



Communication Accessibility Checklist



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COMMUNICATION ACCESSIBILITY CHECKLIST

The Canadian Hard of Hearing Association is pleased to provide you with a Communication Accessibility Checklist. This Checklist is designed to be an easy method for identifying communication barriers encountered by people with hearing loss in private and public facilities. The Checklist may also assist in planning for removal of identified barriers. The Checklist may be used to survey an entire facility or specific areas and components. The checklist is NOT designed to be done with the involvement of company management. Involving management would include other areas of interest such as internal policies related to Employment Equity, Job Interviews, etc.

The Communication Accessibility Checklist is to be used as a guide to increase awareness of communication barriers which prevent full access to buildings and facilities by people with hearing loss. **This checklist is NOT a substitute for federal or provincial accessibility guidelines and/or the appropriate municipal building codes.**

Getting Started

Who will do the Audit? This audit can be done by an individual or a group. A group may find it easier to accomplish and get insights into problems and solutions you would not have obtained if you had done it alone.

Visit a site: It does not matter which site you choose. You may wish to concentrate only on municipal facilities (libraries, pools, sports centres) or privately owned facilities (Shopping malls, recreation parks), or provincial/federal properties. Choose those that are most often used by persons with hearing loss and for which you are most likely to get support. You do not need permission to walk around public facilities such as shopping malls, libraries, hospitals etc., though there are parts of these that are not open to the public.

Complete the checklist: The checklist is designed so that a “YES” or “N/A” (Not Applicable) answer indicates “ACCESSIBLE” and a “NO” answer indicates the existence of a “NOT ACCESSIBLE” feature in the building or facility. You may want to jot down possible solutions as well to help you formulate a report or letter.

Send a letter: Completing this Checklist will be a waste of time unless you ask for changes to the barriers you faced/identified. Since public facilities tend to be heavy in layers of administration, send the letter directly to the top echelon of management and let it trickle down to the department that is responsible. Good places to start are with the Chairman of the Board, the Director of the Library, the Manager, and the CEO etc. Always send a courtesy copy (CC) of your letter to your Advisory group: the local

Branch of CHHA, local agencies serving the deaf and hard of hearing, and influential people who could support your request (for example your MPP/MLA or City Councilor). Explain what you did and what you found. Give them a copy of your completed Checklist. Remind them of their responsibility to remove barriers under the existing, municipal, provincial or federal Disabilities or Human Rights Acts. Be reasonable in what you ask for. It would be fantastic for them to remove all barriers at once, but would it be feasible? Depending on who you are asking, it may be wise to ask for the most important barrier to be removed within this fiscal year and for the others to be included in the yearly planning process to remove barriers. Refer them to a local or regional service agency or company where they can obtain further information and/or purchase the resources you requested.

Follow up: Send an e-mail or letter every 30 days asking for an update of the progress on your request. Keep a paper copy of all your correspondence and replies. If there is no response at all or no progress after 90 days, ask your provincial or federal Human Rights Commission to inquire into the matter. Keep your advisory group up to date on the progress of your request. Most public facilities will be eager to work with you and remove the communication barriers you identified. Some will claim “undue hardship”, i.e. they cannot afford it. This is something that only a Human Rights Commission can determine, so if you are caught between “a rock and a hard place”, let the Commission determine what can and should be done.

Say Thank You: Publicly thank individuals and agencies that helped bring about the positive change. Successes deserve praise, attention and recognition. When you publicly thank them, you bring it up to the attention of the community and it serves as a model for others. This can be done in many ways, you can send letters to the media asking them to print your letter or consider a story on the increased accessibility. You should also ask the CHHA Branch, Chapter or National Office to present Awards or Certificates of Recognition to individuals and programs that have successfully removed communication barriers for people with hearing loss.

Communication Accessibility Checklist

Site and Address: _____

Date(s): _____

Auditor(s): _____



AUDIT ITEM	NOTES	POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS
1.0 SCHEDULING AN APPOINTMENT		
1.1 Did you have difficulty communicating by telephone?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Ask the local branch of CHHA to provide Hearing Awareness Training
1.2 Were you able to speak to someone using your TTY?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Request the installation of a TTY or compatible system
1.3 Can the Receptionist transfer your TTY call to another staff member?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Under a standard of “equal outcome” your call should be transferable to any staff member. If not, request a modification of the system
2.0 PARKING LOTS		
2.1 Is the parking lot gate-house equipped with a digital display screen showing your parking fee?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Ask the company in charge to install one
3.0 ENTRANCE SIGNAGE		
3.1 Is there clear signage at the main entrance indicating the location of all offices?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Request the installation of a Building Directory

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4.0 PUBLIC TELEPHONES		
4.1 Are the public telephones equipped with volume control?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Ask the Building Management and telephone company to install volume control
4.2 Is at least one of the public telephones equipped with a TTY?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Ask the Building Management and telephone company to install a Public TTY telephone
4.3 Do the telephones have appropriate signage to show they are accessible to persons with hearing loss?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Ask the Building Management to install signage and refer them to CHHA
5.0 RECEPTION		
5.1 Did you have difficulty communicating with the receptionist?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Ask the local branch of CHHA to provide Hearing Awareness Training
5.2 Were you able to speak to someone using your TTY?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Request the installation of a TTY or compatible system
5.3 Can the receptionist/information desk transfer your TTY call to another staff member?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Under a standard of “equal outcome” your call should be transferable to any staff member. If not, request a modification of the system
5.4 If there is a T.V. in the waiting area, is captioning displayed?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Replace the television with one capable of displaying captions Staff should be trained to use the CC decoder
6.0 THROUGHOUT THE BUILDING		
6.1 SIGNAGE Are there signs to show the location of TTYs and telephones with volume control?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Ask the Building Management to install signage and refer them to CHHA

<p>6.1.2 Are there signs to show the location of meeting rooms that are equipped with:</p> <p>1) Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs)?</p> <p>2) Televisions with Captioning ability?</p>	<p>YES <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NO <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NO <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Request the installation of signage and refer them to CHHA</p>
<p>6.1.3 Is the International Symbol of Hearing Access displayed outside the main office doors?</p>	<p>YES <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NO <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Ask the Building Management to install signage and refer them to CHHA</p>
<p>6.2 HAZARDS AND EMERGENCY ALARMS Are the fire and other alarms both auditory and visual?</p>	<p>YES <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NO <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N.B. <i>May</i> only be determinable with the assistance of the management</p>	<p>Replace auditory alarms with ones that are both auditory and visual</p>
<p>6.3 MEETING ROOMS</p>		
<p>6.3.1 TELEPHONES Do the rooms have TTY or amplified telephones?</p>	<p>YES <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NO <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Ask that all non-accessible telephones be replaced</p>
<p>6.3.2 LIGHTING Is the lighting non-glare, non-reflective & non-blinking?</p>	<p>YES <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NO <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Ask that lights be changed, modified or turned off</p>
<p>6.3.3 LISTENING OR COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS If requested, are participants provided with:</p> <p>1) Sign Language Interpreters?</p> <p>2) Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART)?</p>	<p>YES <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NO <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NO <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Have a policy ensuring the provision of ALDs, Interpreters, CART or Notetaking and ALD's during meetings, events, and presentations</p>

3) Computerized Notetaking?	NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	
4) Assistive Listening Devices or System?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Reserve an appropriate number of seats at the front for persons with hearing loss
5) Are persons with hearing loss seated within 50 feet of the podium?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	
6.4.4 CAPTIONS If the room has a television, does it have captioning capability?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Replace the television with one capable of displaying captions Instruct the person in charge how to turn the captioning on
7.0 GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS Is the Reception/Information desk answered with a TTY?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Ask the local branch of CHHA to provide Hearing Awareness Training Request a policy/procedure change to ensure service
7.1 Can the Information number transfer your TTY call to another staff member?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Under a standard of “equal outcome” your call should be transferable to any staff member. If not, request a modification of the system
7.2 Do the phone books, posters, brochures, newspapers & television ads show a TTY/Fax number or email address as an alternative contact?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Request that all such forms of advertisement show alternative communication methods and contact points
8.0 FOOD, RETAILER & SERVICE PROVIDERS If there are TVs mounted on the ceiling/walls, do they display captioned programs?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Ask Manager to: 1) open the captions; 2) install a TV with captioning capability; 3) train staff to turn on the captioner

8.1 Does the cash register boldly display the amount for both customer and the clerk to read?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Request the installation of a cash register that displays visible instructions for consumers and clerks
8.2 Do the phone books, posters, brochures, newspapers & television ads show a TTY/Fax number or email address as an alternative contact to a telephone number?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Request that all such forms of advertisement show alternative communication methods and contact points
9.0 HOTEL/MOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS		
Are guests able to obtain rooms with:		The required devices can be permanently installed or available as Accommodation Kits
1) Televisions with captioning ability?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Replace the television with one capable of displaying captions
2) TTY or telephone with a volume control?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Replace all non-accessible telephones
3) Telephone and door alerting devices?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Install Alerting, Signaling and Telephone devices
4) Auditory and Visual fire alarms?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Replace auditory alarms with ones that are both auditory and visual
9.1 Can the TTY in the bedroom connect with the Front Desk or Room Service directly without going through a Message Relay Service?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Under a standard of “equal outcome” your call should be transferable to any staff member. If not, request a modification of the system
9.2 Does the cash register boldly display the amount for both customer and the clerk to read?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Request the installation of a cash register that displays visible instructions

9.3 Do the phone books, posters, brochures, newspapers & television ads show a TTY/Fax number or email address as an alternative contact to a telephone number?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Request that all such forms of advertisement show alternative communication methods and contact points
10.0 WEBSITES		
10.1 Are TTY, FAX numbers, & E-mail addresses listed on the site for correspondence?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Request that TTY and FAX numbers and E-mails be clearly listed

Information on devices, signage and services can be obtained from CHHA or the regional hearing service provider (insert address and telephone number):

Definitions:

Assistive Listening Devices Technical devices that make communication easier in difficult listening environments. Are used to minimize the effects of noise, echoes, and distortion when a hard of hearing person must listen to speakers at a distance or a noisy place. “ex. IR Systems, FM Systems”

Captioning: Text interpretation of the audio (sounds, voices) on a video or television program. Captioning may be **Closed** (appears when activated by a remote or other device), **Open** (present on screen without requiring a device to make it so), or **Realtime** (present on the screen with the aid of computer assisted technology)

CART: Communication Access Realtime Translation is the instant translation of the spoken word into English text using a stenotype machine, notebook computer and Realtime software. The text appears on a computer monitor or other display. This technology is primarily used by people have hearing loss or who are learning English as a second language.

Hotel Access/Hospitality Kit A kit comprising of a TTY, phone flashers, telephone handset amplifier, vibrating alarm clock, and door knock light. Designed for guests and can be used in hotels, hospitals, and bed and breakfast inns and other facilities

Signaling (Alerting) Devices: Devices used to indicate of the telephone, doorbell, or other loud sounds in the home or office by changing the auditory signal to visual or vibratory signals e.g. a door bell alarm, baby sound monitor.

Sign Language Interpreting: Sign Language interpreters facilitate communication between Deaf and hearing people through their knowledge of Sign Language and Deaf Culture.

TTY: (Teletypewriter) A TTY or TTY-compatible device allows users to communicate over a telephone line, using text. A special telephone operator assists with communication with hearing people.

Telephone Devices: Devices used to assist telephone communication such as volume amplifiers, ringer amplifiers, call display and TTY's.

Hearing Loss Symbols of Access



Volume control phone: This symbol indicates the phone has a hand set with adjustable volume control.



TTY/TDD available: This symbol indicates that TTY-compatible devices are available that allow users to communicate over a telephone line, using text. A special telephone operator assists with communication with hearing people.



Sign Language-interpreted: This symbol indicates that Sign language interpretation is provided by a certified interpreter for lectures, tours, performances, conferences or programs.



Assistive listening devices (ALDs): This Symbol indicates that devices are available that make communication easier in difficult listening environments. They are used to minimize the effects of noise, echoes, and distortion when a hard of hearing person must listen to speakers at a distance or a noisy place.



Closed Captioning: The symbol indicates that a television set has a built-in or a separate decoder which transcribes dialogue to text on the screen.



Open captioning: This symbol indicates the translation of dialogue and other sounds appears in print on a film, video or television.



Communication Access Realtime Translation: This symbol indicates that text interpretation of the dialogue/voice is transcribed on a screen or TV monitor with the aid of computer assisted technology.



International Symbol of Access for Hearing Loss: It may be used when access is provided for people who are deaf, deafened, or hard-of-hearing.