



Tasmanian Government Accessible Events Guidelines

The Guidelines

Purpose

To assist Tasmanian Government agencies to conduct events that are accessible to people with disability.

Why ensure that events are accessible?

To make sure that people with disability can attend, participate and contribute meaningfully in Tasmanian Government events

Almost one quarter of Tasmanians (24.6%)¹ experience disability. People with disability face a range of barriers to participation in public events. There are two main areas of concern:

- **Physical Accessibility:** People with mobility difficulties may be unable to get into venues, move around within the venue or access toilets.
- **Communication:** People with a vision or hearing impairment, intellectual disability or other disability that affects understanding or communication, may have difficulty accessing spoken, written and audiovisual information.

We have a legal obligation to make sure that we do not discriminate against people when we hold public events

The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)* and the *Anti-discrimination Act 1998 (Tas)* both create a legal obligation for organisations to ensure that they do not discriminate against people with disability, including when they are holding events.

Planning ahead

The most effective way of ensuring access for everyone is to think about access at the earliest planning stages of an event. This means thinking about the access requirements of attendees, staff, speakers, performers and exhibitors who may have a disability. Planning for accessibility will require sufficient lead-in time to plan for and respond to identified access issues. Provision should be made in the event budget to address the access needs identified by participants.

For large public events, organisers should consider engaging professional advice on access issues (see the professional association for Australian access consultants at <https://www.access.asn.au/>).

¹ *Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers 2012*, ABS, 2013 Cat No 4430.0

The basics

When planning an event, the basic requirements are to provide:

- Accessible online or electronic information about the event
- An accessible registration process
- An accessible venue
- Accessible information at the event
- Accessible catering

Agencies will also need the capacity to respond appropriately to any additional access requirements identified by participants.

Accessible online or electronic information about the event

Event information such as promotional material, invitations, program outlines or agendas should be available in an accessible format. Some people who are blind or have vision impairments use screen reading software which reads aloud written electronic text or displays it on a braille display. Screen readers often have difficulty reading PDF documents. This means that the information should also be available in a format such as Word or html.

Event promotional information should make it clear that every effort will be made to ensure that the event is accessible for people with disability and invite people to discuss their access needs with organisers.

For example:

Access for people with disability

The venue is wheelchair accessible. If you need anything else so you can participate in this event, please indicate on your registration form.

In the absence of clear statements about accessibility, people with disability may assume that they are not welcome to attend and that the event will not cater to their needs.

An accessible registration process

People who use screen readers sometimes find on-line booking systems or electronic forms difficult to use.

The use of CAPTCHA (Completely Automated Public Turing test to tell Computers and Humans Apart) – where users are requested to copy random letters and numbers to verify that they are humans and not a computer, often used for booking systems – is problematic for screen reader users.

Where on-line registration systems are used, it should be made clear to invitees that other forms of registration such as telephone or e-mail registration are available.

All forms should be available in Word or HTML format.

If the event has a cost for participants, please ensure that the event is registered with the Tasmanian Companion Card Program. This program allows eligible people with disability to obtain a free ticket for their carer at participating venues and events.

An accessible venue

The basic requirements of an accessible venue are that a person with a mobility disability, for example someone who uses a wheelchair, can travel to the venue, enter and move around all relevant parts of the facility, and that there is an accessible toilet. There are, however, further factors to be considered to ensure that people can enjoy appropriate access to a facility. The key issues are identified in the Accessible Events Checklist

Accessible information at the event

A range of formats should be considered for oral, audio-visual and written information provided at an event, so that the information is accessible to people who are blind or who have a vision impairment; people who are Deaf or have hearing impairments and people with intellectual disability or cognitive impairments. Auslan (sign language) interpreters, live captioning or use of a hearing loop may be required for people who are Deaf.

Accessible catering

Catering is sometimes overlooked when considering needs of people with disability. Food and drinks can be inaccessible when the counters are too high for a person who uses a wheelchair or because food items may be difficult to handle for people with physical impairments that make it difficult to grip or hold items.

In addition, there may be dietary requirements that need to be addressed so that people can participate fully in an event.

The Accessible Events Checklist and accompanying resources

The Accessible Events Checklist and accompanying resources provide more detailed guidance for organisers to ensure that their events are accessible.

- [Checklist 1: The Accessible Events: The basics checklist](#)
- Checklist 2: Booking and using AUSLAN Interpreters
- Checklist 3: Using hearing augmentation systems
- Checklist 4: Outdoor events
- Checklist 5: Getting the language right
- Checklist 6: Catering tips

See also: [The Easy English Checklist](#) and the [Easy English Handbook 2014](#).

Further information and contacts

The Accessible Events Guide produced by Meetings and Events Australia is an excellent resource to assist with accessibility issues.

The Australian Network on Disability has a range of accessibility resources available at <http://www.and.org.au>.



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