

Serving People who are Blind or Visually Impaired

U.S. Department of Justice
Civil Rights Division
Disability Rights Section

Guide for Places of Lodging: Serving Guests who are
Blind or who have Low Vision

<http://www.ada.gov/lodblind.htm>

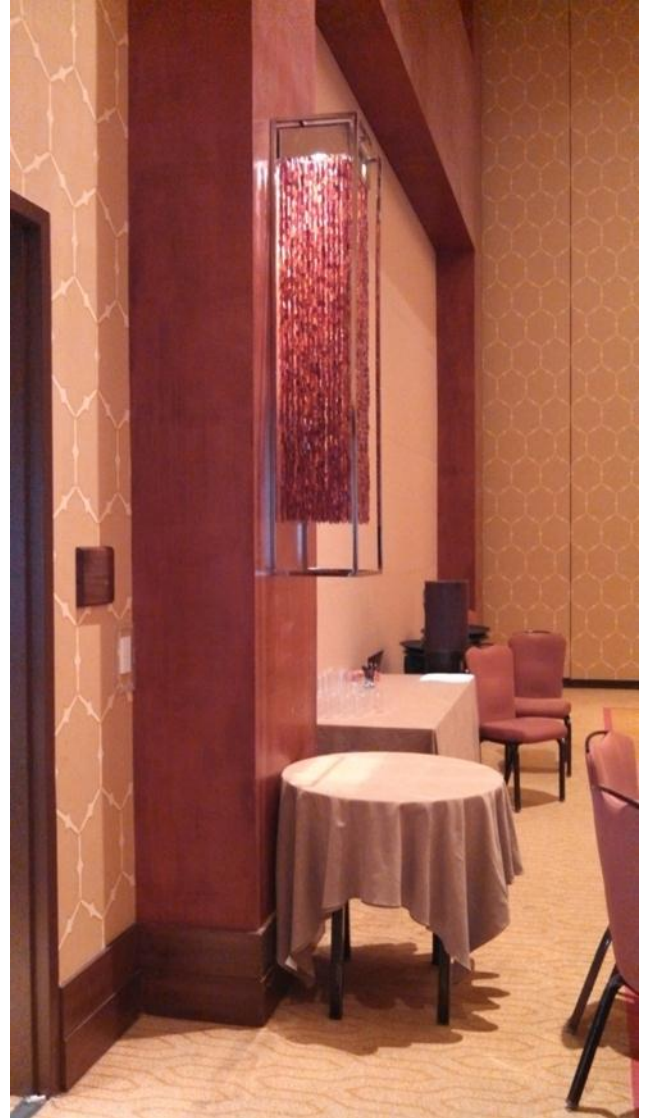
Places of lodging must provide their services in a way that gives people who are blind or who have low vision a full and equal opportunity to enjoy the services that are provided to others.



Picture of a hotel sleeping room with a king-size bed with two nightstands and sliding glass doors leading out to a balcony.

Basic Items to Look For During Site Selection

- Service animals are always allowed in venues. *If the hotel says it will make an exception, remind them of the ADA guidelines. They need to be aware of the rules as much as you are.*
- Permanent signs in all spaces must include Braille
- Elevators must include Braille and ideally should have audio indicators for the floors.
- Restaurant and in-room dining menus should be available in Braille.
- Emergency evacuation instructions should be provided in Braille.
- No items or barriers should be set up that can harm a guest.
- Stanchions are not a good idea for registration counters. Can the hotel assure they will not be used at the hotel front desk?
- Make sure meeting rooms and hallways are well-lit.
- Hotel should be able to ensure electronic meeting room signs have a dark plain background with white/yellow letters/numbers.



Get it in the Contract

- Negotiate that the hotel will provide one or more dog guide relief areas close to the hotel. If it's important, this could be a deal breaker. Make sure the designated relief areas are not placed in areas where attendees have to cross a street to get to them.



- The hotel will provide tactile key cards (to identify one side from the other).
- All stairs will have railings and high contrast on risers.
- The hotel will agree to undergo disability awareness training for staff (group to provide the trainer and materials).

Organization Responsibilities

- Registration forms in alternate formats
- Options for accessible materials listed on registration forms
- Organization should arrange for braille and large copy printed programs.
- Online registration software compatible with screen readers/magnification software
- Name badges – attendee names as large as possible
- Presenter handouts should be available in a format accessible to all
- Organization responsible for securing interpreters and sighted guides at reasonable costs.
- If an attendee brings a sighted guide with them, the sighted guide should not be expected to pay the registration fee.
- Plan to have conference staff offer to take the attendee around the hotel and meeting space.
- Train staff at registration desks to provide basic orientation skills to help attendees get to their locations.

Joelle Ward
Senior Director of Component Relations and Professional Development
Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired
1703 N. Beauregard Street, Suite 440
Alexandria, VA 22311
(703) 671-4500
Joelle@aerbvi.org