



Checklist for Tourist Attractions Accessibility

Most cities and areas offer numerous attractions, such as zoos, museums, parks, etc. These attractions vary widely in nature and each type of attraction has its own set of best practices for making ALL guests feel welcome. Nevertheless, there are a number of basic guidelines to interacting with visitors that apply to all venues, regardless of the nature of the attraction, or whether the visitor does or does not have a disability.

Basics

- Train all staff in proper disability etiquette and language. A few best practices include:
 - People with disabilities are people first. Treat them as you would treat any other guest.
 - Always use person-first language. This puts the person before the disability (i.e. person who is blind). Do not use identity-first language. This puts the disability before the person (i.e. Blind woman).
 - Do not talk down to individuals literally or figuratively. If they use a wheelchair, use a chair to be on their same eye level if you are having a long conversation.
 - Speak directly to a person with a disability, not to their companion.
 - A lack of immediate response does not indicate that the person can't or won't respond.
- Always give clear directions – instructions like “over there” are not helpful to people who can't see where you are pointing!
- Greet guests as soon as they enter the venue – this makes guests feel welcome and can help them orient themselves within the space.
- Inform visitors of the accessibility features of the venue.
- It's OK to ask whether you can help, but accept “no” as an answer.
- Do not touch a guest's assistive devices (i.e. wheelchair, crutches, cane, medical equipment, technology) unless you have permission. Many of these devices are fragile and very expensive.
- Be prepared to accommodate service animals. Some things to note:
 - These animals are highly trained and will not act inappropriately. There is no reason to be afraid.

- Ask questions if you don't understand how or what task the service animal performs.
- Do not speak directly to or engage with the service animal.
- Do not touch a service animal without asking permission first.
- Do not offer a service animal food, toys, or distract them with any other object.
- Provide information about relieving areas for service animals. Make sure they stay clean.
- Be ready to communicate in ways that help guests understand (in simple language, by written notes, etc.).
- Ask for feedback to identify accessibility gaps.

Physical Spaces

- Make all signs easy to read.
- Provide Braille labelling.
- Provide at least one entrance that is accessible to people who use mobility aids (ramps, unobstructed walkways, etc.).
- All venues must offer accessible bathrooms – features include lowered toilets and sinks, enough space to maneuver using mobility aids, handlebars in appropriate spots, etc.
- Indoor virtual mapping helps visitors navigate.
- Avoid obstructing pathways.
- Good lighting facilitates navigation.
- Offer a designated quiet room where visitors can unwind and recharge.

Safety

- Have a plan for evacuating ALL guests and make this available in alternative formats.
- Physically show location of stairways and emergency exits.
- Emergency signals should be both visible and audible.
- Run emergency drills.

These are just a few best practices on how you can provide a great experience for your guests with disabilities. If you are interested in learning more, please contact the Ablr team at info@Abler360.com! Our mission is to remove barriers for people with disabilities and we know first-hand the challenges and barriers that people with disabilities face when visiting various attractions. We want to help you create an experience where everyone feels welcome and keeps coming back!