Ensuring Program and Facility Accessibility in Community Service Programs

Accessibility Checklist
There are many checklists that programs can use to assess their compliance with legal requirements for structure and devices when providing community services and programs.   Accessibility of programs is less concrete and readily visible but equally important.   For example, staff should have the knowledge to use TTY/TDD or receive 711 relay calls or request interpreters; information for people with disabilities can be made available in a variety of formats and presented in a clear, understandable fashion; that emergency procedures at community centers that serve and provide services and programs take account of individuals with disabilities; and in general, people with disabilities are able to equally access programs and services provided.

Under the law, it is not sufficient to simply respond to requests for assistance and accommodations from people with disabilities.   When a community service program is designed, providers are required to proactively anticipate the needs of people with various physical, mental, and sensory disabilities. This checklist provides guidelines for accessibility.

Through the use of this checklist, community service programs can help ensure that:
- Compliance with the law (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act)
- Create an environment that makes people with disabilities feel welcome; and
- Design programs and services so that people with disabilities can fully participate.

Staff Knowledge (Complete the following by answering each question with yes or no.   If yes, please check the box, if no, leave box blank.)

□ Staff is aware of the importance of making people with disabilities feel welcome

□ Staff have had basic awareness training on how to meet the needs of volunteers and members with disabilities

□ Staff understands requirements to provide reasonable accommodations to volunteers and members of potential volunteers and members with disabilities, unless determined that providing such an accommodation would cause an undue hardship

□ Staff understands the obligations of federally funded programs under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, and that

- People with disabilities have the same rights as anyone else to access programs and become volunteers and members
- Services, programs and facilities must be readily accessible
- Services and programs must be delivered in a setting that is as fully integrated as possible (meaning that volunteers and members with disabilities serve alongside volunteers and members who are not disabled)

□ Staff understands that they must make reasonable modifications in services and programs to avoid discrimination against people with disabilities, unless determined that making these modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the program/community service

□ Staff understands that it is required to provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services to ensure that communication with volunteers and members and potential volunteers and members with disabilities is as effective as communication with other individuals, unless this would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of the service or activity being provided

□ Staff is aware that they cannot decide that an action, which would allow program access by a person with a disability, is unfeasible. Such decisions must be made by a designated senior staff member (or by consulting the ADA Coordinator)

□ Staff have been trained in emergency evacuation procedures for people with disabilities, including the evacuation of persons with mobility impairments

□ Staff know how to use various equipment and materials for assisting people with disabilities, including the telecommunications device for the deaf (TTY, TDD), accessible work stations, accessible materials, etc.

Disclosure of Disability
□ When working with volunteers and members with disabilities, staff discuss specific task and accommodations as it pertains to the individual's need to perform the essential functions of the position

□ Staff who are working with volunteers and members with a disability get documented permission from the individual before discussing information about his/her disability with other staff or external individuals (e.g., community center, service agencies, volunteer organizations, etc.)

□ After documenting permission and specific information of the disability to be disclosed, when working with volunteers and members with disabilities, staff may provide information to other staff about an individual's disability only as needed

□ Private space is available for confidential discussion of disability-related issues

□ Any discussions about a disability between volunteers and/or members and other individuals takes place in private; if discussions are by phone calls, calls are made in an area where the caller cannot be overheard

□ Policies and procedures are in place, known to all and disseminated to ensure that staff does not disclose information about a person's disability to others

Accommodation Requests
□ Each program has documented procedures and guidelines for handling requests for reasonable accommodations and reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures

□ A designated senior manager, senior staff person or the ADA Coordinator is designated as the point person/resource to assist in accommodation requests, accessing external resources and acquiring assistive technology or products

□ Each program posts clear procedures for requesting reasonable accommodations and modifications in public areas, and includes them in writing in outreach materials

Recruitment and Orientation
□ Each volunteer and community member is offered assistance in completing forms and application materials

□ When signing up for orientation or an interview, each individual is asked whether they will need assistance or accommodations to participate

□ When a person needs assistance in filling out the application or other forms, this is done one-on-one in a private room (area), where the individual's responses cannot be overheard

□ Procedures for requesting reasonable accommodations and modifications are clearly understood and included in writing and reviewed verbally

□ If needed, a list of auxiliary aids and services for communication, assistive technology devices, and material in accessible formats is made available by contacting the Family Services ADA Coordinator.

Welcoming Environmental Factors
□ People with disabilities are in integrated settings; people with disabilities participate fully in all programs and activities alongside people without disabilities

□ Volunteers with disabilities are routinely asked if they will be able to perform their volunteer service with or without accommodations

□ Volunteers are offered the option of meeting with staff in private offices as needed

□ Information is presented in a way that is understandable to people who have limited or no reading skill

□ Information that is presented orally is also available in writing for people who are deaf or hard of hearing, and for people who learning style requires reinforcement of items in writing

□ For people with attention deficit disorder and hearing impairments, a quiet place is available to read and comprehend information and materials needed for the volunteer activity

General Communication
□ Each program has taken appropriate steps to ensure that communication with volunteers with disabilities is as effective as communication with people without disabilities

□ Staff members shall ask all volunteers if they need information in alternative format or need help in understanding information

□ Staff informs all volunteers that accommodations are provided upon request

□ Each program has a procedure for responding to requests for auxiliary aids and services

□ Each program has identified a source for sign language interpreters, and can respond in a timely manner to interpreter requests

Materials
□ Each program activity has availability for basic/essential materials in alternate format (large print, Braille, audio tape, text on disk, etc.) if needed upon request

□ Materials are available in format that account for a variety of learning styles, and are also accessible to people who have limited or no reading skills (e.g., reading to the individual or listening to audio tapes)

□ Paper materials are presented in contrasting colors (e.g., black and white)

Evacuation Procedures
□ Individuals that are deaf or hard of hearing are advised of the location of fire or smoke alarms for ensuring safety

□ There is an established emergency evacuation plan that addresses the needs of people with disabilities, including persons with mobility impairments

Community Outreach Materials

□ Marketing materials mention people with disabilities as one of the groups that are encouraged to participate

□ Pictures and graphics used include positive images of people with disabilities serving as volunteers

□ Program flyers indicate the ADA accommodation notice which includes a phone number to call for an accommodation.

If any person with a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) needs special accommodations to participate in this proceeding, he or she should contact the Family Services Department at 407-836-6568, not later than two business days prior to the proceeding. When operating under Florida's Government in the Sunshine Law, the Supreme Court recognizes the importance of public participation.   Chapter 286.011, Florida Statutes

□ Off site presentations to the general public are held in locations that are fully accessible to people with disabilities

Recordkeeping Requirements

□ Any disability status (when known) is kept in a secured place that ensures confidentiality.

Facilities Checklist

The following checklist ensures that your facility is physically accessible and welcoming for people with disabilities and complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements for physical accessibility.

Part 1 – Entrance Accessibility

People with disabilities should be able to arrive on the site, approach the building, and enter the building as freely as everyone else. At least one path of travel should be safe and accessible for everyone, including people with disabilities.

Path of Travel

□ Is there a path of travel that does not require the use of stairs?

□ Is the path of travel stable, firm, and slip resistant?

□ Is the path at least 36 inches wide?

□ Can a person with a visual disability detect all objects protruding into the path of travel with a cane?

> *Note: In order to be detected using a cane, an object must be within 27 inches of the ground.   Objects hanging or mounted overhead must be higher than 80 inches to provide clear headroom. It is not necessary to remove objects that protrude less than 4 inches from the wall.*

□ Do curbs along the pathway have curb cuts at drives, parking and drop-offs?

Ramps

□ Are the slopes of ramps no greater than 1:15 slope?

> *Note: Slope is given as a ratio of the height to the length; 1:12 means that for every 12 inches along the base of the ramp, the height increases one inch. For a 1:12 maximum slope, at least one foot of ramp length is needed for each inch of height.*

□ Do all ramps longer than 6 feet have railings on both sides?

□ Are railings sturdy, and between 34 and 38 inches high?

□ Is the width between railings at least 36 inches?

□ Are ramps non-slip?

□ At the top and bottom of ramps and at switchbacks, is there a 5 foot long level landing at every 30 foot horizontal length of ramp?

Parking and Drop Off Areas
□ Are an adequate number of accessible parking spaces available (8 feet wide for car plus 5 foot striped access aisle)?

        For guidance in determining the appropriate number to designate, the table below gives the ADAAG requirements for new construction and alterations. For lots with more than 100 spaces, contact ADAAG or go to www.access-board.gov for a full listing.

Total Spaces	Required # of accessible spaces
1 – 25	1
26 - 50	2
51 - 75	3
76 - 100	4

□ Are 16 foot wide spaces, with 98 inches of vertical clearance, available for lift equipped vans? Note: At least one of every 8 accessible spaces must be van accessible.

□ Are the accessible spaces closest to the accessible entrance?

□ Are accessible spaces marked with the International Symbol of Accessibility?

□ Are there signs reading "van accessible" at van spaces?

□ Is there an enforcement procedure to ensure that only those who need it use accessible parking?

Entrances
□ If there are stairs at the main entrance, is there a ramp, lift, or alternative accessible entrance? *Note: Do not use a service entrance as the accessible entrance unless there is o other option.*

□ Do all inaccessible entrances have signs indicating the location of an accessible entrance?

□ Can the alternate accessible entrance be used independently?

□ Does the entrance door have at least a 32 inch clear opening (for a double door, at least one 32 inch leaf)?

□ Is there at least 18 inches of clear wall space on the pull side of the door next to the handle? *Note: A person using a wheelchair needs this space to get close enough to open the door.*

□ Is the threshold level less than ¼ inch, or beveled, up to1/2 inch high?

□ Are doormats ½ inch high or less, and secured to the floor at all edges?

□ Is the door handle no higher than 48 inches and operable with a closed fist?
    Note: The "closed fist" test for handles and controls is as follows: Try opening the door or operating the control using only one hand, held in a fist.   If you can do it, so can a person who has limited use of his or her hands.

□ Can doors be opened without too much force (maximum is 5 lb)?
    Note: You can use a fish scale to measure the force required to open a door.   Attach the hook of the scale to the door knob or handle, pull the ring end of the scale until the door opens, and read off the amount of force required.   If you do have have a fish scale, you will need to judge subjectively whether the door is easy enough to open.

□ If the door has a closer, does it take at least 3 seconds to close?

□ Is the entire front desk or at least a section of the front desk at a height where customers in wheelchairs can see over the desk comfortably and have face-to-face conversations with staff?

Emergency Egress
□ Is there sufficient lighting for egress pathways such as stairs, corridors, and exit routes?

Part 2 – Access to Services
The layout of the building should allow people with disabilities to obtain services without special assistance.   Where it is not possible to provide full accessibility, assistance or alternative services should be available upon request.

Horizontal Circulation
□ Does the accessible entrance provide direct access to the main floor, lobby, or elevator?

□ Are all public spaces on an accessible path of travel?

□ Is the accessible route to all public spaces at least 36 inches wide?

□ Is there a 5 foot circle or a t-shaped space for a person using a wheelchair to reverse direction?

Doors
□ Do doors in public spaces have at least a 32 inch clear opening?

□ On the pull side of doors, next to the handle, is there at least 18 inches of clear wall space so that a person using a wheelchair can get near to open the door?

□ Can doors be opened without too much force (5 lb. maximum)?

□ Are door handles located 48 inches high or less and operable with a closed fist?

□ Are all threshold levels less than ¼ inch, or beveled, up to ½ inch high?

Rooms and Spaces
□ Are all aisles and pathways to all goods and services at least 36 inches wide?

□ Is there a 5 foot circle or t-shaped space for turning a wheelchair completely?

□ Is carpeting low pile, tightly woven, and securely attached along the edges?

□ In routes through public areas, are all obstacles cane detectable (located with 27 inches of the floor or protruding less than 4 inches from the wall), or are they higher than 80 inches?

□ Do signs designating permanent rooms and spaces such as restroom signs, exit signs, and room numbers, comply with the appropriate requirements for accessible signage? Note: Mount signs on the wall, on the latch side of the door.

□ Are all controls that are available for use by the public (including electrical, mechanical, window, cabinet, game and self-service controls) located at an accessible height? *Note: Reach ranges…the maximum height for a side reach is 54 inches; for a forward reach, 48 inches.   The minimum reachable height is 15 inches.*

□ Are controls operable with a closed fist?

Seating, Tables and Counters
□ Are the aisles between chairs or tables at least 36 inches wide?

□ Are the spaces for wheelchair seating distributed throughout?

□ Are the tops of tables or counters between 28 and 34 inches high?

□ Are knee spaces at accessible tables at least 27 inches high, 30 inches wide, and 19 inches deep?

Vertical Circulation
□ Are there ramps or elevators to all levels?

□ On each level, if there are stairs between the entrance and/or elevator and essential public areas, is there an accessible alternate route?

Stairs
□ Do treads have a non slip surface?

□ Do stairs have continuous rails on both sides, with extensions beyond the top and bottom of stairs?

Elevators
□ Are there both visible and verbal or audible door opening/closing and floor indicators? Note: One tone = up, two tones = down

□ Are the call buttons no higher than 42 inches?

□ Do the controls outside and inside the cab have raised and Braille lettering?

□ Is there a sign on the jamb at each floor identifying the floor in raised and Braille letters?

□ Is the emergency intercom usable without voice communication?

□ Are there Braille and raised letter instructions for the communications system?

Lifts
□ Can the lift be used without assistance? If not, is a call button provided?

□ Is there at least 30 by 48 inches of clear space for a person using a wheelchair to approach to reach the controls and use the lift?

□ Are controls between 15 and 48 inches high (up to 54 inches if a side approach is possible)?

Part 3 – Telephones
There are a variety of considerations in ensuring that the phone system is accessible to people with disabilities, including phones available for use by consumers.

□ If pay or public use phones are provided, is there clear floor space of at least 30 by 48 inches in front of at least one?

□ Is the highest part of the phone no higher than 48 inches (up to 54 inches if a side approach is possible)?

□ Does the phone have push button controls?

□ Does the phone protrude no more than 4 inches into the circulation space?

□ Is the phone hearing aid compatible?

□ Is there a phone adapted with high grade amplification for use by customers with moderate to severe hearing loss, located in a quiet area, away from the ambient noise?

□ Is the phone with volume control identified with appropriate signage?

□ Is one of the phones equipped with a telecommunications device for the deaf (TTY/TDD)?

□ Is the location of the TDD identified by accessible signage bearing the International TDD Symbol?

Part 4 – Usability of Rest Rooms

When restrooms are open to the public, they should be accessible to people with disabilities.   Closing a rest room that is currently open to the public is not an allowable option.

Getting to the Restroom

□ If the restroom is available to the public is it accessible?

□ Are there signs at inaccessible rest rooms that give directions to accessible ones?

□ Is there tactile signage identifying rest rooms? Note: Mount signs on the wall, on the latch side of the door. Avoid using ambiguous symbols in place of text to identify rest rooms.

□ Is the doorway at least 32 inches clear?

□ Are doors equipped with accessible handles (operable with a closed fist), 48 inches high or less?

□ Can doors be opened easily (5 lb maximum force)?

□ Does the entry configuration provide adequate maneuvering space for a person using a wheelchair? Note: A person using a wheelchair needs 36 inches of clear width for forward movement, and a 5 foot diameter clear space, or a t-shaped space, to make turns. A minimum distance of 48 inches, clear of the door swing, is needed between the two doors of an entry vestibule.

□ Is there a 36 inch wide path to all fixtures?

Toilet Stalls
□ Is the stall door operable with a closed fist, inside and out?

□ Is there a wheelchair accessible stall that has an area of at least 5 ft x 5 ft clear of the door swing, or is there a stall that is less accessible but that provides greater access than a typical stall (either 36 x 69 inches or 48 by 69 inches)?

□ In the accessible stall, are there grab bars behind, and on the side wall nearest to, the toilet?

□ Is the toilet seat 17 to 19 inches high?

Lavatories (sink)
□ Does one lavatory have a 30 inch wide by 48 inch deep clear space in front? A maximum of 19 inches of the required depth may be under the lavatory.

□ Is the lavatory rim no higher than 34 inches?

□ Is there at least 29 inches from the floor to the bottom of the lavatory apron (excluding pipes)?

□ Can the faucet operate with one closed fist?

□ Are soap and other dispensers and hand dryers 48 inches high or less and usable with one closed fist?

□ Is the mirror mounted with the bottom edge of the reflecting surface 40 inches high or lower?

Signage
□ Signage should be designed so that it is useful for people with disabilities.

□ Is all signage 60 inches above the ground?

□ Are signs on doors on the same side as the door knob?

□ Is signage well lit, using uniform lighting (e.g., not spotlights), with illumination coming from behind or beside the text or sign?

□ Is signage in clear contrasting colors (e.g., back and white)?

□ Is signage in Braille?