



ACADEMIC SUPPORT AND ACCESS CENTER

Making On-Campus Events Accessible

I. Welcome

- a. Reasonable effort should be made to ensure that anyone with any type of disability is welcome and able to attend an event, and fully participate in all associated activities at American University (AU).
- b. Advanced planning is extremely beneficial to ensure that disability-related accommodations, if requested, can be carried out in a timely manner and that all aspects of your event are accessible. An accommodation for one person can benefit more than just the person requesting that accommodation and can create a more universally designed event.
- c. The Academic Support and Access Center (ASAC) is here to support you to better understand accommodations for events and to guide you through the planning and execution stages for your event.

II. Accessibility requirements

- a. AU has a legal obligation to ensure accessibility for any university event or program open to the AU community.
- b. For co-hosted events at AU or at another institution/location, event planners must coordinate with the co-hosting organization/institution to determine accessibility plans.

III. Marketing of Your Event, Pre-Event Planning, and Registration

- a. For all advertisements and event materials, an event coordinator from your office or organization should be identified as the point of contact. This is important for an attendee or participant to know how they can request an accommodation and to whom they will address the accommodation request.
- b. Suggested statement for advertising materials: "If you would like to request a disability-related accommodation or accessibility information, please contact (office/staff member) at phone or email. Requests should be made by (date at least two weeks in advance of the event)."
- c. Review your event and the nature of all associated activities to assess if barriers exist for participants to fully engage. Consider the needs of attendees who may have mobility, vision, auditory, or learning differences.
- d. We strongly suggest that event organizers create a registration form that includes a field for attendees to request accommodations by a certain date (usually two weeks in advance), especially if film and media will be shown at the event.

IV. Guidance in Responding to Accessibility Requests

- a. If an attendee or participant requests an accommodation and you need assistance understanding or carrying out the accommodation, the ASAC can be a resource.
- b. Examples of aids and services which may be required to provide for attendees on the part of AU:
 - i. Route planning to event site
 1. Contact the ASAC to review the accessible path or route of travel into the building and to subsequent floors of the event.

- ii. Accessible event location and room set-up
 - 1. The majority of buildings at AU are accessible, but several locations are not. Things to consider include whether stairs are necessary to access event space, if bathrooms in the building are accessible, and if the room has ample space between furniture and paths of travel. Contact the ASAC for guidance or for support in requesting a room change if possible.
- iii. Sign language interpreters or Real-Time Captioning (CART)
 - 1. Either an event organizer or attendee must make a formal request through the ASAC online form, two weeks prior to the event if possible. The link to the request form can be found here: <https://www.american.edu/provost/academic-access/ASAC-Interpreter-Request-Form-new.cfm>
 - 2. The ASAC can coordinate sign language interpreters or CART without confirmation of an accommodation request; however, the sponsoring office or organization would be responsible for the cost, not the ASAC.
 - 3. As a reminder, if sign language interpreters or CART providers are present at an event, please make sure that area of room is well-lit for viewing purposes.
- iv. Closed Captioning (CC) for film and media
 - 1. Check to see if the film or media you are showing has captioning. If it does, watch to make sure it is accurate. Some platforms such as YouTube have CC but it is poor in quality. The ASAC can assist with captioning short and long materials. The longer the film or media clip, the longer it may take to prepare. Generally, we need at least two weeks' notice for captioning requests.
- v. Assistive listening devices
 - 1. Sounds and speaking should be amplified for attendees with auditory needs. To request assistive listening devices, please contact the ASAC in advance.
- vi. Materials in an alternative format such as enlarged print, Braille, or electronic version
 - 1. Ensure all participants can read handouts, PowerPoint slides, and resources by creating accessible online documents or alternative format hard copy documents. Contact the ASAC for support.
- vii. Food
 - 1. If serving food, ask if any attendees have any food allergies that need to be accommodated.
- c. Examples of aids and services that are personal in nature and may not be required to provide on the part of AU:
 - i. Hearing aids
 - ii. Wheelchairs
 - iii. Personal transportation services to/around campus
 - iv. Personal assistants
 - v. Parking passes