



Self Assessment Tool

Section: Physical Accessibility

Making the physical space welcoming and inclusive for all.

In this section you will find questions that reflect on the physical accessibility of your space. The section covers how the space is intentionally organized and maintained in order to achieve a physical space that is welcoming and inclusive for all. Categories such as accommodations at events, emergency planning, and signage necessary for a space to meet many of the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements will be addressed in this section.

- To facilitate communication with multiple team members, print out a full list of questions.
- Please be sure to save your work periodically. If you do not save routinely, work may be lost. To save, click “Save and continue later” bar at the top of the page. You will be prompted to write your email twice. Wait 5-10 minutes, then check your inbox for a link to continue.
- Don’t use the back button on your browser page. Information may be lost by navigating with your browser controls. If you need to go back to a previous page use directional buttons at the bottom of the tool.
- Please contact Lisa Handelman at 301-230-7278 or by email lisa.handelman@shalomdc.org for questions or to share additional resources.

Contact Information

1. What is the name of your organization?

2. Please enter your contact information.

First Name Last Name
Title
Email Address
Phone Number

Events

3. Does your organization take into consideration physical accessibility when planning events?
4. Is there adequate seating provided during pre-events or standing events?
5. For *kiddush* and other communal buffet meals is there a plan in place to support those who may have difficulty juggling plates, utensils and finding a seat?
6. Are there comfortable places to which people can easily retreat if sitting still or staying quiet becomes difficult during worship services, where they can still follow along?
7. Are assistive listening devices provided for all who need them at services, special events, and educational programs? Are they readily available?

Interior Spaces

8. Are interior spaces kept neat and organized so they are navigable by people with mobility limitations?
9. Is there adequate lighting at the podium to facilitate lip reading?
10. Can people with physical limitations open interior doors without assistance?
Criteria: The door handle is not higher than 48 inches, and the maximum force needed to open the door is 5 lbs.
11. Is the bimah accessible to people with physical challenges?
Criteria: If there is a ramp, the slope is not greater than 1:12, and there are railings.
12. Is seating to accommodate people using wheelchairs (in the sanctuary, classrooms, and social spaces) distributed throughout with companion seats adjacent to these spaces?
13. Are floors free of potential tripping hazards or barriers for individuals with visual disabilities or those using walkers or wheelchairs (e.g. raised thresholds, deep carpets, or abrupt changes in flooring surface)?
14. Are all threshold edges throughout the space less than 1/4 inches high or, if beveled, less than 3/4 inches high?
15. In addition to being kept neat and organized are the interior space wide enough to be navigable by people with mobility limitations?
Criteria: Is there a 5 foot circle or T-shaped area within the space for persons using a wheelchair to reverse direction?
16. Is there an adjustable workspace available for people who use wheelchairs/scooters or for those who need to sit while working (including kitchen and office table tops or counters)?
17. Are light switches low enough to be reachable by people using wheelchairs and people of short stature?

18. Are unscented/hypoallergenic cleaning products, candles, soaps, and air fresheners used throughout the building?

19. Can electrical, mechanical, game and self-service controls be used by individuals with physical limitations?

Criteria: Are they located at an accessible height, and can they be operated with a closed fist?

20. At each type of cashier counter, is there a portion that is no more than 36 inches high?

21. Do all staircases have continuous rails on both sides with extensions beyond the top and bottom stair?

22. Are the carpeting or mats installed to minimize tripping hazards?

Criteria: Is the carpet no more than 1/2 inch high, and are the edges securely attached?

23. Can all objects protruding into the circulation of paths be detected by a person with a visual cane? (Objects mounted on the wall such as rails, partition, or columns, can pose a hazard unless their projection is limited. Objects that are within cane sweep or at least 27 inches high or that provide headroom clearance of at least 80 inches do not pose a hazard)

24. Is lighting even, glare-free, and sufficiently bright for reading and seeing throughout the building?

25. Can wheelchair-accessible water fountains be reached easily from any location in the building?

26. Is there a route of travel throughout the building at least 36 inches wide that does not require the use of stairs so that every area of the building is accessible to people who cannot use the stairs (including elevators and lifts, if applicable)?

27. Are accessible restrooms with accessible stalls and lavatories easily located and accessed from any area of the building with directional signage provided?

Exterior Spaces

28. Are there ample parking spaces close to the entrance reserved for those with handicapped parking permits?

29. Are sidewalks and exterior spaces kept clear so all can navigate this space?

30. Do curbs at drives, parking and drop-off areas have curb cuts (ramps graded down from the top surface to the adjoining street)?

31. Is there oversight of reserved parking spaces so these spaces are not misused?

32. Is there a welcoming, accessible entrance that can be used independently by individuals with disabilities?

Criteria: If this entrance includes a ramp, is the slope not greater than 1:12? If it has a door closer does it take at least 3 seconds to close?

33. Can people with physical limitations open exterior doors without assistance?

Criteria: The door handle is not higher than 48 inches and is operable with a closed fist, or there is an automatic door opener.

34. Is the door handle no higher than 48 inches and operable with a closed fist, or is there an automatic door opener?

35. Can everyone enter through the same main doorway?

Emergency Planning

36. If emergency systems are provided, do they have both flashing lights and audible signals?

37. Do you have an emergency plan to evaluate people with disabilities that includes times to practice procedures?

38. Are all emergency exits accessible to people with physical and visual disabilities?

Signage & Communication

39. Have you asked individuals with disabilities if they and/or their family members find the space physically accessible?

40. Do you have alternative communication methods for individuals with communication needs or hearing impairments? (MD Relay, text, email)

41. Are there signs indicating accessible entrances and exits (including signs at inaccessible entrances indicating the location of the nearest accessible entrance)?

42. Are glass doors well marked so no one runs into them?

43. Are restrooms identifiable for individuals who are blind or visually impaired?

44. Is signage provided at inaccessible restrooms that give directions to accessible ones?

45. Are signs mounted with a centerline 60 inches from the floor with raised characters and braille text?

Sanctuary & Religious Items

46. Are there *mezuzot* low enough to be reached by people using wheelchairs and people of short stature?

47. Are *tallitot*, *kippot* and printed material (brochures, announcement guides) easily reachable for people using wheelchairs and walkers?

48. Is the Torah accessible or made accessible to people with physical challenges or short stature?

49. Do you have alternative *siddurim* readily available for those who need them (large print, braille, large copies of material)?

50. Are there accommodations for people who cannot hold heavy books (e.g. sections provided in lightweight copies or reading stands provided)?

Budget

51. Do you have a strategic budgetary plan with a clear timeline to support changes needed to make your building physically accessible?

52. Does the budget ensure maintenance and follow-up to create (for new space) and maintain (for current space) physical accessibility that is reviewed and updated regularly (reviewed at least every 2 years and includes maintenance of accessible equipment such as elevators, lifts, automatic door openers)?