

ACCESSIBILITY IN THE LIBRARY

MLA 2025 Breakout Session

Presented by

Sax Mahoney

Lead Librarian II (They/Them)



Agenda

- The Americans with Disabilities Act
- Accessibility Requirements
- Disability Etiquette
- Talking Book Service
- Additional Resources

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

WHAT IS THE ADA

- Federal civil rights law
- Prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities
- Five main sections (Titles)
 - Employment
 - State and Local Government Services ★
 - Public Transit
 - Public Businesses
 - Telecommunications

4

Notes

WHO IS PROTECTED?

- Physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities
- History or record of an impairment
- Perceived by others as having an impairment



Notes

Accessibility Requirements

FACILITIES



Parking

- Accessible parking spaces
- No barriers to facility

Entrance

- At least one entry point that is clearly marked, without stairs, stable, and slip-resistant
- Automatic doors or push button

Additional

- Aisles at least 36" wide and no dead-end aisle less than 60"
- Service counter no higher than 36"

ADA Checklist:

<https://www.adachecklist.org/doc/fullchecklist/ada-checklist.pdf>

7

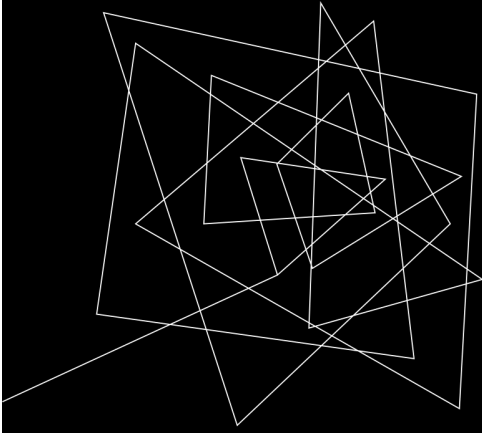
Notes

VIRTUAL

- Web content and documents must be accessible to all patrons
 - Alternative Text for pictures (Alt Text)
 - Ability to enlarge print
 - High contrast
- Section508.gov to get more information



Notes



THERE IS NO
GRANDFATHER
CLAUSE

Disability Etiquette

RULES OF THUMB

- Ask and listen, don't assume
- Be considerate of extra time
- Avoid infantilizing
- Do not touch people or equipment without asking first
- Do not be embarrassed to use common expressions
- Plan for people with disabilities
- Avoid ableism



AVOIDING ABLEISM

- Believe people when they disclose a disability
- Don't assume you know what someone needs
- Never touch a person's service animal
- Don't speak on behalf of someone with a disability
- Talk about disability with children and young people

<https://simmons.libguides.com/anti-oppression/anti-ableism#Allies>

12

Talking Book Service

WHAT IS IT?

- Federally funded program
 - Locally provided by the Braille and Talking Book Library and other network libraries
- Braille, audio books and magazines
- Through mail or on device
- Available for all US citizens



Standard Player, Cartridge, and Mailing Case

14

WHO QUALIFIES?

- Legal blindness
- Visual disability
- Physical disability
- Reading disability
- Institutions with a population who qualifies



Notes

EQUIPMENT

- Audio Player



- Braille eReader



Additional

- Headphones
- Remote
- Pillow Speaker
- Breath Switch
- Etc.

Notes

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Braille and Talking Book Library

<https://www.michigan.gov/leo/bureaus-agencies/bureau-of-services-for-blind-persons/btbl>

Network Library Directory

<https://www.michigan.gov/leo/bureaus-agencies/bureau-of-services-for-blind-persons/btbl/contact-the-btbl-network-libraries>

17

Additional Resources

GENERAL

- Disability Network Michigan
 - <https://dnmichigan.org>
- Area Agencies on Aging
 - <https://4ami.org>

VISION

- Bureau of Services for Blind Persons
 - <https://www.michigan.gov/leo/bureaus-agencies/bureau-of-services-for-blind-persons>
- Michigan Council of the Blind and Visually Impaired
 - <https://www.michigancounciloftheblind.org>

19

HEARING

- Michigan Coalition for Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deafblind People
 - <https://www.michdhh.org>
- Interpreter Directory
 - <https://www.michigan.gov/en/lara/bureau-list/bchs/Qualified-Interpreter>

MENTAL

- Community Mental Health Services
 - <https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/keep-mi-healthy/mentalhealth/mentalhealth/cmhsp>

SOURCES

- ADA.gov
 - <https://www.ada.gov>
- Serving Patrons with Disabilities in Small and Rural Libraries
 - <https://www.ala.org/sites/default/files/2024-05/240316-ppo-ltc-serving-patrons-with-disabilities-practioners-guide-ACCESSIBLE.pdf>
- Section508.gov
 - <https://www.section508.gov>

THANK YOU

Sax Mahoney

231-737-6310

smahoney@madl.org

www.madl.org/lvpd



22

Additional Notes