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Accessibility Tip Sheet for Virtual Meetings and Events

Consider language and disability accessibility needs for all virtual meetings.

1. [Ask about access](#)
2. [Determine the best virtual meeting platform](#)
3. [Fulfill access and accommodation requests](#)
4. [Get feedback](#)

1. Ask about Access

Ask meeting participants in advance about access needs. Even if you know everyone who will be attending, you will not necessarily know all of their access needs.

Check out some [sample questions](#) to ask participants about access needs for virtual meetings. It helps to share expectations about how the meeting will be structured.

Once you know what participants need, you can confirm that you have received their access requests. This is a good time to follow up with any clarifying questions if you do not understand a request or if you need more information.

2. Determine the best virtual meeting platform

After you learn what participants' need, you can determine the best virtual meeting platform.

There are many different virtual meeting platforms. Some include video conferencing, captioning, and type-chat features. Sometimes you may prefer to meet by phone, using a conference line.

To determine which platform to use:

- **Decide if you need interpretation.** Some platforms have video features for sign language interpreters. Some platforms have separate language lines for spoken language interpretation.
- **Decide if you will provide live captioning.** Have participants requested captions for your meeting? Live captioning looks different depending on the platform you choose.
- **Determine the number of meeting participants.** Some platforms work better for larger groups and others are best for small group discussions.
- **Decide if you will be sharing materials during the meeting.** Some platforms have dynamic screen-sharing options. Some platforms others participants to exchange materials and links in the chat box features.

Some examples of accessible virtual platforms include [Zoom Video Conferencing](#) and [Adobe Connect](#).

3. Fulfill access and accommodation requests

Some common access requests include:

- **Receiving materials in advance.** Receiving meeting materials in advance can help people with disabilities that impact visual processing and

reading comprehension prepare for meetings. It can also be helpful to some Deaf participants and participants for whom English is not their first language when preparing for meetings. Blind participants and people with low vision might want to test the electronic document in advance to be sure it is compatible with their assistive technology.

- **Large Print materials.** Materials in fonts larger than 14 point can be easier for people with low vision to read.
- **Translated materials.** Even if someone speaks and understands English, they may read and comprehend written information better in their first language.
- **Interpreters.** If you are hosting a meeting in English, Deaf participants and participants who speak languages other than English may request interpreters for virtual meetings. It can take several weeks to book qualified interpreters, so it is important to gather information in advance.
- **Captioning.** Some participants who are D/deaf and hard of hearing may request captions. Captions are also helpful to participants with disabilities that impact auditory and language comprehension and processing.

Some additional access considerations when planning your virtual meeting:

- **How long will the meeting last?** Sign language interpreters work in teams of two for meetings longer than 1 hour.
- **Will it be one meeting, or a series of multiple meetings with the same group?** You will want to coordinate the schedule with spoken and sign language interpreters if needed.
- **Will you be sharing a PowerPoint presentation or other meeting materials?** You may need to share materials in alternate formats (large print, translated, video, etc.). You will also want to share materials in advance with interpreters.
- **Will participants be able to speak?** You may decide to have participants typing questions in a chat box rather than asking questions aloud. Consider reading the questions aloud so that the interpreters and captioners can convey this information to participants.

4. Get feedback

After the meeting is over, ask participants how it went for them. Did they receive the access they needed? This can inform how you can provide access for future meetings.

Sample Access Questions

We are committed to ensuring access to our **virtual meeting(s)** for all participants, including people with disabilities, people who are Deaf, and people who speak languages other than English. If you have any questions, please contact (NAME) at (EMAIL) or (PHONE NUMBER) before the meeting.

Our meeting will take place on (DATE) from (TIME-TIME).

Please share your contact information with us:

- Name
- Email Address
- Phone Number

We will host this meeting in English. We will provide interpreters by request.

1. Do you need a spoken language interpreter?

- No
- Yes (please specify the language)

2. Do you need a sign language interpreter?

- No
- Yes (please specify the type of sign language interpreter)

We may share PowerPoint slides and other materials in the virtual meeting.

3. If we use or distribute electronic meeting materials, what is your preferred language for meeting materials?

We will share materials as electronic PDF files, unless you request an alternate format. Do you need materials in an alternate format? If so, please specify.

4. Do you need any other accommodations to fully participate in this virtual meeting?

- Yes
- No

5. Please select any additional accommodations that you need from the list below:

- Captioning
- Electronic materials 24 hours in advance
- Materials in larger than 14 point font
- Others (please explain)

We may contact you for further information if necessary. Thank you!