

Final - 12/09/08

PROPOSAL FOR ACCESSIBLE CFA MEETINGS TO FACILITATE PARTICIPATION BY DISABLED FACULTY IN CFA AND THE OPERATION OF THE DISABILITIES CAUCUS

(prepared by Anita Silvers and Sharon Chadwick in 2005 and amended/updated by Disabilities Caucus in 2008)

The following guidelines for accessible meetings are adapted from the Disability Rights Advocates' Events Planners Handbook and other guides.

CFA meetings will be held in hotels and other venues which are accessible. Recognizing that achieving universal design is a never-ending and fluid process, it is our expectation that CFA and its meeting venues will continually foster universal design in their construction, renovations, operation, and organization.

This is a list of commonly made reasonable accommodations that enable individuals with disabilities to participate in meetings. To enable participation, organizations should inform their members of the availability of accommodations, and the process for requesting them, well before members need to decide whether to attend the meeting.

MEETING REGISTRATION/HOTEL RESERVATIONS:

The Registration Form should have space for requesting accommodations, and contact information for the staff member who will provide the accommodations.

Meeting program/advance materials should request attendees to accommodate chemically sensitive colleagues by refraining from wearing scented products. Also, meetings should not be held in hotels and other locations that have aromatherapy and/or scented products in the ventilation systems.

TRAVEL:

Wheelchair accessible taxis/vans: hotels that provide van service to and from airports are supposed to have accessible vans, but some do not. If a hotel contract includes van service, the contract should specify that the hotel must provide accessible service.

Extended travel time, and travel for personal attendants, should be provided if needed.

HOTEL:

Parking: Parking lot should have van accessible and handicapped accessible parking places.

Corridors: Wall-mounted objects should not protrude into corridors. If corridors are blocked by heavy doors, these should have automatic openers.

All lobbies and corridors should have level entrances.

Corridors should be well-lighted. Meeting room names and other signage should be in large letters and well-lighted.

Sleeping rooms: Hotel contract should include ADA compliant rooms within the meeting block, and should specify that adaptive equipment making warnings and communications accessible to deaf/hard of hearing guests and blind/low vision guests is available.

Meeting rooms: Meeting rooms should be accessible without recourse to stairs, and should not be blocked by heavy doors. Furniture in meeting rooms and in banquet rooms should be arranged with 36-inch paths of travel.

Meetings of the Disabilities Caucus and other meetings with disabled attendees should be located near the elevators if at all possible.

Meeting rooms should be well lighted.

Risers should be ramped. Lav or hand microphones should be available for speakers who can't reach the podium microphone.

Podiums should have lights that illuminate the speaker's face to facilitate lip-reading by audience members. Speakers, whether standing at a podium or seated at a table, should be situated at the front of the riser, or close to the audience if there is no riser, with unobscured line-of-sight to the audience to facilitate lip-

reading. (Speakers and MCs should be encouraged to repeat questions asked from the floor before they answer, to assist audience members who cannot hear questions asked by people positioned in seats or at microphones behind them.)

Hotel AV should be able to supply wireless or wired assistive listening devices to amplify talks. If such a device is in use, speakers (whether from the front or the floor) should be reminded at the beginning of the session to use the microphones.

Audiovisual presentations (especially videos) should have captions/subtitles if at all possible. Also, the captions/subtitles should be routinely be turned on even if the presenter doesn't think there is a hearing-impaired person in attendance.

Public restrooms: ADA compliant restrooms should be available on every meeting room floor.

Floor Plan: A floor plan of the hotel should be made available at the hotel's front desk for people to take with them. A tape recorded or electronic description of the hotel's floor plan should be made available for vision-impaired individuals.

Signage: Signs showing locations of elevators, meeting rooms, restrooms (including wheelchair accessible restrooms), etc. should be located where those with disabilities can easily find them and should include Braille signage.

MEETING MATERIALS:

Alternative Formats: Where possible, meeting materials should be made available in electronic format (.doc, .txt. etc but not .pdf) prior to the meeting. Disc copies should be available at registration. On request, all written communication must be made available in a format accessible to blind or low vision participants. Printed materials should have high contrast between the paper color and print. Always use black print and do not use dark-colored or fluorescent-colored paper. Every effort should be taken to work with the requesting meeting participant to agree upon the most user-friendly accessible format.

COMMUNICATIONS:

On request, sign language interpretation or real-time closed captioning should be provided. (These are comparatively easy to arrange in the Los Angeles and Sacramento areas, but must be arranged well in advance.)