

Bonneville Environmental Foundation (BEF) Access for Persons with Disabilities Plan

I. Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to ensure that individuals with disabilities have full and equal access to BEF's programs, services, and public involvement processes, and to do so in such a way as to protect the privacy and independence of individuals.

BEF is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and ensuring that all public participation opportunities are accessible in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and other applicable federal, state, and local laws.

II. Legal Basis and Requirements

This plan is based on the following federal laws and regulations:

- **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990:** Prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and access to public and private places.
- **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973:** Prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.
- **Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964:** Prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin, and extends protections to individuals with disabilities.

III. Ensuring Accessibility in Public Participation

BEF is committed to making public participation opportunities accessible to individuals with disabilities. This includes ensuring the following:

1. **Accessible Venues:**
 - Public meetings and events will be held in ADA-compliant locations that are fully accessible to individuals with physical disabilities.
 - Venues will include accessible parking, entrances, meeting rooms, and restrooms.
 - Consideration will be given to seating arrangements, hearing assistance, and visual accessibility to ensure that all individuals can fully engage in meetings.
2. **Virtual Participation:**
 - When in-person participation is not feasible for individuals with disabilities, BEF will provide virtual options (e.g., video conferencing, webinars) with accessible features such as live captioning and screen reader-compatible platforms.
3. **Communication and Outreach:**

- BEF will ensure that public notices, flyers, and invitations include information on how individuals with disabilities can request accommodations.
 - Public notices will be made available in accessible formats, such as large print, Braille, and accessible PDFs, upon request.
4. **Event Planning Considerations:**
- BEF will ensure that the time, location, and format of public events are planned in a way that promotes accessibility.
 - Security and seating arrangements will be reviewed to avoid unnecessary barriers to access for individuals with mobility impairments.

IV. Reasonable Accommodations

BEF will provide reasonable accommodations to individuals with disabilities to ensure equal access to its services, programs, and public involvement activities. Accommodations may include, but are not limited to:

1. **Assistive Listening Devices:** BEF will provide assistive listening systems at public meetings and events for individuals with hearing impairments, upon advance request.
2. **Sign Language Interpreters:** BEF will offer American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters or other necessary interpreters at public meetings, forums, or events when requested in advance.
3. **Accessible Communication:** Materials and communications will be made available in accessible formats, such as Braille, large print, or electronic formats compatible with screen readers, upon advance request.
4. **Mobility Assistance:** For individuals with mobility disabilities, BEF will ensure that all venues are physically accessible, including parking and restrooms, and will provide assistance as needed.

V. Accessible Digital Content and Communications

BEF will ensure that its website, digital platforms, and communications are accessible to individuals with disabilities by:

1. **Website Accessibility:** All web content will meet or exceed **WCAG 2.1 Level AA standards** for accessibility. This includes ensuring that content is compatible with screen readers, includes alternative text for images, and is navigable via keyboard.
2. **Accessible Virtual Meetings:** When hosting virtual events, BEF will ensure that platforms used for public engagement (e.g., Zoom, WebEx) have features like live captions, accessible chat functions, and screen reader compatibility.
3. **Accessible Documents:** BEF will provide important documents in accessible formats (e.g., accessible PDFs, plain text) to ensure that individuals with visual impairments or other disabilities can access the content.

VI. Training for BEF Staff

BEF staff members will receive training to ensure they understand how to:

- Identify and respond to the accessibility needs of individuals with disabilities.
- Provide reasonable accommodations for meetings, events, and communication.
- Ensure compliance with the ADA and other relevant regulations in both in-person and virtual public engagement settings.
- Use assistive technology and communication tools to support individuals with disabilities.

VII. Monitoring and Feedback

BEF will regularly monitor the effectiveness of its accessibility efforts and make adjustments as needed to improve access for individuals with disabilities. This will include:

1. **Feedback Mechanism:** BEF will establish a system for collecting feedback from individuals with disabilities to assess the accessibility of its services and events.
2. **Continuous Improvement:** Based on feedback and ongoing evaluation, BEF will implement necessary improvements to its accessibility services and procedures.

VIII. Publicizing Accessibility and Accommodations

BEF will actively publicize the availability of accommodations and accessible services through:

- **Public Notices:** All public notices will include information on how individuals with disabilities can request accommodations or alternative formats of materials.
- **Event Announcements:** Invitations to public meetings and events will specify the availability of accommodations and provide contact information for requesting them.

IX. Requesting Accommodations

Individuals with disabilities who need accommodations to participate in BEF's services, programs, or public events may contact the Civil Rights Coordinator to request accommodations. Reasonable efforts will be made to fulfill accommodation requests in a timely manner.

Contact Information for Requests:

Hilary Shohoney

Civil Rights Coordinator

Email: civilrights@b-e-f.org

Phone: (503) 248-1905