

# SAMPLE MEETING NOTICES

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1. Give people **information in advance** about accessibility and auxiliary aids at meetings.
2. Be sure that the information is **accurate**.
3. Include information about **how to reserve a space or request aids or services** and the deadline for doing so.
4. Be sure that the **means** of making a request is accessible such as through plain text e-mail, accessible forms on the internet or alternate format documents.
5. **Tailor your notice** to the nature of the specific meeting or event, its size and other factors.

## HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF NOTICES

### General statement about physical accessibility:

- > The facility is readily accessible to individuals with disabilities.
- > The facility is accessible under the ADA.
- > The meeting will be held in an accessible location.

### A simple statement to include with notice about a meeting at which you already plan to provide certain accommodations or services:

- > All meetings are fully accessible to individuals with disabilities. A sign language interpreter will be provided. Questions can be directed to 555.555.5555 (V/TTY).

### A more detailed statement to include with a notice about a meeting at which you already plan to provide certain accommodations or services:

- > The following services and accessibility features are available for people with disabilities. Others are available on request with 48 hours' notice:
  - Accessible parking at [51 S. Main St.]
  - Accessible entrance, [example: 55 S. Main Street (accessible from Carter Transit Center and bus stop); if all are accessible, there is no need to include this information].
  - Accessible restrooms.
  - Wheelchair loans. See information desk for availability or call in advance.
  - Sign language interpreters with 72 [or 48, or less if your organization can arrange that] hours' notice.
  - Assistive listening devices with 24 [or another number] hours' notice.
  - Large-print agendas and handouts.
  - Materials in other alternate formats such as large print or electronic documents with 48 [or 24] hours' notice; materials in Braille on 72 [or different number] hours' notice.
- > For more information and reservations or to make requests for auxiliary aids or alternate formats, please call 555.555.5555 (TTY 555.555.4444) or e-mail Staff@Nonprofit.org. Please include a way that we can contact you.

### General statement in registration form (choose or modify one option):

- > If you have a disability and wish to request assistance, please inform [name of planner] by attaching your requirements to this form, or call [planner and contact information] by [date, if different from registration deadline].

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- > Accommodations and modifications for people with disabilities are available upon request. Please contact [planner and contact information] by [date, if different from registration deadline].
- > If you have a disability and require accommodation in order to fully participate in this activity, please check here. You will be contacted by someone from our staff to discuss your specific needs.

**Where you include a deadline for accommodation requests, consider adding:**

- > Requests for accommodations or modifications made after [the advertised date] will be honored to the maximum extent feasible, but it may not be possible to fulfill them.

**Detailed questions for planners to ask when receiving a request in response to the general statement above or to include in the registration form if preferred:**

- > I will need the following accommodations in order to participate:
  - ASL interpreter
  - Other interpreter (please specify)
  - Note-taker
  - Assistive listening device (specify whether requesting hearing aid compatible)
  - Captioning
  - Large print
  - Braille
  - Audio cassette
  - Electronic format
  - Wheelchair accessibility
  - Orientation to facility
  - Diet restrictions (please specify)
  - An assistant will accompany me.
  - Other (please specify)
- > I can be reached at [number and e-mail].

# HOW [NAME OF NONPROFIT] PROVIDES COMMUNICATION ASSISTANCE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES<sup>1</sup>

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1. For all communications, keep in mind the basics of disability etiquette. See Tip Sheet 1.
2. For **meetings**, we follow the guidelines in [Tip Sheets 6 to 8 and sample meeting notices in Template A— indicate which you prefer]. [Staff person] can assist you with these accommodations.
3. For **phone conversations with people who are deaf or hard of hearing or who have speech disabilities**, in most circumstances, you should use the free telecommunications relay service. Call 711 and a relay operator will place a call to the other person and act as a translator. See [Tip Sheet 4] for information about how the service works.
4. For **phone calls on hot lines or other urgent matters**, if the person with a disability uses a TTY, use our TTY. See [Tip Sheet 4] for information about using TTYs for placing and receiving calls. Our TTY is located at [person’s desk]. Our TTY number is [###-###-####].
5. For **in-person interactions** other than meetings at our location with **people who have hearing disabilities**, the means of communication will vary according to the situation.
  - > If a meeting or appointment can be **scheduled in advance**, ask the person if he or she requests an auxiliary aid.

If the person asks for an interpreter, that request should usually be honored unless (1) there is not enough time to get an interpreter or (2) the situation is simple and can be handled by an exchange of documents or in writing (if the person has adequate skills in written English). [Customize for the nonprofit’s particular situation. For example, a person won’t usually need an interpreter to get a list of child care providers and find out which ones have openings. The person would probably need an interpreter to discuss his or her child’s care. A person who generally uses sign language to communicate will need one for a meeting where she obtains legal or financial counseling.]

If an interpreter is needed, see Tip Sheet 2 about choosing and using interpreters. To obtain an interpreter, call \_\_\_\_\_, who will call our contractor. We prefer [72] hours’ notice because the cost increases greatly with less than 48 hours’ notice.

- > If this is a walk-in encounter, ask if it would be OK to write notes. Use your judgment. If the situation is not a simple one, you may need to schedule a future appointment for a time when you can get an interpreter. Remember, the person may not have good written English skills. You could also ask if it is OK to use a computer to type back and forth, or use our UbiDuo or borrow one from [a nearby nonprofit]. If you need an interpreter quickly, consider using video remote interpreting, which allows us to connect with an interpreter who is not on-site but appears on a computer monitor or screen. Contact \_\_\_\_\_ for information about how to arrange for and use VRI.

6. For **in-person interactions** other than meetings at our location with **people who have speech disabilities**, you will usually be able to understand the person if you take extra time and are patient. Don’t assume you understand if you don’t; ask questions. Don’t complete the person’s words or sentences. As discussed above as to people with hearing disabilities, sometimes using notes or a keyboard will work. Some people with speech disabilities have communication boards, and they point to letters and words on the board.

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<sup>1</sup> This template is intended to be completed by a nonprofit and made available to staff. It will not work for all types of nonprofits or all types of services.

7. For **people with low vision**, we have these materials on hand in large print:

> [ \_\_\_\_\_ ], kept at [ \_\_\_\_\_ ]

> [ \_\_\_\_\_ ], kept at [ \_\_\_\_\_ ]

8. These types of documents can be enlarged at 130 percent on a photocopier to make them large print:

> [ \_\_\_\_\_ ],

> [ \_\_\_\_\_ ]

9. Our [**monthly newsletter**] can be printed in large print by changing the font to 18 point.

10. We have one copy of [ \_\_\_\_\_ ] in **Braille** at [ \_\_\_\_\_ ]. Contact \_\_\_\_\_ to put other materials in Braille. We need \_\_\_\_\_ days' notice to do so.

11. We provide other documents in **accessible electronic format**. Contact [ \_\_\_\_\_ ] for details.

12. We are in the process of making our **website** accessible. [The home page is accessible. We expect the remainder to be accessible by (date).]

13. These DVDs and videotapes are captioned: [ \_\_\_\_\_ ]

14. Contact \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ with any questions or for assistance.

# HOW [NAME OF NONPROFIT] MAKES POLICY MODIFICATIONS AND ACCOMMODATIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

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[NAME OF NONPROFIT] is committed to full inclusion of people with disabilities in our activities and services. We welcome people with disabilities and seek to integrate them into everything we do.

For information about services and accommodations provided at meetings, face to face or small group situations; communications assistance; and alternate formats of materials, see [Templates A and B and Tip Sheets 2 to 8].

Service animals (dogs) are welcome in our facilities. [At times, miniature horses are allowed.] See [Tip Sheet 3].

## **INCLUDE OR MODIFY THE FOLLOWING AS SUITED TO YOUR NONPROFIT:**

- > We move classes or other activities to an accessible location if needed.
- > We welcome volunteers with disabilities and ensure that they have meaningful work to do. The opportunity to serve is a benefit to them; their talents are a benefit to us.
- > We modify procedures or formats for applying for services, as appropriate.
- > We offer separate programs for people with disabilities only if necessary.
- > We seek membership of people with disabilities on our boards and committees.
- > We take people with disabilities into account in planning for emergencies.
- > If we need to notify our clients or participants of a building closing or any change of circumstances, we are sure to find a way to notify people with disabilities affecting their hearing or vision.
- > We offer assistance, and provide it if it is accepted, in a variety of situations. We will:
  - Help a person carry things in our thrift shop, food pantry, kitchen or shelter.
  - Accommodate people who have difficulty waiting in line for services.
  - Take the time to provide assistance to a person with a cognitive impairment in filling out forms or understanding a process.
- > We welcome suggestions for improvement. Please address suggestions to \_\_\_\_\_.

# ACCESSIBLE FEATURES OF [ \_\_\_\_\_ ] BUILDING

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**USE OR MODIFY AS APPROPRIATE.**

Accessible parking is located at \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.

The \_\_\_\_\_ entrance is accessible.

The \_\_\_\_\_ entrance is accessible from the subway station at \_\_\_\_\_ or the bus stop at \_\_\_\_\_.

There is an accessible restroom on each floor for each sex.

The second floor is accessible.

The basement level is not accessible. If someone needs to access an activity in the basement, we will move it to an accessible level. We will not hold public meetings or those that people can attend without notice in the basement.

There are accessible public telephones at \_\_\_\_\_.

Seating in \_\_\_\_\_ room is accessible. To get to it, go \_\_\_\_\_.

We have assistive listening devices stored in \_\_\_\_\_.

A wheelchair is available to borrow. It is kept in \_\_\_\_\_.

If there is an emergency and the elevator is shut down, there is an area of rescue assistance on the \_\_\_\_\_ floor at \_\_\_\_\_. There is an evacuation chair at \_\_\_\_\_. Usually emergency responders will assist in using these chairs. [Name] knows how to use it. But do not use it unless an individual agrees.

Emergency exits that are accessible are at \_\_\_\_\_.

The drinking fountain on \_\_\_\_\_ is accessible.

If an activity needs to be moved to an accessible space, use \_\_\_\_\_ on the first floor.

We will assist a person with a sight disability if he or she requests or accepts assistance in getting around in the building.

There is an accessible route to a cab stand at \_\_\_\_\_.

Our front door is too heavy for some people to use independently. There is a bell for a person to ring if he or she needs assistance.

We have a ramp at our entrance, but it is too steep for some people to use. There is a buzzer at the bottom of the ramp for a person to use to summon assistance. The buzzer at the entrance door can be used to alert us if someone needs assistance going down the ramp.

We will respond promptly to someone who uses the bell or buzzer and help in a respectful way.