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disAbility Resources
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How to Plan Accessible Remote Events

Before Event

Event Advertisements

Advertisements include brochures, flyers, web flyers, email blasts, Facebook event pages, etc.

All advertisements must include the following statement to ensure accessibility accommodations can be requested:

When you send out the invitation or notice, include a welcome message to let invitees know they can contact the planner regarding accommodations. Your message might include text such as:

- Patrick Henry Community College strives to host inclusive, accessible events that enable all individuals, including individuals with disabilities, to engage fully. To request an accommodation or for inquiries about accessibility, please contact (*event planner name, email, phone*).

OR

- Accommodation requests related to a disability should be made by [specific date] to (*event planner name, phone number, and email address*).

If an accommodation has already been secured, such as a sign language interpreter or specific equipment, note that as well. For example:

- *FM amplification systems are available.*
- *Sign language interpreting will be provided at the April 15th meeting.*

Choose accessible platforms

- [Zoom](#) - offers [keyboard controls](#) for most functions.
- [Google Hangouts](#) is another good option and includes the option to “auto-caption” (more on that in a minute!).

Important considerations in selecting a tool are shortcut keys, accessible chat windows, and robust help resources.

Budget for captions

Captions are also useful for people for whom English is a second language.

Live captions are more challenging, and auto-captioning is far from perfect, but it is improving by the day.

Google Hangouts offer auto-captions while [StreamText](#) can be integrated with other services.

[Streamer](#) is another option for captioning and transcripts, and it’s currently free for one month for new users. (There is usually a fee for these cloud-based software solutions.)

[Microsoft Translator](#) is free and can be used on various operating systems and smart devices. It can also be used to translate for participants who speak in different languages. Please note that auto-caption features should not replace live captioners or translators when needed.

[Web Captioner](#) is also a great free live captioning tool but has to be used on Chrome platform.

If you are pre-recording your content, you can use Studio in Canvas to add captions. It is easy to upload and then edit the captions.

Think through audio description

Audio description is a process by which short verbal descriptions of key visual aspects such as the setting, the participants, their actions and facial expressions, are provided to add context to non-visual users. These audio descriptions are inserted into pauses within a video's dialogue and are essential to inclusion for people without vision.

Think strategically about your presentation or lesson plan to minimize the need for audio description. If you are using a video in your session, try listening to it without

watching it. Does it still make sense? What information is missing, that was only conveyed visually? That's what you need to audio-describe.

There's currently no technical way to render screen-sharing, such as a slideshow presentation, accessibly—if you're sharing an image of the screen and there are images they need to be described by the person giving the presentation.

You can also think ahead and provide accessible versions of the presentation.

Give presenters tips

Train your presenters on how to make their presentations accessible. It takes much longer to remediate documents that are not accessible. The best workflow is to consider concepts of universal design and accessibility in the planning stages of any digital content:

- Teach presenters how to create effective “alt text” for images, including infographics, photos, figures, and clip art. [Alt text Techniques](#)
- Make them familiar with the accessibility features of your chosen platform, so they can help attendees.
- Require them to provide accessible materials in advance.
- Review the slides for contrast issues. The [Colour Contrast Analyser](#) from the Paciello Group is one of several free tools available for checking color contrast based on WCAG 2.1 compliance.
- Make sure the fonts are readable! We recommend keeping font size at least 14pt, and using sans-serif fonts such as Verdana or Arial which are easier to view.
- Avoid ALL CAPS—they can be difficult to read for people with low vision, and will be read incorrectly by screen readers.
- Remind presenters to reference each slide number as they move through the presentation. This will allow a user with a screen reader to more easily follow along.
- Before you begin to put a presentation together using a tool such as PowerPoint or Google Slides, plan for accessibility. It is best to use the standard slide templates. Those objects will be accessible. Creating custom slides is not recommended unless the presenter is familiar with how to add accessible objects and content.
- Sticking with the standard templates helps people who are less familiar with accessibility and universal design keep their content accessible.
- Include a slide number on each slide located in a consistent spot such as the bottom right corner. Note that if you are converting to a format other than PowerPoint (in order to provide an alternate format to participants), the page numbers available from PowerPoint footers will not be visible and are artifacts in PDF files. Page numbers can be added manually and most screen readers have keyboard commands to hear information on the location within a document.

During Event

- Make sure your audio is clear; poor audio quality can make it hard for people to access the event
- Have your speakers use a headset whenever possible if this is accessible to them to improve audio.
- Hosts and presenters should use a quiet room where they won't be disturbed whenever possible.
- Mute all attendees but those speaking to keep background noise to a minimum so that attendees can easily hear.
- Ask people speaking to **say their name every time they speak**, so captioners and attendees alike all know who is talking.
- Ensure that fonts are easy to read and text is large and has good [color contrast](#).
- Be mindful of jargon, slang, and assumed knowledge to be inclusive of all attendees.
- Use [plain language](#).
- Avoid [ableist and other negative language](#).
- Do not use [flashing or strobing animations](#) in a presentation or other materials you and other event organizers are creating. If you are including material that already has strobing or flashing, such as a showing of a film or television show, remove the strobing from the original material or skip that portion of the material. If you absolutely must include something that has flashing or strobing (which, again, should really be avoided at all costs), then you must ensure you put a very clear warning in place before showing the material.

After Event

- Share materials in an accessible format.
- If the event was recorded make sure to add captions before sharing (using Studio in Canvas is a free way to do this) [Studio Captions](#)
- If your team live-tweeted the event or if a Twitter chat was part of the event, create a blog post or other [easy-to-read collection](#) of those tweets for anyone who was unable to participate live.
- Offer your attendees the opportunity to provide feedback about the event, including accessibility, to help you prepare to plan the next one.
- Make accessibility an ongoing, inclusive conversation in your community for all types of events.

For questions or help contact disAbility Resources

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