Equal Access: Universal Design of Libraries
A checklist for making libraries welcoming, accessible, and usable

The following questions can guide you in making your library accessible to everyone. This content does not provide legal advice. To help clarify issues, consult your institution's legal counsel or ADA/504 compliance officer or call the regional Office for Civil Rights (OCR) can also help clarify issues.

Planning, Policies, and Evaluation
— Consider diversity issues as you plan and evaluate services.
— Are people with disabilities, racial and ethnic minorities, men and women, young and old students, and other groups represented on your staff in numbers proportional to those of your community?
— Does the library have a written policy and description of services for patrons with disabilities, including information on how to request accommodations?
— Is accessibility included in the procurement of library holdings?
— Does the library have a procedure in place that ensures timely response to requests for disability-related accommodations and other special assistance?
— Are disability-related access issues addressed in your evaluation methods?

Physical Environments and Products
— Ensure physical access, comfort, and safety within an environment that is inclusive of people with a variety of abilities, racial and ethnic backgrounds, genders, and ages.
— Are there library parking areas, pathways, and entrances that are wheelchair-accessible and clearly identified?
— Are all levels of the library connected via an accessible route of travel, or are there procedures to assist patrons with mobility impairments in retrieving materials from inaccessible locations?
— Do elevators have auditory, visual, and tactile signals and are elevator controls accessible from a seated position?
— Are wheelchair-accessible restrooms with well marked signs available in or near the library?
— Are information desks and facilities such as book returns wheelchair accessible?
— Are aisles kept wide and clear for the safety of users who have mobility or visual impairments?
— Are there ample high-contrast, large print directional signs throughout the library? Are shelf and stack identifiers provided in large print and Braille formats? Are call numbers on book spines printed in large type? Is equipment marked with large print and Braille labels?
— Are private study areas available for patrons with disabilities who need to bring personal equipment, who need the assistance of a reader, or who are distracted by noise and movement?
— Is lighting adjustable by the individual?

Library Staff
— Make sure staff are prepared to work with all patrons.
— Are all staff members aware of issues related to communicating with patrons of different races and ethnicities, ages, and abilities?
— Are staff trained in the use of the Telecommunications Relay Service, as well as assistive computer technology provided in the library?
— Are staff trained in policies and procedures for providing accommodations to patrons with disabilities?
— Do staff members have ready access to a list of resources for patrons with disabilities?
— Are staff knowledgeable about federally-funded Talking Book and Braille Libraries and dother organizations that provide relevant services to patrons with disabilities?
— Do service staff wear large-print name badges?
— If there are staff members with sign language skills, are they identified to other staff members so that, when available, they can assist patrons who are deaf?

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Information Resources and Technology
— Ensure that publications and websites welcome a diverse group and content is accessible to everyone.
— Can the library's electronic and information resources, including web pages, online catalogs, indexes, and full-text databases and CD-ROMs, be accessed with a variety of adaptive computer technologies such as screen readers?
— Are librarians prepared to assist patrons with inaccessible electronic resources by providing consultations or materials in other formats?
— Are reader and research assistants available to patrons with visual impairments?
— Are reference and circulation services available by phone and email?
— Are resource delivery services available for patrons unable to leave their homes, retirement facilities, or hospitals?
— Are applications for the nationwide network of Talking Book and Braille Libraries available for patrons with print-related disabilities?
— Do you include a statement about your commitment to universal access and procedures for requesting disability-related accommodations? Ex: "Our library's goal is to make all materials and activities accessible. Please inform project staff of accessibility barriers you encounter and of accommodations that will make information resources accessible to you."
— Are all printed library publications available in alternate formats such as Braille, large print, and electronic text?
— Are key documents provided in languages other than English?
— Do electronic resources and websites adhere to accessibility guidelines adopted by your library?
— Do you include a statement on your website affirming your commitment to accessible design? Ex. "We strive to make our website universally accessible. We provide text descriptions of graphics and photos. Video clips are open-captioned and audio-described, providing access to users who can't hear the audio or see the video, respectively."
— Do videos developed or used in the library have captions?
— Is an adjustable-height table available for each type of workstation to assist students who use wheelchairs or are small or large in stature?
— Do you provide adequate work space for both left- and right-handed users?
— Is software to enlarge screen images and a large monitor available to assist students with low vision and learning disabilities?
— Do you provide a trackball to be used by someone who has difficulty controlling a mouse?
— Are wrist and forearm rests available to assist some people with mobility impairments?
— Are staff members aware of accessibility options (e.g., enlarged text feature) included in computer operating systems and of assistive technology available in the facility?
— Are procedures in place for a timely response to requests for assistive technology?

Events
— Ensure that everyone feels welcome and can participate in events sponsored by the organization.
— Are events located in wheelchair-accessible facilities? Is the accessible entrance clearly marked?
— Is information about requesting disability-related accommodations included in library materials?
— Is accessible transportation available if transportation is arranged for other participants?