion seat shall be provided for each wheelchair space and shall be equivalent in size, quality, comfort, and amenities to the seating in the immediate area.
- If your event is seated and will last for more than one hour, have some seats near entrances/exits reserved for those who cannot sit for long periods of time.

Please contact DPRC if you would like a sign to use to reserve seats. For more information on exact seating space requirements (size and quantity), please see Section 802 of the ADA Standards on Buildings and Sites.

Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Accommodations

If an individual discloses they are deaf or hard-of-hearing, the following accommodations may be offered to provide access. Keep in mind that not all deaf individuals use sign language, nor do all hard-of-hearing individuals use hearing aids. Instead, allow your guest to tell you what will work best for their participation in the event. It is also a best practice, that if main speakers at an event are using microphones, any audience participation also takes place using a microphone. This is especially important if any of the accommodations listed below are being utilized.

Assistive Listening Devices:
Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs) are a personal amplification system worn by hard-of-hearing individuals. ALDs are available at some venues on campus including the Cesar Chavez Student Center, J. Paul Leonard Library, Downtown Campus, Seven Hills & Towers Conference Centers, and McKenna Theatre in the Creative Arts building. For other venues and meeting rooms, please contact the DPRC.

Captioned Multimedia:
A video or film with captions reflects the content of the spoken or descriptive material as well as other auditory elements. Not all videos or films have captions imbedded, and automatic

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captioning provided by services such as YouTube are often inaccurate and not provided in line with current standards for captioning. Please contact the DPRC at captions@sfsu.edu **3-4 weeks in advance** when possible to ensure any media displayed is captioned correctly or for assistance in displaying the captions at your event.

Sign Language Interpreting:
A Sign Language Interpreter is a highly skilled professional who facilitates communication between hearing individuals and deaf or hard-of-hearing individuals. Interpreters are trained to listen to another person's words, inflections and intent and simultaneously render them into the visual language of signs using the mode of communication preferred by the deaf or hard-of-hearing individual. To secure a Sign Language Interpreter for your event, please complete the DPRC's interpreting request form online **at least two weeks prior to the event** when possible to facilitate scheduling.

Real-Time Captioning:
A professional Captioner transcribes spoken communication verbatim by using specialized equipment and software. The deaf or hard-of-hearing individual is able to follow the event as communications are displayed in text format on a personal screen and/or other display device such as the projected screen(s) used for the event. To secure a Real-Time Captioner for your event, please complete the DPRC's real-time captioning request form online **at least two weeks prior to the event** when possible to facilitate scheduling.

Event Handouts and Visual Materials

Materials that are to be distributed at the event should be available upon request to blind or low vision participants. This can be done by emailing in advance or saved on a thumb drive or CD, so they can access such materials on a personal device using text-to-speech software. Please consult with the DPRC for information about accessible documents and how to ensure text-to-speech software will be compatible with your electronic materials.

If visual content will be displayed, such as in art exhibits or poster presentations, alternative formats or services provide equivalent exhibit information for people with sensory disabilities in a manner appropriate to the program material. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Titles of work and narrative using large 14 point san serif fonts on a high contrast background
- Audio descriptions of photographs/artwork
- Tactile replicas of art objects
- Captioning of video or film presentations

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- Trained staff available to provide descriptions or tours

Food Allergies

If food will be served, it is encouraged you speak with your caterer about having common allergens listed on menu cards. Alternatively, for some severe (or uncommon allergies), guests may request a print out of all ingredients available at the event. If possible, have any guests with allergy concerns speak directly with your caterer to ensure there will be food available without the exact allergen or any cross-contamination served.

Fragrance Free Event

Some individuals experience Multiple Chemical Sensitivity/Environmental Illness (MCS/EI) in the presence of scented products. MCS/EI often results from overexposure to chemicals over a long period of time. A person with MCS can become extremely ill by chemicals found in everyday environments. To ensure your event venue is accessible for those with MCS/EI take the following actions:

- Use low odor dry erase and permanent markers
- Ask all guests to wear non-scented body products (e.g., lotion, hair spray, etc.)
- Refrain from using items in the room that give off chemical-based scents (e.g. air fresheners, potpourri, etc.)
- Allow recently dry-cleaned clothing to air out before wearing
- Use the least toxic cleaning products, disinfectants, and paints

Mobility Accommodations

On-Campus Cart Service:
This service can be made available for guests who may have mobility disabilities. Take special consideration if your venue is located far away from where guests are instructed to park. Contact DPRC to inquire about availability and costs **at least two weeks prior to your event** when possible to secure the service. Please note cart services are for accessible transportation needs within campus boundaries and cannot be driven on streets.

Wheelchair Rentals:
While wheelchairs are often a personal device and not considered a reasonable accommodation, they may be offered to guests as a courtesy. Admiral Medical Supply (650-697-0900) has wheelchairs available for rent, with a delivery and pickup service and has a current vendor relationship with the university. Please contact DPRC if you plan to provide

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this service to obtain the required Release of Liability Waiver. Please note, costs for this service will be directly incurred by your department.

Service Animals

Please refer to the Time, Place, and Manner policy (Executive Directive #83-13, page 19) and the CSU Guidance to Faculty and Staff Regarding Service Animals (found on the Chancellor's office website, under Faculty and Staff Resources) for more information about animals on campus and in campus buildings. Please contact the DPRC for any further consultation.

Venue Accessibility

Accessible Entrances:
Keep entrances (and push button to activate doors) clear of tables, cords, and other barriers. If the automatic door opener is malfunctioning, please contact Facilities & Service Enterprises for repair. DPRC appreciates being alerted of any access barriers.

Accessible Paths of Travel:
A path of travel includes a continuous, unobstructed way of pedestrian passage by means of which the area may be approached, entered, and exited. An accessible path of travel may consist of sidewalks, curb ramps and other interior or exterior pedestrian ramps, clear floor paths, parking access aisles, elevators and lifts, or a combination of these elements. **Ensure you do not create barriers or obstructions along accessible paths of travel while setting up your event.**

Accessible paths of travel need to be pointed out with signage. Keep in mind that at least one of each type of good or service must be located on the path of travel for equal access. For example, a literature table upstairs doesn't need to be accessible if there is an identical literature table on the first floor (AND if all the amenities are the same).

Accessible Restrooms:
Most locations on campus will already have accessible restrooms. Prior to your event, ensure accessible restroom stalls are present, in service, and push buttons to gain entry are working.

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