Recommendations for an Accessible Caucus

Planning for accessible caucus and convention activities is important. It starts with choosing an accessible venue, and continues with preparing the space and the meeting process to accommodate attendees with diverse needs. This quick guide includes some common accessibility tips to get you started.

- **Post signs along the accessible route to the caucus location, both inside and outside of the building.**
  - Make sure signs are up high enough to see. It’s especially useful if the sign can be seen and understood by somebody who is trying to read it from their vehicle.

- **Clearly mark accessible parking.**
  - You can create accessible parking with temporary signs and block off adjacent parking spots to serve as access aisles.

- **Make sure doorways are accessible with 36” wide openings, thresholds 1/4” or less, and doors are easily to open.**
  - Check that door handles are no higher than 48” and operate with a closed fist (doorknobs do not work!)
  - Do not prop the door open with a trash can or other bulky object, they get in the way!

- **Check that ramps are available to use and have a gentle slope.**
  - Clear items placed on ramps and walkways that intrude on a 36” passageway.
  - The top and bottom of a ramp should have a clear area 5’ x 5’
  - Any slope greater than 5%, inside or out, should have a handrail.

- **Ensure all stairs have non-slip treads and continuous rails on both sides.**

- **Clearly mark all accessible bathrooms.**

- **If the caucus room isn’t at ground level, working elevators must be available to use.**
  - Post a sign directing attendees to the elevator.

- **Check that the caucus room has 36” aisles and adequate space to maneuver between tables, chairs, and other furniture.**
  - Be creative and rearrange!
- Create space at the end of aisles for wheelchairs, service animals, etc.

- If there are objects above 27 inches from the floor that protrude from the wall more than 4 inches, place an object (e.g. cone, box, small trash can) on the floor beneath it to alert people who are blind or have low vision.
  - Think about navigating with a cane and how you would want an alert that you’re about to hit your head or hip on something you can’t see.

- Use microphones!!
  - Everybody likes to be able to hear clearly, and this particularly accommodates those who are hard of hearing.

- Create an accessible seating area.
  - Make sure the objects you use to create the accessible seating area don’t become barriers themselves.

- Provide chairs or benches for people to use while waiting in line or listening to speeches.
  - Rest assured, you will not have too many. If you have them, people will use them.

- Have an easy-to-locate link or phone number on your party website to request an accommodation ahead of time.

- Have a volunteer(s) designated at each site to provide assistance, handle accommodation requests and answer questions.
  - Make sure other people know which volunteer is an accessibility expert.

- Be prepared to provide accessible voting methods for voters who require accommodations.

For additional resources, we invite you to visit the website of our sister agency, Disability Rights Iowa. There you will find tutorials developed by Microsoft and the American Bar Association that address planning for accessible meetings. Go to: https://drivoting.org/caucus-access-resources/access-materials-for-staffers/

This fact sheet has general information and is not a comprehensive checklist of ADA requirements. It is not intended as legal advice. Only an attorney can give you legal advice to help you with a problem, or answer a question.