



Professional Development
american**job**center®

How to Create an **Accessible Meeting** – In Person and Virtual

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Antonio Gómez

- Workforce Development Coordinator
 - Illinois Center for Specialized Professional Support
- abgomez2@ilstu.edu



Heather Speth

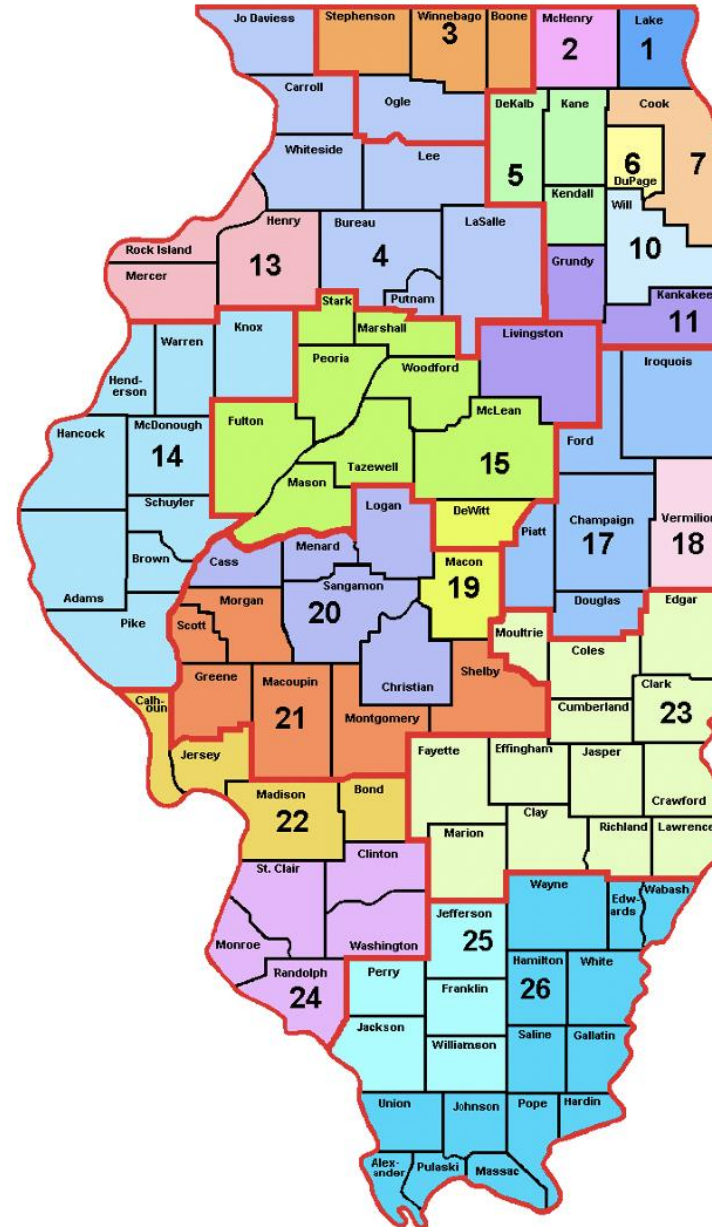
- Assistant Bureau Chief
 - Bureau of Customer and Community Blind Services
- Heather.speth@Illinois.gov



Welcome

- I will be your **moderator** and **technical support**
- Please hold all **questions** until the Q&A portions of this webinar or post questions in the chat
- This webinar will be offering **closed captioning**
- We will be **recording** this webinar
- A recording and all materials will be available within **two business days** on the [Illinois Workforce Academy](#)
- **Let's get started with some polls...**

Where is Your Local Area?



Which partner do you best represent?



These are best practices



Best practices **change**

Plan ahead

5 Sections

1. Meeting Preparation
2. Shared Meeting Materials
3. In-Person Meetings
4. Virtual Meetings
5. Resources

We will have Q&A time at the end of each section

Credits

- These **Meeting Accessibility Guidelines** were compiled by the Disability Workgroup of the Career Pathways for Targeted Populations Committee (CPTP) of the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB)
- The **CPTP Disability Workgroup** consists of Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) Representatives, Employers, Workforce Development Professionals, Education Specialists, and Local Workforce Innovation Area (LWIA) Representatives
- These guidelines are a **collaborative** effort of all these entities and seek to align with national standards listed in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and [Section 508](#) (which requires that electronic elements be accessible to individuals with disabilities)

Credits

- These guidelines are a work-in-progress. If you have **suggestions**, please fill out [this form](#).
- Heather Speth is online as a representative of the Bureau of Customer and Community Blind Services for any questions I can't answer
- Heather will interject at various points in the presentation

First, Definitions...

- **Readily Achievable:** “[...]easy to do without much difficulty or expense.” [ADA Design Standards](#)
 - Frequently, **no cost.** [IL Div. of Human Rights](#)
 - Job Accommodation Network (JAN) surveyed 700 employers: one-time cost of **\$300** for employers. [WorkforceGPS](#)
- **Program Access:** “[...]individuals with disabilities are not excluded from any program, service, or activity provided by the state or local government because existing buildings and facilities are inaccessible.” [ADA Design Standards](#)

Section 1: Meeting Preparation

This section mainly applies to in-person meetings



Plan ahead

As You Look for Venues

If you have not visited, **ask:**

- ✓ Do they have **Braille** signage?
- ✓ Are entryways, passageways, and hallways wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair or scooter **easily**?
- ✓ Do they have **ramps**?
- ✓ Are **service animals** permitted?
- ✓ Are there:
 - ✓ Accessible Bathrooms
 - ✓ Gender-neutral bathrooms



If you do not need the accessible bathroom, use other stalls first

As You Look for Venues

If you have not visited, **ask:**

- ✓ What is their **tech capacity**?
 - ✓ Do they have microphones?
 - ✓ Do they have public wi-fi?
 - ✓ Can online attendees hear the microphones without echo or reverb?
 - ✓ Do they have a wireless mic so participants do not have to come to the podium?
 - ✓ Is the projector screen large?



What If They Don't Have What You Need?

Not all venues will have what you need:

- ✓ Is it a deal breaker?
 - ✓ Use your best judgment
 - ✓ Ask an expert
 - ✓ ICSPS
 - ✓ DRS
- ✓ Can you supply what they are missing?
- ✓ **Let attendees know**



As You Prepare



- ✓ Ensure **name tag** font is large, high contrast, and not overly decorative
- ✓ If **food** is served, collect any data regarding potential allergies
- ✓ **Keep** presenters **and** organizers **informed**

Have a Housekeeping Script

- Here is one of ours:
 - **Use “Person First” Language** (ex: an individual with a Disability, a Justice-Impacted Individual, etc.)
 - **Assume positive intent**
 - **Avoid jargon and explain acronyms**
 - **Respect lived experiences**
 - **If you do not want to be on camera,** use the chat
 - **Please wait until the floor is opened for discussion,** raise your hand, or put comments in the chat
 - **Share the floor**

When You Send Invitations/Registration

- **One month prior**, send out invitations/registration
- Include a **request for reasonable accommodations**
- Here is some **language** you can borrow and tweak:
 - Do you require an accommodation to participate in this meeting? *Please provide two weeks' notice if requesting an interpreter. If notice is not received prior to two weeks, [entity] will do the utmost to provide an interpreter
 - No
 - If yes, please specify the type of accommodation (e.g., interpreter [please specify language and if you are bringing your interpreter], CART reporter, Braille or large print materials, etc.)

When You Send Invitations/Registration



- Possible accommodations include:
 - ✓ Assistive listening device
 - ✓ Interpreter
 - ✓ Closed captioning
 - ✓ Reserved front-row seat
 - ✓ Large print
 - ✓ An advance copy of the slides
 - ✓ Wheelchair access
 - ✓ Scent-free room
 - ✓ Lactation room
 - ✓ Gender neutral bathroom

When Requesting an Interpreter

- **Two-week notice** to the interpretation agency
- Enough space for the attendee to **specify their language**
- An option for the attendee to specify that they are **bringing their interpreter** (attendees may already be planning to bring an interpreter)
- **Inform** the facilitator/speaker/IT tech



Looking for a Checklist?

WorkforceGPS has created a checklist for event planning:

- Follow this [link](#)
- Half-way down the page, you will see a table with a checklist

Finalize Planning (Checklist)

Incorporate feedback and accommodation requests from your audience into existing plans, adjusting as needed to ensure equivalent access, participation and comprehension.

| No. | Planning Item | Examples |
|-----|---|---|
| 1 | Select the optimal venue and communications platform to meet your guests needs, of those available to me | Registration, building entrance and rooms, telephone, virtual meeting software |
| 2 | <div style="background-color: #e0e0e0; padding: 2px; text-align: center; font-size: 0.8em; margin-bottom: 5px;">Finalize Planning - Checklist</div> Secure support staff, technology and services necessary to accommodate your guests' needs | Captioning, ASL interpreting, Braille, large print, assisted listening devices, ushers/guides, seating |
| 3 | Update the meeting's promotional material, registration and agenda with any updates and additions to venue and communications platform accommodations | Meeting links, captioning links, platform help files such as test meetings, keyboard controls documentation |



Questions?

Section 2: Shared Meeting Materials

In This Section We Will...

1. **Learn** some general document accessibility
2. **Demonstrate** how to use built-in accessibility tools



This Section Will Be Interactive

- Please feel free to follow along on your device and post any **questions in the chat**
- I will address any questions either at the end of the section or as I see them
- We will be looking at **Microsoft Office** applications (Word, PowerPoint) and **Adobe Acrobat Pro** (PDF reader/editor)

General Guidelines



General Guidelines

- ✓ Save docs in their **original format** as it preserves more accessibility features (if you can)
- ✓ **Don't** send scanned documents
- ✓ Save and send out all materials as plain text
 - ✓ Save As/Plain Text (.txt)
- ✓ Use **built-in structure** (headings, body, bullet points, etc.)
- ✓ Position **graphics** in alignment with the text they refer to
- ✓ Specify document **language**
- ✓ If possible, share materials **two days prior**

General Guidelines



- ✓ Use the **Accessibility Checker**
 - ✓ **Microsoft Office:**
Review/Accessibility or bottom banner
 - ✓ **Adobe Acrobat Pro:**
Tools/Prepare for accessibility

Use Plain Language

- Write for your reader
- Major points first, details last
- Eliminate filler
- Minimize abbreviations/acronyms
- Use common definitions
- Avoid legal, foreign, or technical jargon
- Use tables/illustrations
- Use short paragraphs
- Use many headers
- Have a proofreader



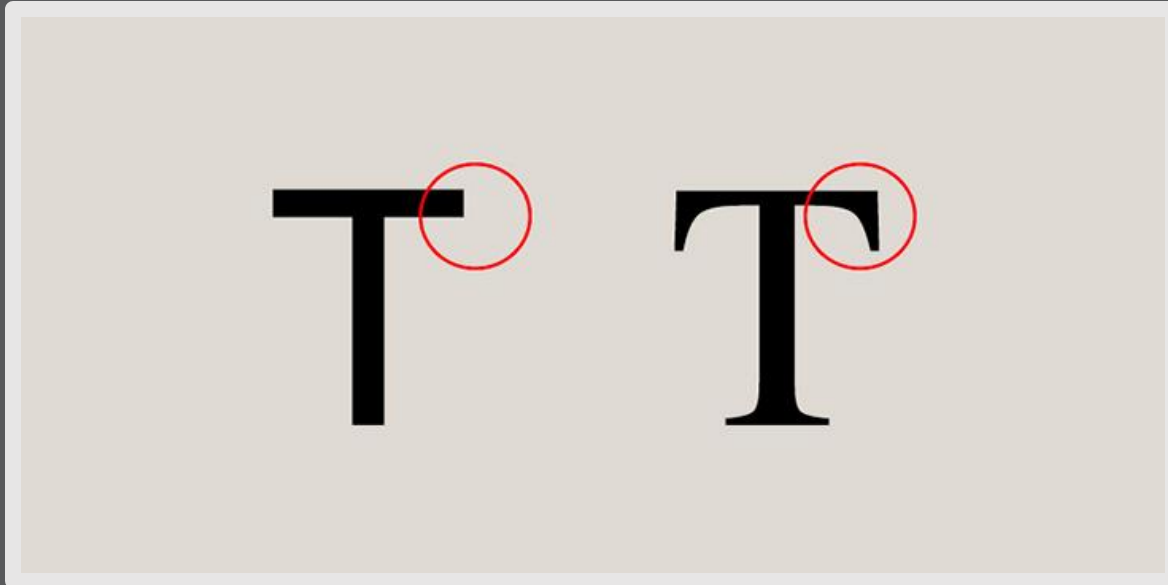
General Guidelines

- ✓ Use **alt text**
 - ✓ Will demonstrate shortly
- ✓ Rename **hyperlinks**
 - ✓ Will demonstrate shortly
- ✓ Use a simple, large **font**
 - ✓ Documents: 12 points (16 pixels)
 - ✓ Slides: 24 points (32 pixels)



✗ **alt**="yellow apple"

✓ **alt**="hand reaching for a yellow apple hanging from the tree"



Sans Serif Fonts



Accessible Fonts: Examples

Helvetica

Calibri

Tahoma

Book Antiqua

Century Gothic

Georgia

Verdana

Times New Roman

Lucinda Sans

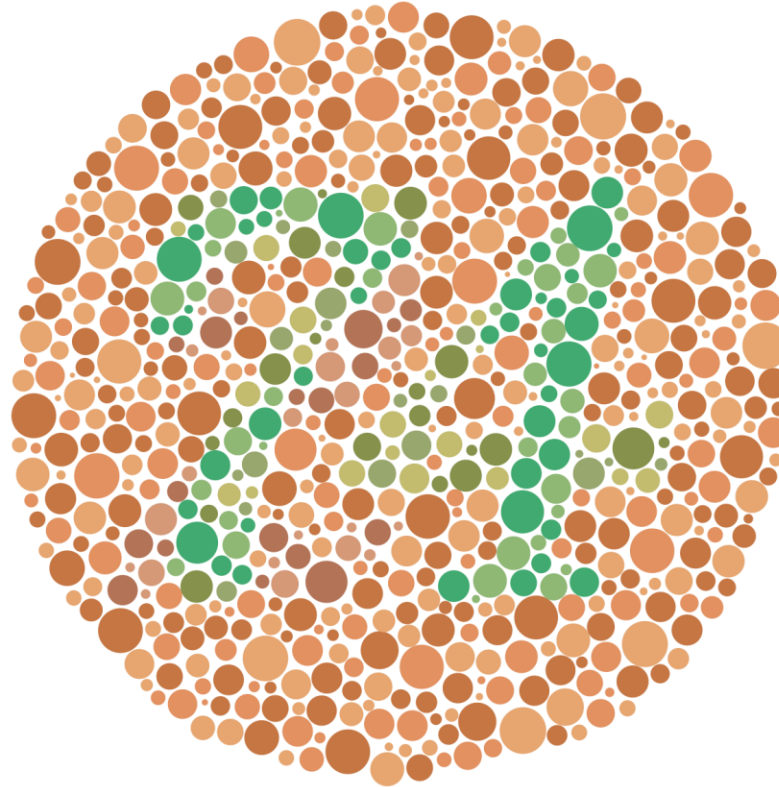
Garamond

Arial

Accessible Colors

Designing for Color Blind Individuals

- ✓ Can your content be understood **without color**?
- ✓ Can your links and buttons be understood **without color**?



Switch It Up!

- ✓ Use **texture** – lines, dots, hash marks
- ✓ Use **high contrast** – hue, saturation, and brightness
- ✓ Don't ignore the Accessibility Checker

Accessible Colors

Color
Combos to
Avoid:

Green-Red

Green-
Brown

Blue-Purple

Light
Green-
Yellow

Blue-Gray

Green-Gray

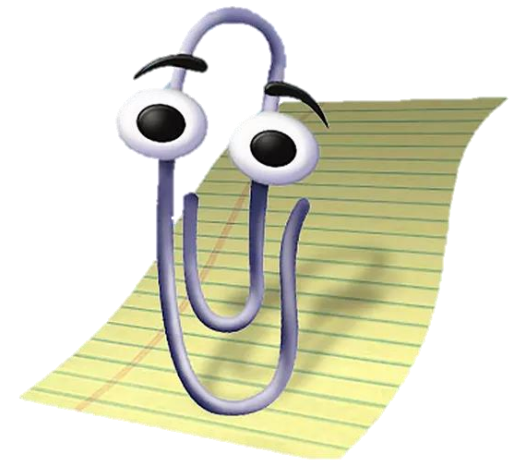
Green-
Black

A Few Extra PowerPoint Tips

Ensure text is legible from Outline View

- Double checks font size
- Helps if you need to print your slides

Avoid flashing text and graphics



Tutorial Time!





Microsoft Word



Microsoft PowerPoint

Adobe Acrobat Pro



Questions?

Section 3: In-Person Meetings



Be Aware of Your Surroundings

Arrive Early

When You Arrive at the Venue



- **Push in chairs**
- **Look for trip hazards:**
 - Rugs
 - Trashcans
 - Steps
 - Furniture
- Reserve **front seats** for visually impaired attendees
- Reserve **empty, easily accessible spaces** for wheelchair/assistive device users

When You Arrive at the Venue

- Look for **ramps** so you can lead attendees to them
- Test **door openers**
- If you have a little downtime, do a quick **online check** for
 - Nearby public transportation
 - Nearby food
 - Nearby lodging



Tech Check



Befriend IT!

- ✓ Can online participants hear people speaking into the microphone in the room?
- ✓ Can participants in the room hear participants online when they speak?
- ✓ Is your video feed framed well?
- ✓ Is all tech in the room functioning properly?
- ✓ Do you have an IT contact in case something goes wrong?

**Report any
malfunctioning
accessibility
equipment**





Questions?



Section 4: **Virtual Meetings**

General Guidelines



Log on **early** in case of tech problems



Provide **dial-in** numbers prominently on invites



Mute all participants on entry



Use accessible **backgrounds**

General Guidelines



Ensure that all participants **introduce** themselves as they begin to speak



Turn on **closed captioning**



If you are recording, make sure to record **breakout rooms**

*If you are hopping breakout rooms, the recording follows you

Dial-In Attendees

Have a plan so dial-in attendees can **participate** in:

- ✓ **Polls**
- ✓ **Breakout rooms**
- ✓ **Any activities**



Interpreters



Pin interpreters



If you are recording,
spotlight interpreters

Think About the Recording

Will viewers:

- ✓ Understand the video without audio?
 - ✓ Closed Captions
- ✓ Understand the video without visuals?
 - ✓ Audio descriptions

✓ If you would like to watch a 5-min WorkforceGPS video on Video Accessibility, click [here](#)





Questions?



Section 5: **Resources**

Resources

- [University of Wisconsin-Madison - "Guide to Planning an Accessible Office Meeting"](#)
- [UIT Stanford - "During Accessible Meetings"](#)
- [Seattle.gov - "Meeting the Needs of People with disAbilities"](#)
- ▶ ● [Cornell University - "Accessible Meeting and Event Checklist"](#)
- ▶ ● [Web Accessibility Checker](#)
- [Bureau of Internet Accessibility - "What is Color Blindness Accessibility?"](#)
- ▶ ● [A11Y - "Color Contrast Accessibility Validator"](#)
- [Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#)
- [WorkforceGPS – Create Accessible Meetings](#)

Resources

- ▶ ● [Federal Plain Language Guide](#)
- [Plain Language Checklist](#)
- ▶ ● [JAN - Job Accommodation Network \(askjan.org\)](#)
- ▶ ● [The Illinois Assistive Technology Program](#)
- [Venngage – Guide to Accessible Colors - Palettes](#)
- ▶ ● [Venngage – Accessible Color Palette Generator](#)
- [NC State University – Color and Color Contrast for Accessibility](#)
- [University of Wisconsin – Designing for Color Blindness](#)
- ▶ ● [ADA Standards for Accessible Design](#)
- ▶ ● [WorkforceGPS – Disability and Employment Community](#)
- ▶ ● [WorkforceGPS – Section 508 Guidelines for Meetings](#)
- [WorkforceGPS – Creating Accessible Media](#)



Any Final **Questions?**



Thank You!