

Accessible Screenings Guidelines



Create accessible spaces for all!

Why are Accessible Screenings Important?

Imagine being excited about a film, receiving your entrance, and getting to the theater only to discover barriers preventing you from enjoying the screening (a noisy environment, low volume, a dirty space, a blurry image, no seating available, etc.). You would be disappointed, wouldn't you? Well, this is how hundreds of people with disabilities feel when they go to theaters that don't provide accessible screenings.

Accessible screenings produce an inclusive environment to ensure those with disabilities can access the movies. Many elements go into offering an accessible screening; some of them are background music, adaptive devices, signage, and even service dogs.





Considering accessibility for your screenings will benefit your audience, including those with visible and non-visible disabilities, as well as people of different ages and health conditions that will be able to participate and engage in the discussions.

The best way to fill the needs of the individuals attending your screening is to ask them what they need and address it in the best way your resources allow it. If you are sending a reminder or email with general information, you can list the available options you have by request.

You can offer ASL interpretation, large print or braille versions of the printed material you plan to distribute, assistive listening devices, and front-seat reservations, among other accommodations.

You can also offer QR codes at each seat for people to scan, as another way to access printed materials.

Audio Descriptions and Captions are available for some films using the All4Access app. Check the updated list of accessible films and follow the instructions to [download and use the All4Access app.](#)

Make sure to explain the use of All4Access to the audience. Offer the deaf and hard-of-hearing audiences a flexible support arm to hold their phones during the screening.





About the Venue

- Signage: To help those with visual impairments, offer clear signage identifying locations and directions. Black and yellow is recommended. Printouts with images and/or braille signage are encouraged.
- Background music: Limit the use of unnecessary background music.
- Mobility: Consider accessible parking near the venue, proximity to a bus stop, ramp and/or elevator access, accessible bathrooms, barrier-free pathways, wide doorways and aisles to accommodate wheelchairs/scooters, and no loose cables across walking areas.
- Adaptive devices: Outlets and tables should be available in designated areas for those using adaptive devices.
- Service dogs: Areas for relief and space to accommodate service dogs should be available.
- Relaxation spaces: Have a room or space available close to the screening area for people to relax in case they feel overwhelmed during the screening.



Logistics

- Assistance: Make sure you have assistance-volunteers or personnel-available to accommodate and assist your audience with disabilities before, during, and after the screening.
- Q&A: Consider having an ASL interpreter during the Q&A session. If your audience with hearing disabilities doesn't show up this time, they will next time. Please ask the presenters to repeat questions before responding.
- Announce your screening as accessible and include consumer organizations serving people with disabilities in your mailing list.



Sensory Friendly Screenings

Consider offering screenings addressing those who prefer a more relaxed environment, including people with autism spectrum disorder, sensory and communication disorders, or a learning disability.

For those screenings, take into account the following: house lights on at all times, sounds lower than usual, and a rest area available outside the screening room. It would help if you told the audience what to expect in advance.

You should make sure your screenings are accessible, not only to comply with ADA guidelines but also to provide a safe and fun environment for people with disabilities to entertain themselves. Having an accessible theater will improve your reputation in this community and will ensure that a wider audience will visit your business.



Additional Information

You can find additional information in the following reference links:

- [Inclusive Cinema - Quick tips for running relaxed screenings](#)
- [Cornell University - Accessible Meeting & Event Checklist](#)
- [Reel Access: A Guide to Accessible Film Festivals and Screenings So Everyone Feels Welcome](#)
- [SEATUP - Guide to Accessible Entertainment](#)
- [Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf \(RID\) - Hiring an Interpreter](#)

About Dicapta

This guide was prepared by Dicapta, a communications technology company focused on making media accessible for people with visual and hearing disabilities. It has been offering high-quality audio description, captioning, and language customization services, including multilingual events, since 2004. Dicapta has served the TV industry, media companies, educational institutions, and a variety of organizations in making communications accessible to everyone.



Created by Dicapta to promote accessible screenings

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Disclaimer

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