

GOOD ACCESS IS GOOD BUSINESS

Customer Access¹ Checklist for Theatres and Cultural Venues

The City of Melbourne has introduced the 'Good Access is Good Business' publications and education program to support city businesses to meet the legal (Disability Discrimination Act 1992) and community expectations of fair access for all members of the community to all goods, services, entertainment and recreational opportunities available within the city.

This self-assessment checklist has been developed to provide a guide to how accessible your theatre and cultural venue is. This can also be used as a guide when planning improvements or when selecting premises to establish a theatre and cultural venue.

Does your theatre or cultural venue have:

Yes

Access to the building / premises

- accessible parking for people with disabilities close by
- accessible parking for scooter users
- accessible public transport close by
- clear external and internal directional signs including symbols
- clear path of travel from outdoor to indoor areas
- protection from wind, rain and noise in outdoor areas
- step free access
- wide self opening or easy to open doors

¹ Access / Accessible – means that a person with a disability is, without assistance able to approach, enter, pass to and from and make use of an area and its facilities. Source Municipal Association of Victoria – Access on Line www.mav.asn.au/access

Ease of access when moving around the premises

- lever style door handles at an accessible height
- a handrail from the entrance to ticket counters
- low height, 'clutter free' ticket counters with a seat
- consistent and even lighting throughout
- wide, clear internal and external walkways
- clear space between furniture and exhibits for a person to manoeuvre a mobility aid (e.g. wheelchair, walking frame, stick, crutches)
- slip resistant floor and ground surfaces
- ramp or a lift access to all levels
- direct access to an accessible toilet with an 'access sign'
- an accessible baby change area
- access to stage and change room areas
- limited use of roped barriers
- spaces for a person using a wheelchair to sit with family and friends
- wheelchair accessible seating at various locations in venue
- enough space between theatre seating for easy movement along aisles
- brochures and printed information at an accessible height
- effective lighting throughout facilities
- limited use of roped barriers
- handrails and contrasting edges on any steps
- lighting on stair edges in theatre areas
- definition of stages in performance areas

Accessible amenities

- safety markings on glass doors and adjacent panels
- colour contrasting door frames / trims

- an accessible buzzer on ticket counters
- seating with backs and armrests
- seating with colour contrast to walls and floors
- accessible water / tea / coffee facilities
- access to any bar / kiosk area
- accessible storage area for mobility aids

Accessible provision of information

- information about services for people with disabilities e.g.
 - lift
 - accessible toilet
 - emergency procedures
- a taped phone message about services and facilities
- an accessible Web site with information about services
- large print, raised tactile, Braille and audio signage
- an 'assistance animal welcome' sticker at entry (e.g. guide dog, hearing dog)
- information in large print and Braille
- clear, large print name tags on staff
- audio descriptions of performances and displays
- audio guides for exhibits and displays
- tactile depictions of artist displays e.g. paintings
- raised tactile and Braille markings on any lift buttons
- audible information in any lifts
- large print seat numbers in theatre areas
- seat numbers in colour contrast to seat in theatre areas
- a 'hearing awareness' card on ticket counters
- alternatives to any audible announcements e.g. visible display
- accessible public telephone and telephone typewriter (TTY)
- captioning on any film or video screens

Staff who are able to communicate appropriately with people with disabilities

- friendly helpful staff, trained in access awareness

- staff available to read information to patrons if required
- staff with basic sign language skills
- sign language interpreters if required
- staff who speak clearly and look at the patrons when talking
(for easy lip reading)
- effective glare free lighting at ticket counters
- pen and paper for exchanging information
- appropriate acoustic environments to reduce background noise
- hearing augmentation at ticket counters and in performance areas

Responsive evacuation procedures

- visible and audible fire alarms
- accessible emergency exits
- emergency evacuation procedures to respond to all users

Other issues to consider

- an Internet booking system
- a phone booking system
- accessible payment options
- discounts for pensioners
- acceptance of 'companion cards'
- accessible guided tours
- wheelchairs for loan

CUSTOMER ACCESS PLAN

Now you have completed the access checklist, you will have identified a number of areas where you are providing good access. You will also have identified areas that require access improvement.

You can now use this page to begin to develop a Customer Access Plan for your theatre and cultural venue based on the answers you could not check YES in the Checklist.

Start by grouping access action you need to take, into the following areas:

- Action you can take now for little or no cost;
- Action you can take in the medium term that doesn't require renovation to your premises;
- Action you will need to take during a refurbishment or redevelopment of your premises to provide access for all.

Under the Building Code of Australia, you are required to provide access for people with disabilities in any renovation or redevelopment project.

If you don't own your premises, you can also start to talk to your landlord about the legal requirements of providing access for all, as they are also responsible under the DDA.

Please refer to the Good Access is Good Business publications and telephone 9658 9658 if you require additional copies or information.

Access Consultants

There are a number of recognised disability access consultants who can conduct an access audit of your premises and provide you with specialist advice and assistance for developing an access plan.

Disclaimer

- The information published in this checklist is as a community service provided by the City of Melbourne to disseminate information on how accessible individual businesses are to people with disabilities.
- Whilst due care has been taken in preparing the checklist, we do not guarantee its accuracy or currency.

- The City of Melbourne is not responsible to you or anyone else for any loss, damage or injury incurred or sustained by any person as a result of use or reliance on the checklist.

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CUSTOMER ACCESS PLAN

Short Term Action/s

Medium Term Action/s

Long Term Action/s