

BRG Facility Access Fact Sheet

Background and Purpose

The Disability:IN ERG/BRG Leadership Committee has prepared this fact sheet to assist corporate disability Employee Resource Groups/Business Resource Groups to advance inclusive and easy access to their companies' grounds and buildings. This fact sheet provides ideas, recommendations and resources for disability inclusion that go beyond the ADAAG (Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines). It also addresses ADAAG requirements that are too often overlooked or misinterpreted.

Best Practices

SENIOR-LEVEL ACCESSIBILITY OFFICER AT THE VICE PRESIDENT OR CHIEF ACCESSIBILITY OFFICER LEVEL

To ensure coordination across the enterprise, establishing a senior level accessibility position is a best practice. A skilled and knowledgeable person in this position greatly contributes to ensuring that your facility is usable and welcoming for all employees, clients, customers and visitors.

- Skills
 - Possesses a very diverse background with sufficient business experience including HR and law and an understanding of technology barriers; there should be a dotted line connecting this position with those responsible for technology
 - Has the knowledge and executive position to ensure accessibility coordination between those who are responsible for employees and those responsible for customers
 - Courses or training or workshops in Disability Studies for knowledge on the socio-economic issues surrounding disability
- Report Options
 - To executive management such as the COO or Chief Technology Officer with links to Human Resources, Safety & Security, Supply Chain and Health Services to ensure a strong voice with all the units responsible for design, procurement and maintenance, or
 - Up through Diversity and Inclusion with links with HR, facilities and technology

CENTRALIZED ACCOMMODATIONS AND A CENTRALIZED ACCOMMODATIONS FUND

Effective and Inclusive Facility Access and Accommodations are closely linked. In addition to having a senior level accessibility position, a centralized accommodation process with centralized funding is a best practice. With both in place, full disability inclusion will be greatly enhanced.

- Suggestions
 - All requests go through the same request process to ensure that the right accommodations are implemented, and the employee receives the appropriate accommodation
 - Develop a fully integrated program that includes an online product catalogue, frequently updated with product upgrades, adaptations and new products, that allows an employee to choose the type of accommodations needed, including for mandated or career advancement training

ACCOMMODATION MODELS (NOTE: MAY BE A HYBRID OF 2 OR MORE, BUT ALL REQUESTS GO THROUGH THE SAME PROCESS)

- **Model 1:** The ERG/BRG, HR and D&I are all involved in the accommodation request process
- **Model 2:** The accommodations function sits in Global Health and kept separate from HR with staff trained in Assistive Technology
- **Model 3:** Requests go through Employee Relations
- **Model 4:** Requests are made through the employee's line of business³

Accessibility Features Not Specifically Covered by ADAAG

- Doors that swing in only one direction
- Automatic Door buttons that are located at a reasonable distance from the door but ensures sufficient time for someone with a mobility disability to pass through the door
- Timing on automatic doors set longer than the standard setting
- Automatic doors kept in good repair with scheduled regular maintenance
- Automatic door buttons are easy to press with minimal strength and can be pressed by those who do not have use of their fingers

- Doors eliminated wherever possible, e.g. like the design of entrances to many airport restrooms; but account for management of noise for people with sensitivity to noise
- Relief areas for service animals located in smoke-free areas and have a roof, trash cans, a bag dispenser and a surface that does not retain excessive heat
- Door handles selected in contrasting colors and textures for individuals with low vision
- Design the accessibility features on touch screens for destination elevators so they are integrated with standard controls and not placed in a separate location
- Key cards are tactilely marked with the direction and side that needs to be inserted.
- Key slot location tactilely marked
- Movement sensitive lighting that senses movement by individuals who are less than average height and signal when go off to alert individuals who are blind

Accessibility Requirements that Frequently are Missed

- Bathroom doors on accessible stalls that swing in rather than out
- Doors that exceed the required less than 5 pounds of pressure to open
- Thresholds transitions from one space to the next are too high
- Carpets that do not meet the low & tight pile and firmly installed standards
- Locking mechanisms on accessible bathroom stalls that do not have an easily used on and off function
- Lighting installed that is not maintained or of a type that can trigger seizures or migraines
- Floors that do not meet the firm and non-slip surface requirement

Additional Actions to Consider (from the 7/15/19 ERG/BRG In-Person Committee Meeting)

FACILITIES

- Recognize there can be great disparities in access even within one company
- Understand there are issues between legacy and new facilities
- Inclusive Design that is usable by all is the goal
- Universal/Inclusive Design positively impacts the reasonable accommodations process & removes the burden from the individual of needing to ask for changes to the environment

- Consider the impact of 'new' furnishings such as sit-stand desks, mother pods, lactation rooms
- It is important to take a holistic look that is at an enterprise level
- Include Gender Neutral facilities
- An Accessibility department is a best practice

ACCOMMODATIONS

- A centralized decision-making point needs to be in place staffed by individuals trained on ergonomics, accessibility and universal or inclusive design
- The ERG/BRG should be used as a resource to enable the company to go beyond the minimum requirements
- Leverage accommodation requests for an opportunity for innovation
- Implementation of accommodations without a lengthy approval process is key
- Have a list of pre-approved common items requested as accommodations so when those items are requested, they are done or issued without a waiting period or an approval process
- Information is easily found on where a centralized accommodation budget sits and how the process works
- Data needs to be generated as part of the accommodation process to guide decisions on where to invest in the future, how you are doing and if you are succeeding – are you doing as well as you think you are