

## **EVENTS ACCESSIBILITY GUIDE**

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**Note:** This guide reflects a series of observations and recommendations made by Dance/NYC. This is not a legal certification or guarantee of physical accessibility as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act and/or other federal and state laws and regulations. Dance/NYC bears no organizational or individual liability with regard to the content discussed in this guide.

## **I. GUIDE OVERVIEW**

### **A) Dance/NYC Mission Statement**

Dance/NYC's mission is to promote the knowledge, appreciation, practice, and performance of dance in the metropolitan New York City area. It embeds values of justice, equity, and inclusion ([Dance.NYC/equity/values](#)) into all aspects of the organization. It works in alliance with Dance/USA, the national service organization for professional dance.

### **B) Values of Justice, Equity & Inclusion**

Dance/NYC believes the dance ecology must itself be just, equitable, and inclusive to meaningfully contribute to social progress and envisions a dance ecology wherein power, funding, opportunities, conduct, and impacts are fair for all artists, cultural workers, and audiences. It seeks to advance policies, investments, programs, mindsets, and actions that remove and prevent inequities that exist along the continuum of lives in dance, from the public school classroom to the stage.

Dance/NYC's approach cuts across its public programs—advocacy and research; leadership training, networking and convening; technology and visibility; and regrants—and all aspects of its operations. Its approach is intersectional, building upon multiple issue areas that together create a more just, equitable, and inclusive dance ecology. Dance/NYC's approach is also grounded in collaboration. It recognizes generations of people and organizations working to advance justice, equity, and inclusion in the arts and culture and strives to contribute to their efforts. It has established formal partnerships with colleague arts service organizations. Learn more about our partners at [Dance.NYC/equity/equityinclusionpartners](#).

### **C) Disability. Dance. Artistry. Agenda**

With its Disability. Dance. Artistry. Task Force ([Dance.NYC/partner-resources/disability/task-force](#)), Dance/NYC has undertaken focused and sustained activities to ensure the dance ecology expressly and equitably includes disabled people. Dance/NYC honors the intersectionality of the disability community. Disabled people are part of every community in NYC.

Dance/NYC aims to dismantle ableism in dance and amplify the voices and autonomy of disabled people. It seeks to advance a cultural ecosystem that expressly includes disabled artists and disability communities. In doing so, it puts disability front and center as a positive artistic and generative force. Dance/NYC launched its Disability. Dance. Artistry. Initiative on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act ([Dance.NYC/equity/disability/disability-initiative](https://www.dance.nyc/equity/disability/disability-initiative)).


Please refer to Dance/NYC's Disability. Dance. Artistry. Agenda to learn more about our work: [Dance.NYC/DDA/Agenda](https://www.dance.nyc/DDA/Agenda)

## **D) Purpose and Framework**

The purpose of this guide is to address and offer guidelines to create spaces that allow the full and equitable participation of disabled persons at Dance/NYC events. This guide advances Dance/NYC's core values of justice, equity, and inclusion by implementing an intentional framework of inclusion and equity in all internal and external aspects of its programming, services, and organization. Dance/NYC follows leadership in disability rights by defining the term "disability" as a marker for identity, not as an assignment of medical significance.

Dance/NYC understands the minimum requirements for accessibility are often not enough. Thus, as an organization committed to ensuring that the diversity of NYC's cultural landscape is represented, Dance/NYC will continuously strive to ensure that it consistently maximizes accessibility and comfort through all aspects of programming, including how spaces are designed, how events are managed, and how Dance/NYC's programming reflects its commitment to accessibility, justice, equity, and inclusion.

Recognizing that there is a spectrum of accessibility, Dance/NYC defines that spectrum from ADA compliance to the expectations, which exceed basic compliance and value comfort, usability, and independence of disabled peoples along with making adjustments based on research and experience in the field.

Minimum Compliance			Inclusive Design
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follows ADA guidelines</li> <li>• Provides alternative spaces and amenities for disabled patrons</li> <li>• Unable to accommodate additional accessibility requests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides accessibility features beyond what is required by ADA</li> <li>• Able to accommodate accessibility requests with advanced notice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Universal design</li> <li>• Fully accessible space</li> <li>• Trained staff available to provide further assistance</li> </ul>	

As such, the accessibility details in this guide serve to:

- Create inclusive spaces in which the disability community can fully and meaningfully participate in Dance/NYC events;
- Integrate accessibility into all aspects of Dance/NYC's programming and services, including internal and external organizational practices;
- Continue to promote and advance inclusion and access to the art form for disabled people;
- Continue to promote disability as a medium for dance making; and
- Set an example for cultural organizations to make spaces and materials accessible internally and externally.

These goals acknowledge dance as a vibrant space, open and ready for technological institution; disability as a cutting edge technological field; and design and technology as media to expose and enhance the pleasure of disabled life. (Source: Alice Sheppard, Artistic Lead and Founder, Kinetic Light)

Beyond the design and creation of accessible events, this guide is a tool for practicing accessibility and equity in a way that remains flexible to changing needs and available resources. Dance/NYC embraces the idea that accessibility for one is accessibility for all, meaning that inclusive practices affects both disabled and nondisabled people and their pleasure, innovation, and sense of ownership. (Source: Open Access)

Please note that this accessibility guide is a compilation of preexisting resources and best practices learned by Dance/NYC. The guide is not comprehensive, and Dance/NYC welcomes information about additional resources. Please email [disabilitynycdance@dance.nyc](mailto:disabilitynycdance@dance.nyc) with your suggestions.

For Dance/NYC's online Disability. Dance. Artistry. resources, please visit the Dance/NYC website: [Dance.NYC/partner-resources/disability/resources](https://Dance.NYC/partner-resources/disability/resources)

#### **D) Dance/NYC Disability. Dance. Artistry. Task Force**

As an underlying tenet of its inclusion work, Dance/NYC embraces the concept of "Nothing Without Us": no program or policy should be formed without the full, direct involvement and vesting of members of the affected group. The role of this Task Force is to advise and assist Dance/NYC's disability initiative on behalf of the organization and the dance field in the New York metropolitan area. It is with thanks to this core group of people and those who have done the work before us that Dance/NYC continues its work.

Task Force Members:

- **Alexandria Wailes**, Actor, Dancer, Teaching Artist
- **Alice Sheppard**, Artistic Lead and Founder, Kinetic Light
- **Christine Bruno**, Disability Advocate, Actor, Teaching Artist
- **Diane Duggan**, Dance Therapist, Dance Educator
- **Elisabeth Salzhauer Axel**, Art Beyond Sight
- **Heidi Latsky**, Heidi Latsky Dance
- **Kitty Lunn**, Infinity Dance Theater
- **Nicholas Viselli**, Theatre Breaking Through Barriers
- **Simi Linton**, Disability/Arts/NYC Task Force
- **Zazel-Chavah O'Garra**, Performing Artist, Model, Motivational Speaker, Social Worker

For more information on the Task Force, please visit: [Dance.NYC/partner-resources/disability/task-force](https://Dance.NYC/partner-resources/disability/task-force)

## II. VENUE ACCESSIBILITY

**A) Goal:** To create inclusive spaces in which disabled persons can fully and meaningfully participate in Dance/NYC events.

ADA requirements are often set at minimum levels, meaning that compliant spaces are not necessarily easily or comfortably accessible by disabled participants. Whenever possible, aim for maximum measurements and facilitations in order to obtain fullest level of accessibility rather than the minimum requirement. Specific required measurements by the ADA (height, width, requisite number, etc.) are found in the Department of Justice's regulations ([www.ada.gov/regs2010/titleIII\\_2010/titleIII\\_2010\\_regulations.htm](http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/titleIII_2010/titleIII_2010_regulations.htm)).

Often, accessibility features and accommodations are made secondary. For example, a venue may have a wheelchair ramp to a back entrance rather than having an accessible main entrance. When considering venue accessibility, utilize the Principles of Universal Design to ensure the spaces are inclusive and equitable for disabled persons.

### Principles of Universal Design

- i. **Equitable Use:** The designs are useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.
- ii. **Flexibility in Use:** Designs accommodate a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.
- iii. **Simple and Intuitive Use:** Uses of designs are easy to understand, regardless of user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.
- iv. **Perceptible Information:** The designs communicate necessary information effectively to the user regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.
- v. **Tolerance of Error:** The designs minimize hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.
- vi. **Low Physical Effort:** The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.
- vii. **Size and Space for Approach to Use:** The design provides appropriate size and space for approaching, reaching, and manipulating, regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility.

## **B) Venue Features**

For any space or feature that is inaccessible, ensure that there is signage to the available accessible space or feature.

### Entrances and Exits

- Entrances should be at street level, barrier-free, clearly marked, and well lit. Areas surrounding the main entrance of the building that are not accessible should be clearly marked, including construction zones and/or physical obstacles. Entrances not at street level should be accessible by ramps or lifts.
- Doorways must be wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs and scooters: 36 inches wide with the door open at 90 degrees.
- Doors should weigh no more than 5 pounds with lever handles or have automatic push buttons.
- Revolving doors are not accessible.
- Emergency exits should have alarms that produce both audio and visual signals. A carefully considered emergency exit plan should be in place should one arise, and staff leads should know how to get in touch with the fire and police departments if necessary.

### Floors

- Interior of the venue must have stable, firm, slip-resistant floors.
  - A stable surface is one that remains unchanged by contaminants or applied force.
  - A firm surface resists deformation by indentations or movement on its surface.
  - A slip-resistant surface provides sufficient frictional counterforce to the forces exerted when moving on the surface.

### Hallways

- Hallways should be at least 36 inches wide, or 64 inches wide for two-way traffic.
- Wider hallways are preferred to provide sufficient space to turn around or turn corners comfortably and to allow for disabled patrons to walk accompanied by a companion if desired.
- Hallways should be well lit.



### Elevators

- Venues with multiple stories must have an elevator for visitor use.
- Elevator doors must open to at least 36 inches wide.
- Elevator buttons should be no higher than 42 inches and have raised lettering or Braille.
- Elevators should have proper signage in raised lettering or Braille, or audio signals.
- Elevator doors should remain open long enough to allow visitors enough time to enter and exit safely and comfortably.
- If elevators cannot be operated independently, ensure that staff is available to provide assistance.

### Stairs and Ramps

- Stairs must have continuous handrails on both sides with no open risers (space between steps), as well as tactile ground surface indicators that signal stairs and ramps for people who are blind or have vision loss.
- Ramps must be equipped with handrails on both sides if the rise is greater than 6 inches.
- Ramps must have a level landing that is at least 4 feet long.
- When adding a ramp to stairs, there needs to be a foot of ramp for every inch raised.
- Ramps should have the smallest possible slope, and the maximum slope of a ramp in new construction shall be 1:12. The maximum rise for any ramp run is 30 inches.

### Lighting

- Lighting should be adequate, avoiding abrupt changes in lighting levels and colors.
- Place lighting instruments carefully so that reflections and glare do not obscure objects.
- Keep shadows off objects and pathways.
- Provide task lighting and/or adjustable lighting if requested. (Task lighting adds light to a specific area, such as a desk.)

### Restrooms

- The accessibility of a restroom is determined by not only the presence of a wheelchair accessible restroom stall under ADA compliance, but also the components of the entrance of the restroom, such as the doors, doorframe, and interior, and the maneuverability through and around them.
- Accessible stalls should be at least 60 inches wide to allow sufficient space for wheelchair users to turn comfortably.
- Toilet rim should be no higher than 34 inches high (for easy transfer for wheelchair users).
- Accessible stalls should have grab bars behind and on both sides of the toilet.

### Furniture

- Tables should be at least 27 inches high to provide sufficient knee space.
- Countertops should be no higher than 36 inches (registration stations, information desks, etc.).
- Chairs and tables without wheels should be available.
- Boom microphone stands are preferred, and allow for flexibility of use and movement.
- Lecterns with adjustable heights are preferred. If one is not available, an adjustable music stand can be used. Please note: music stands are not as sturdy and may require a sandbag or proper taping to the ground to ensure they are not moved easily or knocked down.
- Furniture should be arranged in a way that is easily navigated around.

### Sources:

- [Check List of Planning Accessible Events, Cornell University Student Disability Services](#)
- [Design for Accessibility: A Cultural Administrator's Handbook, National Endowment for the Arts](#)
- [Fractured Atlas Accessibility Checklist](#)
- [Planning Accessible Meetings and Events: A Toolkit, American Bar Association Commission on Disability Rights](#)

### III. DESIGN AND COMMUNICATIONS

**A) Goal:** To ensure that both the physical space of an event as well as the modes in which it is communicated about is accessible

#### **B) Design**

1) Visual Design:

Any online or printed materials should be formatted appropriately for accessibility. Materials may include e-blasts, surveys, registration forms, signage, etc. Information on accessible design can be found in the Dance/NYC Design Guidelines for Accessibility (refer to Appendix).

2) Printing:

Printed materials should be single sided or on cardstock, using a matte finish in adherence with the American Printing House for the Blind guidelines including using a 14-point sans-serif font.

Sources:

- [American Printing House for the Blind](#)
- [Planning Accessible Meetings and Events: A Toolkit, American Bar](#)

#### **C) Tech Systems**

Many communication platforms are distributed digitally and are accessed both on personal computers, mobile phones, and other devices such as tablets and screen readers. Dance/NYC shares communications through the Dance/NYC website, online registration, online surveys, and other online platforms.

Online platforms should be made accessible for use by taking into account contrast ratio, text-size, alternative text, video quality, audio quality, closed captioning, audio description, platform responsiveness, such as zoom possibility and screen reader compatibility.

Screen readers are software programs that allow blind or low vision users to read the text that is displayed on the computer screen with a speech synthesizer or Braille display. A screen reader is the interface between the

computer's operating system, its applications, and the user. They range in price from no cost to \$1,200 and are compatible with personal computers and devices running Linux, Windows, MAC, iOS, Android, and more.

Some mobile phone operating systems have built-in screen-reading technology. While mobile phone accessibility continues to improve, as a general rule, since mobile phone technology is newer, desktop applications tend to be more accessible.

### 1) Standards for Website Use

The leading standards for web accessibility guidelines are the 508 Compliance and Accessibility Standards: <https://section508.gov/>

As general practice, use the WAVE Web Accessibility Tool: <http://wave.webaim.org/>, which will instantly evaluate a website and tag inaccessible areas.

Each of these standards/guidelines have methods and suggestions to evaluate website accessibility:

508 Standards: <http://www.508checker.com/>

WCAG: <https://www.w3.org/WAI/eval/Overview.html>

Guidelines: <https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/>

WebAIM: <http://webaim.org/standards/wcag/checklist>

### 2) Survey Platforms

Online surveys are a valuable tool for recording RSVPs for an event as well as measuring guest satisfaction and engagement. Survey Monkey, SurveyGizmo, and Get Feedback are all survey platforms that can be designed to be accessible.

Both Survey Monkey and SurveyGizmo can be designed to be compliant with 508 online accessibility standards and WCAG.

SurveyGizmo publishes an online guide

(<http://www.surveygizmo.com/survey-software-features/accessibility>)

to making their surveys more accessible and includes an accessibility evaluation tool within the online platform itself. GetFeedback complies with 508 online accessibility standards, but it does not include an

accessibility evaluation tool. Careful care must be given to evaluating a survey's accessibility via another tool, such as WebAIM.

### 3) Alternative Text

Alternative text is text that translates images that convey meaningful information such as pictures, logos and charts into text so that screen readers can interpret them. If your survey contains images that communicate meaningful information, add alternative text that conveys equivalent information. Section 508 requires that a text equivalent for every non-text element shall be provided. This makes the image accessible to respondents using screen readers to take your survey. Since screen readers can't read an image, they will announce the alternative text instead. Please visit Dance/NYC's research reports for examples of alternative text:

Follow these best practices to help build compliant surveys:

- Do not include images that blink or flash.
- Confirm that animated content meets the latest updated refresh requirements. Section 508 outlines these requirements.
- Ensure the survey's contrast ratio follows accessible guidelines (The WCAG recommends a contrast ratio of 4.5 for small text or 3 for large text which is 24px or 18px bold).
- Avoid Likert scale questions as some screen readers interpret them as a table.
- Avoid JavaScript driven questions, as they do not work well with screen readers.
- Avoid using hidden questions with logic as they almost always use Java.
- Avoid using grid-based question, as they are difficult to interpret with screen readers.
- Accessible surveys enable respondents using screen magnifiers to successfully complete the survey.
- Accessible surveys include the necessary text to enable a respondent to successfully navigate and complete a survey by using a screen reader with a text-to-speech (TTS) system.

- Accessible surveys can be completed using voice command and control software. An accessible survey doesn't require a mouse or keyboard to complete.
- Use a standard theme. SurveyMonkey has included the right amount of color contrast and brightness in most of their standard themes so that those with color blindness won't have any trouble reading your survey. If you choose to create a custom theme, use a tool like the Tanaguru Contrast-Finder ([www.contrast-finder.tanaguru.com](http://www.contrast-finder.tanaguru.com)) to ensure that the color combinations you use have a compliant contrast ratio.
- Clearly label required questions. If there are required questions in your survey, make sure the survey is set to show asterisks next to required questions. In the survey introduction ([help.surveymonkey.com/articles/en\\_US/kb/Tip-Creating-an-effective-survey-introduction](http://help.surveymonkey.com/articles/en_US/kb/Tip-Creating-an-effective-survey-introduction)), explain that survey questions marked with an asterisk require an answer.
- Make navigation buttons clear. Clearly label the navigation buttons ([www.help.surveymonkey.com/articles/en\\_US/kb/How-do-I-create-edit-the-navigation-buttons-e-g-Next-Done-etc](http://www.help.surveymonkey.com/articles/en_US/kb/How-do-I-create-edit-the-navigation-buttons-e-g-Next-Done-etc)) so that screen readers will announce them correctly. Labels like "Previous", "Next", and "Done" work well with screen readers, as opposed to labels like "<<" and ">>".

## **D) Communications to Patrons**

### 1) Accommodation Requests

Designate a staff member to handle all accommodation requests. If several types of accommodations are available, always give primary consideration to the option preferred by the disabled person. Include a message in all event communications on how to make accommodation requests such as:


Requests for reasonable accommodation should be made two weeks in advance of the event date by contacting Dance/NYC at 212.966.4452 (voice only) or [specialevents@dance.nyc](mailto:specialevents@dance.nyc).

## 2) Venue Accessibility Details

On all promotional and communication materials, include information about how accessibility and accommodations can be provided. Announce specific accessibility features only when they have been confirmed for the event. Explain accessible entrances/exits, elevator services, seating availability, accessible parking and transportation, and any other relevant assistive services such as lighting, presence of elevators, power doors, and other personal assistive devices such as hearing loops.

For details on how to include access symbols in accessibility details, please refer to the section on access symbols.

An example for providing accessibility details is below:

**Accessibility Features:**   Gibney is an accessible venue. Wheelchair ramps and elevators are available via the 280 Broadway entrance. All restrooms are wheelchair accessible. Second-floor restrooms are wheelchair accessible through the dressing rooms. Studios and rooms are lit by fluorescent lights. Childcare or healthcare will not be available for this event. ASL interpretation and braille programs will be provided. If you require reasonable accommodation, please contact Dance/NYC at least two weeks prior to the event via email at [specialevents@dance.nyc](mailto:specialevents@dance.nyc) or call 212.966.4452 (voice only).

### 3) Accessible Transportation Options

It is important to know which nearby buses and subway lines are accessible what routes of transportation will be used by event attendees.

*Note: Most New York City public transportation is not accessible.*

Airport service with MTA buses, subways, and commuter rail:  
([web.mta.info/nyctservice/airport.htm](http://web.mta.info/nyctservice/airport.htm))

#### Buses

Most New York City buses are wheelchair accessible.  
([web.mta.info/accessibility/transit.htm - buses](http://web.mta.info/accessibility/transit.htm-buses))

#### Accessible Dispatch

Wheelchair accessible taxicab upon request.  
([www.accessibledispatch.com](http://www.accessibledispatch.com))

#### NYC Wheelchair Accessible Transportation

24-hour taxi service specializing in airport pick ups.  
([www.nycwheelchair.com/](http://www.nycwheelchair.com/))

#### Access-A-Ride

MTA New York City Transit operates Access-A-Ride, the City's paratransit system. Access-A-Ride (AAR) provides transportation for people with disabilities who are unable to use public bus or subway service for some or all of their trips. It offers shared rides and door-to-door paratransit service. ([web.mta.info/nyct/paratran/guide.htm#what\\_is](http://web.mta.info/nyct/paratran/guide.htm#what_is))

#### Subways

Note: While most subway stations are not accessible, there are some stations in Manhattan, The Bronx, Queens, and Brooklyn that are equipped with AutoGate, an automatic entry/exit gate that allows customers who have ambulatory disabilities, are accompanied by a service animal, or use wheelchairs to enter and exit the subway system. Find a list of accessible subway stations online:

([web.mta.info/accessibility/stations.htm](http://web.mta.info/accessibility/stations.htm))



Passengers need a Reduced-Fare AutoGate MetroCard to enter or exit the subway system through the AutoGate:

[web.mta.info/accessibility/transit.htm#applying](http://web.mta.info/accessibility/transit.htm#applying)

#### Wheely App

This mobile app features accessible subway maps licensed by the MTA<sup>®</sup>, specific directions and maps to subway elevators and reviews based on local accessible places:

([bit.ly/2t933l](http://bit.ly/2t933l))

#### Access Link

ADA paratransit is located in New Jersey and provides public transportation to disabled people who are unable to use the local bus services:

([www.njtransit.com/tm/tm\\_servlet.srv?hdnPageAction=AccessLinkTo](http://www.njtransit.com/tm/tm_servlet.srv?hdnPageAction=AccessLinkTo))

#### Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North Railroad

The railroads have more than 60 accessible stations and nearly 100 additional stations with wheelchair accessibility. Individuals with qualifying disabilities who have the required identification can travel on the Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North Railroad for half fare.

([web.mta.info/accessibility/rail.htm](http://web.mta.info/accessibility/rail.htm))

#### 4) Front of House Communications

An integral part of the accessibility of Dance/NYC's programs is the use of language and the importance of being respectful and welcoming to all people. To do this, Dance/NYC conducts training with staff and volunteers on the language of equity, inclusion, and disability and develops Front of the House Scripts tailored to each event that includes information such program content, venue accessibility, assistive services, and more. A sample Front of House Script is detailed below.

#### **Front of House Script**

Hello, welcome to today's event.

May I please have your first name? Do you have any guests with you?

Please note that today's event will be recorded. If do not wish to be included in the recording, please let one of our ushers know.

Is there anything I can do to make your experience more comfortable?

#### **Notes:**

- If patrons did not RSVP, please fill out the standby form.
- Seating is general admission.
- Accessible seating is available at the front of the theater.
- Elevators are available to the theater area.
- Accessible restrooms are located by the elevators on each floor.
- ASL interpretation is provided.
- Please contact <<staff member>> if you need further assistance.

Dance/NYC follows leadership of the Task Force in disability rights by defining the term "disability" as a marker for identity, not as an assignment of medical significance. The chart on the following page, compiled by Inclusion in the Arts, outlines disability language guidelines.



**THE LANGUAGE OF DISABILITY:  
Top 10 Dos and Don'ts**

<b><i>DON'T USE</i></b>	<b><i>DO USE</i></b>
<i>Wheelchair-bound/confined to</i>	Wheelchair user/ uses a wheelchair
<i>Suffers from/afflicted with/crippled by</i>	These terms make assumptions about how the disabled person feels about their disability. Use "has" and the name of the condition (e.g., has cerebral palsy, has paraplegia, etc.)
<i>The disabled/the blind/the deaf</i>	Always use as an adjective rather than a noun – disabled person, blind filmmaker, deaf man or woman.
<i>Retarded/mentally retarded/retard</i>	Intellectual disability; cognitive disability; developmental disability. When using these terms, however, it is important to understand the distinctions among them.
<i>Handicapped (handicap)</i>	In general: If you're not writing about sports, don't use it! Use disability, disabled person, person with a disability.
<i>Handicapped parking, restroom, etc.</i>	Accessible parking, restroom, etc.
<i>Midget/dwarf</i>	Little person; dwarf is acceptable only if the subject actually has dwarfism. Keep in mind that anyone with dwarfism is a little person, but not every little person is a dwarf.
<i>Deaf-mute/deaf and dumb Hearing-impaired</i>	Deaf Hard of hearing
<i>Physically challenged/differently abled</i>	Avoid outdated or saccharine terms and euphemisms. Use disabled as an adjective (e.g., disabled sportscaster) or person-first language (e.g., person with a disability).
<i>Overcoming/inspiring/brave/courageous</i>	Avoid patronizing and condescending descriptives. Describe the person's accomplishments without value judgment or interpretation.
<i>Special</i>	Do not use when referring to disabled people.

5) Access Symbols

The following 12 symbols developed by the Graphic Artists Guild may be used to promote and publicize accessibility of places, programs, and other activities for disabled people. These symbols are intended to help advertise access services, and symbols should be used only to indicate that a particular accessibility service or feature is available. Place symbols next to relevant information in all communication materials, including online. Examples of places to use accessibility symbols include: advertisements, newsletters, brochures, membership forms, building signage, floor plans, and maps.

Symbols are downloadable online:

[www.graphicartistsguild.org/tools\\_resources/downloadable-disability-access-symbols](http://www.graphicartistsguild.org/tools_resources/downloadable-disability-access-symbols)

The following pages outlines access symbols and context for their use.

Access Other Than Print or Braille) for Individuals Who Are Blind or Have Low Vision



This symbol indicates access for people who are blind or have low vision, best used in places such as a guided tour, a path to a nature trail or a scent garden in a park; and a tactile tour or a museum exhibition that may be touched.

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Symbol for Wheelchair Accessibility.

*This is the universal symbol for accessibility.*



The wheelchair symbol indicates access for individuals with limited mobility, including wheelchair users. Remember that a ramped entrance is not completely accessible if there are no curb cuts, and an elevator is not accessible if it can only be reached via steps.

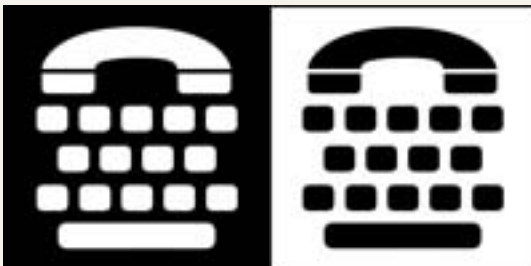
## Audio Description



Blind or low vision people may enjoy performing arts, visual arts, television, video, and film that offers live commentary or narration (via headphones and a small transmitter) of visual elements provided by a trained Audio Describer. An adapter for non-stereo TVs is available through the American Foundation for the Blind, (800) 829-0500.

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## Telephone Typewriter (TTY)



This device is also known as a text telephone (TT), or telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD). TTY indicates the presence of a device used with the telephone for communication with and between deaf, hard-of-hearing, and/or hearing persons.

### Volume Control Telephone



This symbol indicates the presence of telephones that have handsets with amplified sound and/or adjustable volume controls.

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### Assistive Listening Systems



These systems transmit amplified sound via hearing aids, headsets, or other devices.

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### Sign Language Interpretation



The symbol indicates that Sign Language Interpretation is provided for a lecture, tour, film, performance, conference, or other program.

### Accessible Print (18 point or Larger)



Large print is indicated by the words "Large Print," printed in 18 point or larger text. In addition to identifying large print versions of books, pamphlets, museum guides, and theater programs, you may use the symbol on conference or membership forms with large print. Sans serif or modified serif print with high contrast is important, and special attention should be paid to letter and word spacing.

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### The Information Symbol



Knowing where to find what you need is almost as valuable as finding it. The information symbol indicates the location for specific information or materials concerning access, such as "LARGE PRINT" materials, audiocassette recordings of materials, or sign interpreted tours.



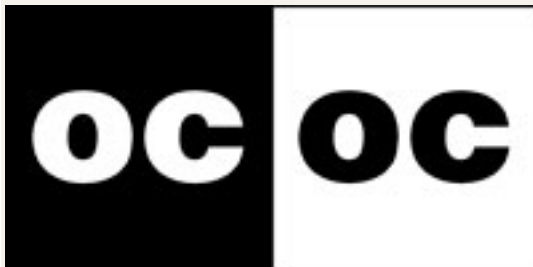
### Closed Captioning (CC)



Closed Captioning (CC) (commonly known as subtitles) enables people who are deaf or hard of hearing to read a transcript of the audio portion of a video, film, exhibition, or other presentation. As the video plays, text captions transcribe (although not always verbatim) speech and other relevant sounds.

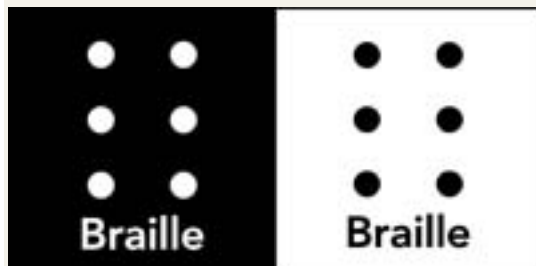
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### Open Captioning (OC)



This symbol indicates that captions, which translate dialogue and other sounds in print, are displayed on the videotape, movie, television program, or exhibit audio. Many prefer Open Captioning, including deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals and people whose second language is English. It also helps teach children how to read and keep sound levels to a minimum in museums and restaurants.

### Braille Symbol



This symbol indicates that printed material is available in Braille, including exhibition labeling, publications, and signage.

The Disability Access Symbols were produced by the Graphic Artists Guild Foundation with support and technical assistance from the Office for Special Constituencies, National Endowment for the Arts.

## **IV. EVENT LOGISTICS**

**A) Goal:** To assure accessibility of all aspects of an event throughout a program's creation, promotion, duration, and conclusion.

As an organizational practice, Dance/NYC allocates a certain amount of its budget to providing accommodations, materials in alternative formats, and other accessibility needs for its events.

### **B) On-site Arrival Procedures**

On-site registration is the process by which a guest arrives at the program and checks in with a person designated to fulfill this role. At this point, any pertinent information such as a printed program, the availability of a coat check, or directions to accessible seating and restrooms are communicated and a welcoming atmosphere is created through the core values of equity and inclusion being understood and observed. The Front of House Script detailing all accessibility features and important location should be used to communicate information to guests.

On-site arrival procedures should also be in place for artists, speakers, and guests participating in an event at a venue. Information and directions to accessible entrances, greenrooms, restrooms, etc., should be provided, ideally, this information should be provided at least two weeks in advance of arrival in order to allow for time to accommodate any specific accessibility requests.

A key to determining the accessibility of your on-site registration procedure and reception is to conduct a thorough venue site visit at least six weeks ahead of time to plan registration and reception setup, guest flow, use of space, and any other adjustments that will need to be made ahead of time.

Part of this assessment must include a thorough understanding of the accessibility features on all floors of the venue that will be utilized and a plan for how to communicate about them to guests.

### **C) Ground Plan**

A ground plan is a flexible map for how all spaces involved in the program will be utilized, occupied by staff, volunteers, and guests, and how all furniture and technical equipment will be arranged and used so as to provide the most accessible program possible. The ground plan is developed with information gathered on the site visit.

### **E) Presentation Guidelines**

- Presenters should stand in a well-lit area.
- Any visual media should be communicated via projection.
- Speakers should use descriptive text to introduce themselves and describe any visual media.

### **F) Services for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Persons**

#### 1) ASL Interpreters

ASL interpreters translate spoken word into American Sign Language. All interpreters must be certified

Dance/NYC generally uses LC interpreting services, though many interpreting services exist in the NYC metropolitan area. Services are available in all five boroughs of New York City, Long Island, Westchester County, and New Jersey.

Owner & Interpreter: Lydia Callis

Phone: Monday – Friday EST 8am-9pm: [\(917\) 210-5804](tel:(917)210-5804)

After Hours and Weekends: [\(347\) 842-0188](tel:(347)842-0188)

Email: [info@lcinterpretingservices.com](mailto:info@lcinterpretingservices.com)

Website: [www.signlanguagenyc.com](http://www.signlanguagenyc.com)

Send ASL interpreters subject specific content at least one week prior to the event. This will allow them to become familiar with the topics and themes that will be covered in the event.

Several interpreters may be needed for longer events. The average amount of time a person can comfortably interpret is about 20 minutes.

Most interpreters in a presentation setting work in teams of two and trade off every 20 minutes. In a performance or dialogue setting, two or more interpreters typically work at the same time to convey the dialogue.

In a presentation setting, a common location for the interpreter is at the end of the speakers' table or next to the speaker. Interpreters should be in a well-lit area. In a small group work setting or breakout sessions where groups that both do and do not require ASL interpretation are working simultaneously, it is best that the group that requires ASL interpretation have their own space to work.

## 2) CART Services

Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) is a professional service that can be delivered on location or remotely. The National Court Reporters Association (NCRA) ([ncraonline.org](http://ncraonline.org)) describes CART services as "the instant translation of the spoken word into English text using a stenotype machine, notebook computer and real-time software." The text produced by the CART service can be displayed on an individual's computer monitor, projected onto a screen, combined with a video presentation to appear as captions, or otherwise made available using other transmission and display systems. LC Interpreting Service also supplies CART services.

## 3) Open and Closed Captioning

### Open Captioning

Open captioning is always visible, preferred by most people and much more user-friendly. With open captioning, there are no buttons to push and it is less likely to be subject to technical difficulties and mechanical breakdown. Open captioning also benefits children learning to read and people learning English as a second language, as well as the general public in a noisy environment. Closed captioning allows the display of captions to be either on or off. All of Dance/NYC's public programs are recorded for archival and access purposes are captioned.

### Closed Captioning

Closed captioning is frequently used for television broadcasts, videotapes, and DVDs. Cultural organizations often use closed captioning for video

presentations with a sign next to the video display stating, "Press the button to view this video with captioning."

4) Assistive Listening Devices

Assistive listening systems (ALS), in most cases, must be provided for assembly areas where audible communication is integral to the use of the space (theaters, meeting rooms, lecture halls, etc.) ALS minimizes background noise, reduces the effect of distance, and overrides poor acoustics. There are three basic types of ALS technologies: audio loop, FM systems, and infrared systems.

**G) Services for Blind and Low Vision Persons**

1) Materials in Alternative Formats

Any printed materials or signage should be provided in alternative formats.

Braille is a system of touch reading that employs embossed dots evenly arranged in cells. It can be used for printed materials, such as programs or menus, or for signage and labels, such as elevator call buttons or restroom signs.

Large-print documents should use a non-italic, sans serif font (such as Helvetica) in 14-to-18 point size with a space and a half between lines. For signage and labels, print should be a minimum of 24 points or larger, depending upon the distance from which people must read the print.

Some people who are blind or have low vision cannot read Braille or large print and prefer hearing information rather than reading it. In this case, information can be recorded or a trained staff member can read information out loud.

2) Audio Description

Audio description provides descriptions of physical appearance, body language, and/or actions of the subject and content of performance and visual art. Live audio description can be prerecorded or transmitted live to assistive listening devices.

# Disability. Dance. Artistry.



## Sources:

- [Design for Accessibility: A Cultural Administrator's Handbook, National Endowment for the Arts](#)
- [Planning Accessible Meetings and Events: A Toolkit, American Bar Association Commission on Disability Rights](#)

#### IV. GUIDELINES FOR INTERACTION

**A) Goal:** To educate staff and volunteers on the preferred terminology and to create a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere for everyone.

**B) Guidelines:** Dance/NYC staff and volunteers act as ambassadors to all of the communities it is part of. To do this effectively and equitably it is important that they stay informed on the shifting landscape of accessibility tools, language, and expectations. Although Dance/NYC follows vetted protocols, it is important to allow all guests and attendees to identify what language and accommodations they prefer in order to have the most comfortable and enjoyable experience.

In addition to creating inclusive environments, it is important for Dance/NYC staff and volunteers to undergo regular training and assessment of their practice around accessibility. Accessibility training should be a part of standard onboarding for staff, interns, and volunteers.

Disabled persons should also be included in the development and delivery of programming. As indicated before, Dance/NYC embraces the concept of "Nothing Without Us": no program or policy should be formed without the full, direct involvement and vesting of members of the affected group. Accessibility is not an extraneous component of programming but an integral aspect of equitable and inclusive design.



## V. Glossary of Terms

**508 Compliance Standards:** Compliance standards are set by Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that requires federal agencies to provide software and website accessibility to people with disabilities. When websites are 508Compliant, they are accessible to all users.

**7 Principles of Universal Design:** A set of design parameters developed in 1997 by a working group of architects, product designers, engineers, and environmental design researchers, led by the late Ronald Mace at North Carolina State University ([www.design.ncsu.edu/cud/about\\_ud/udprinciples.htm](http://www.design.ncsu.edu/cud/about_ud/udprinciples.htm)). The purpose of the Principles is to guide the design of environments, products and communications. According to the Center for Universal Design in NCSU, the Principles "may be applied to evaluate existing designs, guide the design process and educate both designers and consumers about the characteristics of more usable products and environments."

**Ableism:** Ableism is a system of power and privilege that discriminates against people who are or are perceived as being Disabled and that privileges those who are or are perceived to be nondisabled. Its expression can take many forms, including social relations, institutions, and practices, and it can take the form of prejudices, discrimination, violence, and stereotyping. Ableism is an active force in history, a force that also served and serves settler colonialism. (Susan Burch, "Disorderly Pasts: Kinship, Diagnoses, and Remembering in American Indian-US Histories": unpublished manuscript, 2015, 32); This working definition draws on extensive conversations with others, including Eli Clare, Alison Kafer, Kim Nielsen, and Katherine Ott.

**Accessible, accessibility:** Use "accessible" when describing a space, location or event that is modified to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Accessible modifications allow unrestricted admittance to accommodate individuals who may or may not use a wheelchair. Individuals who may have sensory disabilities, and modifications for individuals who communicate in different languages, are deaf/hard-of-hearing, blind/low vision or have cognitive or learning disabilities. (Source: National Disability Rights Network [NDRN], Inclusion in the Arts)

**The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA):** Prohibits discrimination and ensures equal opportunity for persons with disabilities in employment, State and local government services, public accommodations, commercial facilities, and transportation. It also mandates the establishment of TDD/telephone relay services. (Source: [www.ADA.gov](http://www.ADA.gov))

**ADA 2010 Standards:** The Department of Justice published revised regulations for Titles II and III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 “ADA” in the *Federal Register* on September 15, 2010. These regulations adopted revised, enforceable accessibility standards called the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design “2010 Standards” or “Standards”. The 2010 Standards set minimum requirements, both scoping and technical, for newly designed and constructed or altered State and local government facilities, public accommodations, and commercial facilities to be readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. (Source: [www.ADA.gov](http://www.ADA.gov))

**Assistive devices and assistive technology:** Any piece of equipment or device used to maintain, promote, or increase function in someone with a disability. Examples include, but are not limited to, wheelchairs, crutches, hearing aids, prosthetic limbs, screen readers, and communication boards (Source: Inclusion in the A

**Disability:** “Disability” and “Disabled” as used by Dance/NYC are intended as markers of identity and membership within a specific minority group connected by social, political, and cultural experiences. The use of the term disability is not intended to assign medical significance. This use of language follows movements in disability studies and disability rights, discussed in detail in Simi Linton’s seminal *Claiming Disability: Knowledge and Identity* ([similinton.com/about\\_claim.htm](http://similinton.com/about_claim.htm)). Further, this formulation of disability encompasses all impairments—mobility and physical, sensory (including, but not limited to, vision and hearing), intellectual, cognitive and/or learning, and psychological, whether readily apparent or not.

**Identity-First Language:** Identity-first language is founded upon the idea of the social model of disability and puts disability out in front to be visible and not something to be hidden.

**Intersectionality:** The study of overlapping or intersecting social identities and related systems of oppression, domination, or discrimination (art Equity, theory first coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw, [artequity.org](http://artequity.org))

**People-First Language:** People-First Language emphasizes the person, not the disability. By placing the person first, the disability is no longer the primary, defining characteristic of an individual, but one of several aspects of the whole person. (Source: The Arc, [thearc.org](http://thearc.org))

**Reasonable accommodation:** Any modification or adjustment to a job or the work environment that will enable a qualified applicant or employee with a disability to participate in the application process or to perform essential job functions. Reasonable accommodation also includes adjustments to assure that a qualified individual with a disability has rights and privileges in employment equal to those of employees without disabilities. (Source: [ADA.gov](http://ADA.gov), Inclusion in the Arts)

**Refresh Requirements:** Federal acquisition requirements that apply to information and communications technology (ICT) that is used, developed, procured, maintained, or used by federal agencies. The standards promote ICT that can be accessed by the public and employees with disabilities.

**Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG):** is developed in cooperation with individuals and organizations around the world, with a goal of proving a single shared standard for web content accessibility that meets the needs of individuals, organizations, and governments internationally.

## **VI. Source Links**

Access Symbols for download

[graphicartistsguild.org/tools\\_resources/downloadable-disability-access-symbols](http://graphicartistsguild.org/tools_resources/downloadable-disability-access-symbols)

ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG)

[access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/buildings-and-sites/about-the-ada-standards/background/adaag](http://access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/buildings-and-sites/about-the-ada-standards/background/adaag)

Alliance for Inclusion in the Arts

[inclusioninthearts.org](http://inclusioninthearts.org)

American Bar Association Commission on Disability Rights; Planning Accessible Meetings and Events: A Toolkit

[americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/mental\\_physical\\_disability/Accessible\\_Meetings\\_Toolkit.authcheckdam.pdf](http://americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/mental_physical_disability/Accessible_Meetings_Toolkit.authcheckdam.pdf)

American Foundation for the Blind; Information on screen readers

[afb.org/prodBrowseCatResults.aspx?CatID=49](http://afb.org/prodBrowseCatResults.aspx?CatID=49)

American Printing House for the Blind

[aph.org/research/lpguide.htm](http://aph.org/research/lpguide.htm)

Cornell University Student Disability Services; Checklist for Planning Accessible Events

[disability.cornell.edu/docs/accessibility-checklist.pdf](http://disability.cornell.edu/docs/accessibility-checklist.pdf)

Fractured Atlas; Accessibility Checklist for Venues

[fracturedatlas.org/site/Knowledgebase/view\\_image?id=731](http://fracturedatlas.org/site/Knowledgebase/view_image?id=731)

National Association of the Deaf; CART services

[nad.org/issues/technology/captioning/cart](http://nad.org/issues/technology/captioning/cart)

National Endowment for the Arts; Design for Accessibility: A Cultural Administrator's Handbook

[arts.gov/publications/design-accessibility-cultural-administrators-handbook](http://arts.gov/publications/design-accessibility-cultural-administrators-handbook)

Survey Monkey; Creating Accessible Surveys

[help.surveymonkey.com/articles/en\\_US/kb/Creating-Accessible-Surveys](https://help.surveymonkey.com/articles/en_US/kb/Creating-Accessible-Surveys)

Survey Monkey; Adding alternative text

[help.surveymonkey.com/articles/en\\_US/kb/Can-I-add-images-or-pictures-into-the-survey?beta=true](https://help.surveymonkey.com/articles/en_US/kb/Can-I-add-images-or-pictures-into-the-survey?beta=true)

Tanaguru Contrast Finder

[contrast-finder.tanaguru.com](https://contrast-finder.tanaguru.com)

Universal Principles of Design: The Principles of Universal Design. Raleigh, NC: North Carolina State University, 2002.

[ncsu.edu/ncsu/design/cud/pubs\\_p/docs/poster.pdf](https://ncsu.edu/ncsu/design/cud/pubs_p/docs/poster.pdf)

WAVE Web Accessibility Tool

[wave.webaim.org](https://wave.webaim.org)

Web Accessibility and adding animated content

[webaccessibility.com/best\\_practices.php?technology\\_platform\\_id=11](https://webaccessibility.com/best_practices.php?technology_platform_id=11)