

Tips for Making Your Event Accessible



Blayney Shire Council as part of its commitment to build awareness and promote social inclusion and accessibility in our community. As part of this commitment, council wishes to promote to event organisers the importance of making events more accessible.

The Disability Discrimination Act is a law that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities and opens doors for full participation in all aspects of everyday life.

This fact sheet is intended to help event organizers design events to accommodate people of all abilities and make their event more inclusive to the wider population.



Making the Venue Accessible

Particular attention should be given to the accessibility of the event location. Understanding how visitors arrive at and move through your event will go a long way in identifying and removing barriers. Some suggestions include:

- Access from public sidewalks, parking areas, and public transportation
- Access to the booths, displays/exhibits and activities at your event
- Provide access to public restrooms and portable toilets
- Avoiding obstruction to other public amenities, such as drinking fountains and benches
- Provision of ramps

Seating

- If patron seating is provided, accessible seating and companion seating should be provided.
- Accessible seating and companion seating areas should be identified using the international symbol for accessibility and placed for maximum visibility.
- Portable tables should be arranged far enough apart so a person with a mobility device can manoeuvre between them when patrons are seated.

Service Animals

Event organizers must allow people with disabilities to bring their service animals into all areas of the event open to other event patrons. Service animals are animals that are individually trained to perform tasks for people with disabilities. Service dogs include animals in training being guided by a trainer.

Parking

- If parking is provided for an event, accessible parking is also required. If no parking is provided for an event, an accessible passenger loading and unloading zone is required.
- Accessible parking and passenger loading and unloading zones are required to be identified using the international symbol for accessibility and should be mounted where they are visible.

Accessible Routes

The path a person with a disability takes to enter and move through your event is called an accessible route. This route should be at least 1m wide and not be blocked.

- All pathways should remain clear of protrusions and attention should be given to avoid trip hazards.
- Cords, wires, hoses, etc. located on a pathway must be covered with a cord cover or other similar device.
- An alternate path of travel should be provided whenever the existing pedestrian access route in a public right-of-way is blocked by temporary conditions. Where possible, the alternate path of travel should be parallel to the disrupted pedestrian access route and on the same side of the street. If an alternate path of travel is provided, signage designating the alternate path of travel is required. Where the alternate path of travel is adjacent to potentially hazardous conditions, the path must be protected with a portable barricade.
- If a raised area (stage, podium, dais, etc.) is to be used by event attendees, accessible access to the raised area must be provided.
- If crowd control measures are to be used, plans must be in place to ensure that the path of travel is not blocked and that people who are blind or have low vision do not encounter trip hazards.
- Temporary/portable ramps that do not exceed an 8.33% (1:12) grade may be used to provide an accessible

Sales or Service Counters and Displays

- There should be an accessible pathway to each display or exhibit.
- There should be at least 1.5m of turning space in front of each display/exhibit.
- If sales or service counters are provided for event, a portion of the counter should be no more than 0.9m above the finished floor or the ground and the width must be at least 0.9m wide.
- Vendors should be instructed to consider access to their displays by people with mobility devices.



Portable Toilets

The total number of portable toilets to be provided for an event determines the required number of accessible portable toilets in any given area. This number should be 5% of the total, but in no event should there be less than one for each location. If a single unit is placed, it must be accessible. The placement of single units will increase the number of accessible portable toilets required for your event.

- If portable toilets are provided, accessible units must be located on a level area.
- An accessible path of a minimum of 0.9m to each accessible portable toilet is required.
- Access to the door of a portable toilet must not be impeded by any barriers. Pay attention to ensure that portable toilet doors do not open outward and thus protrude, onto pathways.
- Accessible portable toilets must be identified with the international symbol of accessibility.

Other suggestions include:

- Availability of sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices, Braille or other alternative formats if required.
- Training of staff, volunteers and others on how to involve, assist and accommodate people with disabilities.

Steps for Success

Making events accessible and welcoming to people of all abilities is the right thing to do. Taking proactive and thoughtful measures will ensure legislative compliance and contribute to a quality event. Emphasize with your event staff and event vendors the importance of maintaining an accessible environment for customers and patrons with disabilities.