



On-going evaluation of accessibility in shelters

Shelter workers and managers can assess as they move about the shelter, and work with the shelter clients. Some of the things they can observe, remedy and/or report to the shelter manager (or designee):

Shelter set-up

- Are cots placed far enough apart with pathways for access by mobility devices (at least 36")?
- Is there accessibility to bathrooms/showers (are pathways at least 36")?
- Is there an accessible route (36" wide) between the serving area and in between tables in the eating area(s)?
- Is there accessible parking (and if temporary, properly marked)?
- Is there at least one entrance to the building that is accessible for people with mobility issues with signage identifying the location of the accessible entrance?
- Is there an awareness of sensory issues (lighting, noise, etc.) and a space designated as a quiet room?
- Are the portable bathrooms, showers, and hand washing stations accessible (is the approach free from stones, rubble, steps, tree roots, mud, or loose sand)?
- Is there designated space (room, privacy screens, etc.) for people to attend to personal activities of daily living with privacy and dignity?
- Is the emergency evacuation route accessible?
- Is there an appropriate area for service and assistance animals to relieve themselves?

Registration

- Does the registration table have an area no higher than 36" available?
- Are there additional accessibility items to assist in registration (larger print, magnifiers, Show Me tools, tablets with communication apps, pocket talkers, language lists (e.g. 'I speak' card), etc.)?

Shelter services

- Is there accessibility to programs (food service, counseling services, resource fair, information boards)?
- Is there line management available (alternatives for those with mobility issues who are waiting in line for food/services)?
- Is there a contact list for transportation resources and disability service agencies available?

Communication

- Is there communication accessibility (interpreters for foreign language, ASL; access to Language Lines; information written on whiteboards in simple language; announcements made with PA system; televisions with closed caption turned on; accessibility to internet)?
- Is there easy-to-read signage? Is the signage prominently posted (not in the front of a table), visible, readable, large print with readable font (sans serif fonts recommended)? Use of pictograms in signs (for limited English proficiency and/or those who can't read)?
- If there are television sets in the shelter, is the closed caption function turned on?