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Handbook for State Arts Agencies and Regional Arts Organizations Accessibility Coordinators

Welcome! This handbook is designed to provide state arts agency (SAA) and regional arts organization (RAO) accessibility coordinators with easy access to information about the ADA/504 coordinator role as a requirement of the NEA Partnership Agreement grants. We hope that the information presented provides context and understanding for new agency staff and serves as a refresher for existing staff.

The information provided is by no means exhaustive. Thus, we also included links to the complete and official information on the NEA or external websites.

The Office of Accessibility (OA) serves as the advocacy and technical assistance arm of the Arts Endowment, devoted to making the arts accessible for people with disabilities, older adults, military personnel and veterans, and people in institutional settings. The OA works in a variety of ways to assist applicants and grantees in making their arts programs accessible and inclusive for all participants. We provide technical assistance to constituents throughout the application and post-award process. The OA also develops a broad range of cooperative efforts with arts organizations, service groups, federal agencies, and private organizations. The focus of these efforts is inclusion and equity—extending existing programs to citizens who would not otherwise have opportunities to be involved in quality arts programming.

The office maintains a public listing of all [SAA and RAO 504/Accessibility Coordinators](#) on the Arts Endowment's website. The Accessibility staff regularly communicates with the state arts agency and regional art organization accessibility coordinators and provides information regarding accessibility- related laws, regulations, training opportunities, and resources. The office also serves as a technical assistance resource to the agencies on accessibility compliance. If there is a change in the accessibility coordinator in your agency, please e-mail accessibility@arts.gov so we may update our records and offer assistance to those who are new to the role.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if you have questions.

Beth Bienvenu

Director
Office of Accessibility
202-682-5567
bienvenub@arts.gov

Katharine Hayward

Specialist
Office of Accessibility
202-682-5748
haywardk@arts.gov

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I. ACCESSIBILITY AND THE NEA PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT WITH STATES AND REGIONS

Congress designates 40 percent of the NEA's grantmaking funds for support of the 56 state and territorial arts agencies and the six regional arts organizations. The Arts Endowment funds state arts agencies and regional arts organizations in the form of Partnership Agreement grants. State arts agencies and regional arts organizations submit a full application narrative, strategic plan, and support materials to the Arts Endowment every three years. For more detailed information about Partnership Agreements, see the [NEA Handbook for State Arts Agencies and Regional Arts Organizations](#).

1. Accessibility Laws and Regulations

Per the NEA's [General Terms and Conditions for Grants and Cooperative Agreements](#), state arts agencies and regional arts organizations must execute their projects (e.g., productions, workshops, programs, etc.) in accordance with the following accessibility-related laws, where applicable:

i. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

[Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#) provides that no otherwise [qualified individual](#) with a disability in the United States shall, solely by reason of his/her disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. (29U.S.C. 794) The Arts Endowment's regulations implementing Section 504, as amended, can be found in [45 CFR Part 1151](#) (refresh webpage if link does not work).

ii. The Americans with Disabilities Act

[The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990](#) (ADA), as amended, prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in employment (Title I), state and local government services (Title II), places of public accommodation, and commercial facilities (Title III). (42 U.S.C. 12101-12213)

The ADA extends the requirements of Section 504 to:

- All activities of state and local government under Title II; and
- Places of public accommodation and commercial facilities operated by private entities, including places of "public display or collection" such as museums, under Title III.

Therefore:

- Cultural groups operated by state or local governments are covered by Title II;
- Title III covers cultural groups operated by private entities as places of public accommodation, even if they do not receive federal funds; and
- Places of public accommodation that are also recipients of federal financial assistance must comply with the requirements of both Title III of the ADA and Section 504.

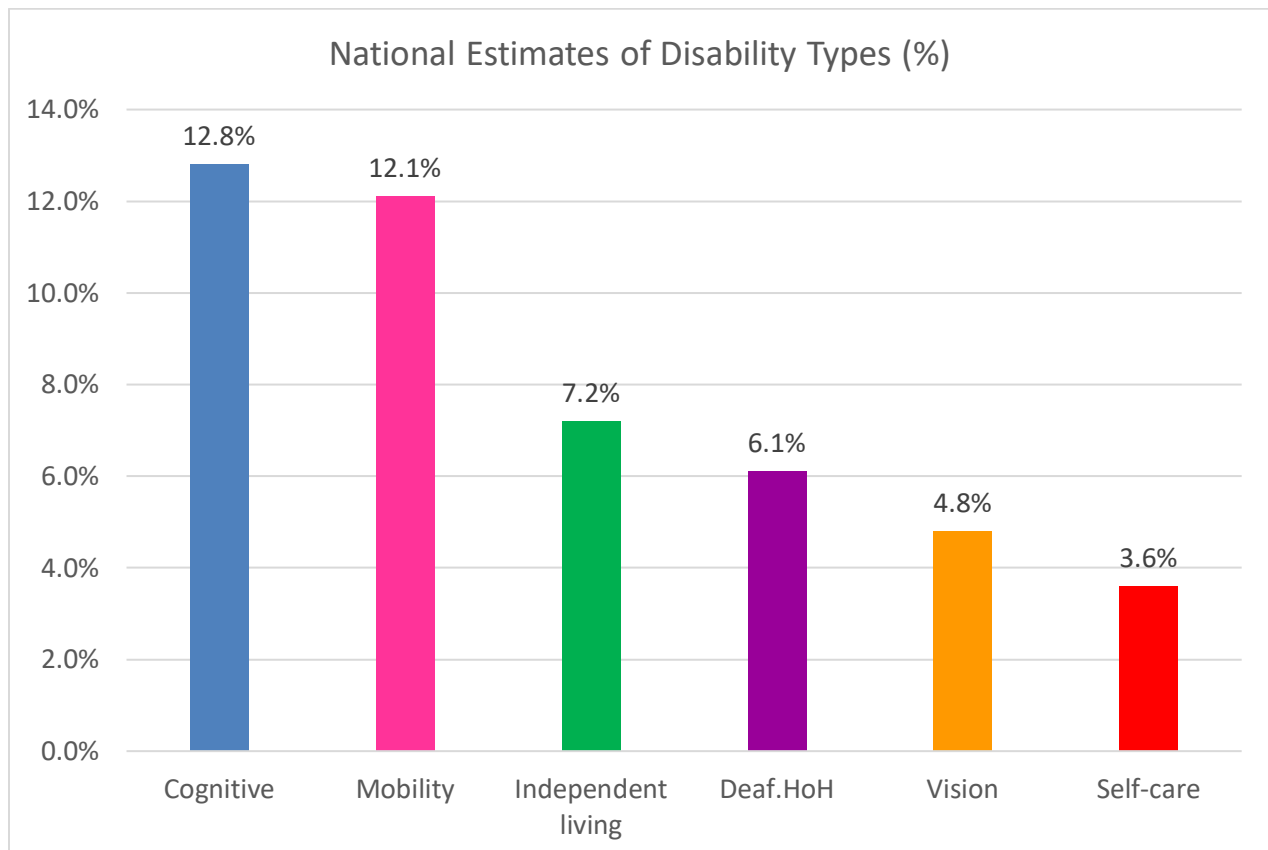
More information is available through our [Office of Civil Rights](#) and in the [Assurance of Compliance](#) section of the Partnership Agreement guidelines.

2. Disability Estimates

Data can be a powerful way of showing how people with disabilities are a significant part of any community you are working with, including your agency’s staff. The latest estimate is that **1 in 4** (27%) adults have a disability.

The illustration below shows that:

- The most common type of disability is a cognition disability with 12.8% of adults having serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions.
- 12.1% of U.S. adults have a mobility disability with serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs.
- 7.2 % of U.S. adults have an independent living disability with serious difficulty doing errands alone.
- 6.1% of U.S. adults are deaf or have serious difficulty hearing.
- 4.8% of U.S. adults have a vision disability with blindness or serious difficulty seeing even when wearing glasses.
- 3.6% of U.S. adults have a self-care disability with serious difficulty dressing or bathing.

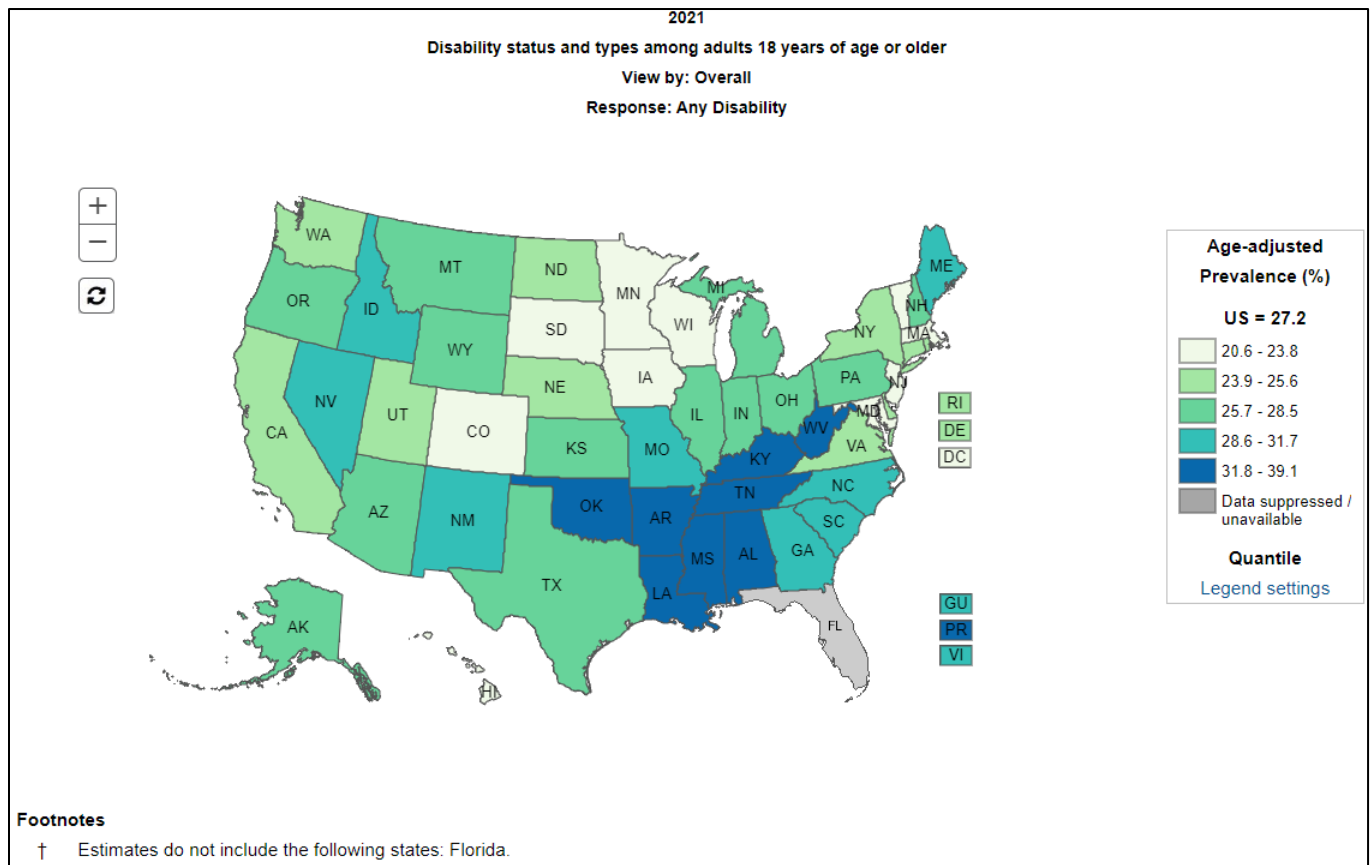


Data Source: [Disability Impacts All of Us Infographic | CDC](#)

State Disability Estimates

The U.S. map below shows disability estimates by state. The lowest percentages of disability estimates range from 20.6% - 23.8%. The majority of states have estimates between 23.9% and 31.7% of the state’s population. The map indicates Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, Tennessee, and West Virginia have the highest percentages of disability ranging from 31.8 - 39.1%.

You can find your state’s disability estimates using [Disability and Health U.S. State Profile Data](#). These estimates provide a useful reminder that whether one identifies as having a disability or not, you are going to find staff, artists, and arts program participants that would benefit from access features and accommodations. *Please also note that these estimates are likely underestimates because they do not capture the breadth of the disability experience and are based on self-report.



Source for Map: [Disability and Health Data System Explore by Indicator | NCBDDD | CDC](#)

3. Designation of Accessibility Coordinator

Each state arts agency and regional arts organization must appoint a staff member to serve as its accessibility coordinator (Arts Endowment 504 regulations use the term 504 Coordinator). The accessibility coordinator should help lead the organization and its constituents in its efforts to comply with Section 504 and the ADA. Under the Arts Endowment's 504 Regulations it is required that "a responsible official be designated to

*coordinate the [grant] recipient's efforts in connection with Section 504" (S1151.42). The accessibility coordinator must be indicated in the organization's Partnership Agreement application in **Attachment 1: Staffing List** with a (504) next to the designated staff member's name. This person should also sign and maintain the agency's completed 504 self-evaluation (for more information, see section I.3.i).*

Further, there are additional [requirements for an ADA coordinator](#) under the ADA's Title II for state and local governments. These include publicizing the name of the coordinator as an official accessibility contact and establishing a grievance procedure for responding to public complaints (for more information, see section II.4).

Guidance on designating an accessibility coordinator:

- The accessibility coordinator should serve as consultant to board and staff, educating members of your organization about access issues and ensuring that planning for access is incorporated into all organizational decisions as needed. The coordinator should also counsel applicants and grantees on accessibility compliance.
- The accessibility coordinator may come from a number of different professional backgrounds, services, or programs within an agency. The accessibility coordinator's duties may be assigned to a staff position that currently exists. The ADA/504 coordinator can be someone who comes to the position out of interest and acquires information and expertise through training, conferences, consultation, and use of resources such as the NEA's [Design for Accessibility: A Cultural Administrators Guide](#) and the [Accessibility Planning and Resource Guide for Cultural Administrators](#).
- Although the accessibility coordinator is the designated facilitator for access, accessibility must be everyone's responsibility to be truly inclusive and effective.
- As mandated by the ADA, the job description should provide an in-depth analysis of the essential functions of the position. For sample job descriptions of an accessibility coordinator, please see the [Accessibility Planning and Resource Guide for Cultural Administrators](#), [Step 3](#).

4. Accessibility in the NEA General Terms and Conditions

The *General Terms and Conditions for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to Organizations* apply to all NEA grants and cooperative agreements, including the state arts agency and regional arts organization partnership agreements. These General Terms are based on the administrative requirements related to federal laws, rules, regulations, and Executive Orders — as well as Arts Endowment regulations, rules, and policies— that apply to grants and cooperative agreements.

Nondiscrimination policies, including Section 504 and the ADA, are covered under the General Terms and Conditions. As recipients of Arts Endowment funding, state arts agencies and regional arts organizations (and subgrantees, see section II.3.ii) must maintain a Section 504 self-evaluation on file and ensure that subrecipients of funding understand their legal obligations under the laws.

i. Section 504 Self-Evaluation

A Section 504 self-evaluation must be on file for all recipients of Arts Endowment funding, including state arts agencies, regional arts organizations, and their subgrantees. The Arts Endowment has developed a [504 Self-evaluation Workbook](#) (which covers programs, activities, and facilities) to assist organizations in their efforts to comply with Section 504 and the ADA. An organization can elect to not use the Workbook, but the pertinent information in a comparable document must be on file. **A new self-evaluation should be conducted each time an organization receives federal funding.** Recipients are required to gather and maintain the information in the Section 504 self-evaluation process, and keep it for a three (3)-year period. The information must also be made available to the public and the NEA upon request.

ii. Subgranting

The federal laws, rules, regulations, and OMB Circulars that apply to Arts Endowment organizational award recipients generally also apply to such organizations when they receive a subgrant through an Arts Endowment-supported award. Thus, state arts agencies and regional arts organizations must inform subgrantees that they are receiving federal funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, and that they must comply with these mandates, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Subgrantees also must have a Section 504 self-evaluation on file.

II. POLICIES AND PRACTICES OF THE AGENCY

State arts agencies and regional arts organizations can provide leadership to the field by setting a good example that is evidenced in their policies, guidelines, plans, budgets, meetings, conferences, panels, and community outreach.

To ensure Section 504 and ADA compliance is being monitored and even upgraded, the agency's access policy and/or mission statement, self-evaluation document, grievance procedure, and access implementation plan should be reviewed and re-evaluated on a regular basis.

1. Access Policy and Access Statement

An accessibility policy is a documented process on what needs to be done to ensure accessibility of activities, identifies roles, and timelines for specific procedures. Policies can be internal, such as the accommodations process for staff, including grant panelists or reviewers, or can be external such as grievance procedures for grantees and other constituents. An example is the [Ohio Arts Council 2024 ADA Policy \(ohio.gov\)](#).

Having an official access statement in place for the public to reference demonstrates an organization is making a "good faith effort" to comply with Section 504 and the ADA regulations, and conveys that people with disabilities have a legal right to equal access to programs, services, and facilities. Access statements can be included in websites, publications, and other marketing materials. State arts agencies and regional arts organizations should be ensuring access and should be prepared to provide access accommodations prior to publicizing a program's accessibility.

Examples of state and regional arts organization access statements:

- “At [Arts Midwest](#), accessibility ties into our values of equity, integrity and learning. We do not discriminate on the basis of disability in access to services or programs or in hiring and employment decisions. We work to meet our colleagues’ access needs and continue to improve the accessibility of our work and program environments. We believe that compliance to the [ADA](#) (Americans with Disabilities Act) is important. Further, we believe creating a culture of access and inclusion goes beyond the ADA. We strive to embody accessibility in our attitudes, approaches, proactive planning, and design. Our staff bring curiosity and humility to this work. We focus on active learning, conversations, and the relevancy of our set and living goals, and want to be in a space of constant learning and adapting.”
- “[NEFA](#) supports universal access to the arts, and strongly encourages all arts organizations to foster integration for individuals of all ages and abilities, whether audience members or artists, in all of their arts programs. NEFA abides by state and federal laws that prohibit public support to organizations (people or entities) that discriminate against people with disabilities. Therefore, each grantee is required to assure that they are in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).”
- “Making the arts accessible to Nevadans of all cultures and abilities, without prejudice to geographic or economic status, is a priority for the [Nevada Arts Council](#) (NAC). Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act states, in part, that “no otherwise qualified person with a disability... shall solely by reason of their disability be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.” The NAC encourages its grantees and partners to view accessibility as both a philosophic commitment and a business practice. Methods to address diversity in your community include involving individuals from diverse populations and/or organizations in the planning, implementation, evaluation and follow-up of a program. By making Nevada’s arts and cultural programs, activities, information, and facilities accessible and usable to all people, with and without disabilities, we open the door to a new and expanded audience of participants, patrons and advocates.”
- “The [Utah Division of Arts & Museums](#) (UA&M) is committed to creating an agency culture of accessibility for all Utahns. We acknowledge all individuals should have equal access to our programs and services. We recognize the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a civil right by law. We will unceasingly strive to comply with this law and go beyond. UA&M will also serve as a resource and guide for accessibility work at cultural organizations across the state. We recognize this work as a journey, never complete.”

The states and regions, sometimes in collaboration with their access advisory committees, have been amplifying the importance of accessibility in the arts for people with disabilities through trainings ranging from short conversations to half day convenings virtually. A sampling from the last couple of years includes:

- [Accessibility in the Arts Online Convening | Council on the Arts, North Dakota \(nd.gov\)](#) – half day convening featuring testimony from artists with disabilities and how arts organizations can become more accessible (October 13, 2022)
- The [Mid Atlantic Arts Accessibility Resource Committee](#) presented three [Disability Justice Virtual Resource series \(americansforthearts.org\)](#) where disabled artists held conversations with each other around tenets of disability justice such as intersectionality (March 2023)
- [Minnesota State Arts Board](#) hosted [Accessibility 101 for Arts and Culture Organizations](#), a training conducted by the NEA Office Of Accessibility (February 7, 2024)

2. Access Advisory Committee

An access advisory committee can be an effective method to develop ongoing technical assistance for an organization and its constituents. The organization, formality, and convening of an access committee can vary depending on an agency's needs and governance. In general, the access advisory committee should consist of arts patrons, artists, and consultants who represent and/or have disabilities. Advisors should be recruited from and reflect the agency's community, including people of color, individuals with various disabilities, and older adults.

Functions of an access advisory committee can include:

- Assist in evaluating the accessibility of an agency's facilities, programs, and services;
- Make recommendations for needed improvements;
- Guide the development of an access policy and a plan for action;
- Provide guidance and/or assistance with technical issues and funding sources to implement access improvements;
- Serve as an access resource and review mechanism, which may include consultation on new programs, policies, and services;
- Assist in educating staff, board, and grantees concerning disability services and access issues, which may include conducting awareness seminars and participating on conference panels and workshops;
- Recommend people with disabilities or older adults to serve as board members, panelists, or staff;
- Assist grantees/constituents with access referrals, which may include developing a resource manual on local services and equipment; and
- Assist in developing outreach to people in the community who are older or have disabilities, e.g., providing assistance in finding what programs are available in their city and state and advertising what the state arts agency or regional arts organization has to offer them.

3. Access Plan

An access plan can serve as documentation of an organization's "good faith" efforts to comply with the ADA and Section 504. A starting point is to conduct the self-evaluation and create a transition plan, if needed. Keep in mind a self-evaluation must be on file with all organizations receiving Arts Endowment funding. The Arts Endowment's Section 504 Workbook can be used for the self-evaluation, or an organization can create a

document containing similar information.

When developing an access plan, state arts agencies and regional arts organizations should consider direct internal and external **objectives**, including:

- Thorough review of access procedures and means of interacting with constituents;
- Appointment of an accessibility coordinator;
- Accessibility of buildings and grounds;
- Accessibility of public meetings;
- Established grievance procedure;
- Print materials designed for legibility and easy comprehension;
- Website that is accessible for people with hearing, mobility, and visual disabilities;
- Programming that is respectful and reflective of the community;
- Content that educates constituents about their legal obligations and effective ways to achieve accessible programs and activities;
- Provision of technical assistance to constituents;
- Service as an information resource and model of accessibility; and
- Creation of partnerships that promote inclusion and access.

The implementation of an access plan should be incorporated into the organization's overall long-range plan. The access plan may include:

- A complete listing of access accommodations and services offered;
- Time tables for plan review and updates;
- Documentation of steps taken to make any needed improvements or to remove barriers;
- Documentation of the involvement of people with disabilities (such as an advisory committee);
- Budgetary considerations;
- Access education efforts with staff and constituents; and
- Access language in grant application guidelines and other publications and communications.

State arts agencies and regional arts organizations can work with the access advisory committee to conduct evaluations of policies, programs, services, and facilities to identify where access improvements are required.

4. 504/ADA Grievance Procedures

An effective and comprehensive accessibility policy should include a standard grievance procedure for resolving Section 504 and ADA grievances made against the agency or subgrantees. Organizational staff should be knowledgeable of accessibility policies and be prepared to address any grievances in an appropriate and efficient manner. An access policy should be implemented as part of the overall access plan.

Per the Arts Endowment's Section 504 regulations, "A recipient may adopt an internal grievance procedure in order to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action prohibited by this part. A responsible official should be designated to coordinate the recipient's efforts in connection with this section." ([45 CFR Part 1151](#))

Further, a grievance procedure is required of a state or local government entity that employs 50 or more people government-wide, including employees of each division or other sub-unit ([28 CFR Sec. 35.107](#)). Under Title III of the ADA, places of public accommodation are encouraged to have a grievance procedure.

A grievance procedure is an established system for receiving and responding to grievances that identifies responsible staff persons, defines responsibilities, sets forth a clearly-identified procedure for processing, establishes criteria for judgment, describes hearing procedures and sets time limits for resolution of differences between the organization and its staff or its users. It can be used for both informal and formal complaints, and for reviewing complaints against an organization or its subgrantees. It is a particularly useful technique for settling local or in-house differences, without resorting to outside intervention and invoking federal complaint mechanisms.

When investigating and seeking to resolve a grievance, try to obtain as much information as possible. Seek specific information as to who did what to whom, where, when, and how. Try to ascertain what the problem is, what solutions the individual seeks, and what is feasible from the perspective of the organization. A standard procedure should be followed to resolve the matter and should be documented in writing. Neither Title II nor its implementing regulations describe what ADA grievance procedures must include. However, the Department of Justice has developed a model grievance procedure within its [ADA Best Practices Tool Kit for State and Local Governments](#).

Individuals who believe that a recipient of federal financial assistance through the National Endowment for the Arts, such as state arts agencies, regional arts organizations, and cultural organizations, has subjected them to discrimination may file a grievance under Section 504 with the Arts Endowment's [Office of Civil Rights](#). If the recipient is a state government entity, the Arts Endowment will consider the requirements of both Title II of the ADA and Section 504 in processing the complaint.

Grievances against places of public accommodation, such as private cultural organizations, may be filed under Title III of the ADA with the [Department of Justice](#). Grievances against state government entities, such as state arts agencies, may be filed under Title II of the ADA with the federal agency designated as the enforcement agency for that government entity by the [Department of Justice](#). Employment complaints may be filed with the [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#), or designated state human rights agency.

Neither Section 504 or the ADA regulations requires individuals filing grievances to exhaust the SAA, RAO, or cultural organization's internal procedure prior to filing a complaint with the appropriate federal agency. Individuals may also file their complaints in court.

Examples of relevant grievance procedures:

- Mass Cultural Council's [Grievance Form](#)
- South Carolina Arts Commission's [Grievance Policy](#)
- Tennessee Arts Commission's [Grievance Procedure](#)

5. Staff Training

Training can help ensure that access issues are integrated into the daily operations of state arts agencies or regional arts organizations, including budget, policy, education, and public information. It helps ensure that the staff implements access considerations in their specific areas of specialization, including funding guidelines, panels, and other meetings.

Staff involved at all levels of the organization need to be trained. This includes staff who have direct interaction with the public, as well as staff who work behind the scenes. The location, methods for instruction, and content of the training should model accessibility. Participants and presenters will benefit from learning through demonstrations of accessible training practices that include the training site and methods used. Hold all training sessions in accessible locations or virtual platforms, provide handouts in large print and Braille, provide captions for video conferencing, ensure that videos are captioned and/or audio described, and provide sign language interpreters so that participants experience the auxiliary aids and services that make programs inclusive to people with various disabilities.

Consult with area disability organizations, such as a local [Center for Independent Living](#). These organizations may provide examples of access workshops that are being conducted in the area. In addition, individuals from these groups may be able to serve as advisors and/or presenters in these activities.

Meet with staff on a regular basis to discuss access issues, including representation of people with disabilities on panels, access budget, the state of access among constituents/grantees, new access developments and technologies, and universal access to programs and activities.

III. POLICIES AND PRACTICES FOR CONSTITUENTS

State arts agencies and regional arts organizations can serve as a model to the field for accessibility through their funding opportunities, programming, resources, and services.

1. Funding Guidelines

Funding guidelines serve as an opportunity to communicate to applicants their responsibilities under Section 504 and the ADA, to ensure that programs and facilities are fully accessible to people with disabilities and older adults. State arts agencies and regional arts organizations can include application requirements in grant guidelines to collect information from the applicant about how the project will be accessible. Accessibility checklists, access plans, accessibility-related questions within an application narrative, and accessibility-related review criteria are all methods of gathering and evaluating accessibility information from an applicant and/or grantee.

For example, the NEA's guidelines state the accessibility requirements in the [Assurance of Compliance](#).

Sampling of states that include accessibility requirements in funding guidelines:

- Minnesota State Arts Board's [ADA Access Plan and Review Criteria](#)
- North Carolina Arts Council [FY23 Accessibility Checklist](#)

- West Virginia Commission on the Arts' [ADA Certification Statement and Accessibility Inventory](#)

2. Technical Assistance

Accessibility coordinators act as a resource/referral for staff, applicants, and the field. Accessibility coordinators can:

- Research and compile, with the assistance of an access advisory committee, a directory of access information, services, and equipment that would be helpful to staff, grantees, and others.
- Create a designated "accessibility" page on the organization's website that includes contact information for the accessibility coordinator (including both a phone number and email address), the organization's accessibility statement, grievance procedures, and accessibility resources. Resources can include information about Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the ADA, planning for accessibility, virtual convenings and online accessibility, local access services (i.e. sign language interpreters), and arts and disability organizations in the state.

Sampling of state arts agency and regional arts organization accessibility webpages:

- Arizona Commission on the Arts' [Accessibility resource webpage](#)
- Indiana Arts Commission's [Accessibility \(in.gov\) webpage](#)
- North Dakota Council on the Arts' [Accessibility webpage](#)
- Texas Commission on the Arts' [Becoming Accessible webpage](#)
- Vermont Art Council's [Arts & Accessibility webpage](#)
- Check out your [Regional Arts Organization's](#) accessibility resource pages
- Work with constituents and grantees to organize and convene access trainings as separate meetings or as a part of other meetings, or utilize web-based platforms. For example, the [Rhode Island State Council on the Arts](#) offered several workshops designed to provide guidance about interacting, communicating with and including people with dis/abilities. Their ["Creating Access and Inclusion" Workshops](#) were done in partnership with arts and disability organizations (click on Recordings of Creating Access and Inclusion Workshops to view).

3. Access Accommodations for Meetings and Convenings

State arts agencies and regional arts organizations regularly conduct public events, including meetings, lectures, conferences, arts events, virtual events, and panels. Any meetings that are open to the public must comply with the provisions of Section 504 and the ADA. Public meetings must be held in physically accessible spaces and provide effective communication, such as sign language interpretation or large-print materials, for people with disabilities, and virtual events must include captions and sign language if needed.

Be sure to include access language in marketing materials and announcements of meetings and convenings, so people with disabilities know how to request accommodations. Sample language: "If you require an access accommodation, such as sign language interpretation, to participate in this convening, please contact [name] at

[phone] and [email] by [date]." For conference registrations, include a checklist with the language, "Check here if you require: (insert a checklist of accommodations such as wheelchair accessible seating and assistive listening system). For resources on planning accessible meetings and conferences, see [A Guide to Planning Accessible Meetings](#) from the Mid-Atlantic ADA Center.

IV. RESOURCES FOR ACCESSIBILITY COORDINATORS

The NEA Office of Accessibility has compiled a listing of resources for state arts agency and regional arts organization accessibility coordinators. This listing includes general, culturally specific, and web and media accessibility resources, as well as resources concerning funding for capital improvements.

1. General Accessibility

These organizations can provide technical assistance, recommend local experts, and serve as potential partners.

- The [ADA National Network](#) is a federally funded network of 10 regional ADA centers located throughout the United States that provide information, guidance, and training on the ADA. The centers can provide assistance on all aspects of the ADA, including accessible technology, employment, and Title II/state and local government.

The New England ADA Center's [ADA Checklist for Readily Achievable Barrier Removal](#) allows organizations to evaluate their physical environment to ensure it is in compliance with the ADA.

- The [United States Access Board](#) is an independent federal agency devoted to accessibility for people with disabilities. The board oversees design criteria for the built environment, transit vehicles, telecommunications equipment, and electronic and information technology. It also provides technical assistance and training on these requirements.
- The [National Center on Disability](#) is a program of the University of Indiana and is funded in part by the U.S. Park Service. The center provides technical assistance and training to the cultural and recreational fields, and conducts research to promote access and inclusion for people with disabilities in parks, recreation, and tourism.
- The [Job Accommodation Network](#) (JAN) provides free, expert, and confidential guidance on workplace accommodations and disability employment issues. Federally funded by the Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy, JAN offers one-on-one guidance on accommodations, the ADA, and related legislation.
- [Independent Living Research Utilization](#) (ILRU) is a national center for information, training, research, and technical assistance in independent living for people with disabilities.

The ILRU [Directory](#) of Centers for Independent Living can help state arts agencies and regional arts organizations locate and connect with the local disability community.

- The [Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf](#) (RID) is a national membership organization for sign language interpreters and transliterators. The RID website allows organizations to search and find a certified interpreter in a specific area.

2. Cultural Accessibility

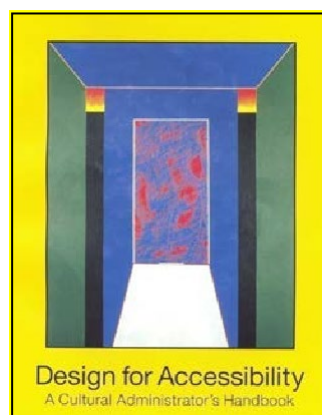
These organizations can provide cultural-specific accessibility resources, experts, and tools.

- The National Endowment for the Arts' [Office of Accessibility](#) serves as the advocacy and technical assistance arm of Arts Endowment, devoted to making the arts accessible for people with disabilities, older adults, veterans, and people in institutional settings.
- The [Careers in the Arts Toolkit](#), divided into four sections empowers [artists](#), [cultural workers](#), and [youth with disabilities](#) to explore arts careers and access resources to support their success. It also educates [arts employers](#), [educators](#), and [grantmakers](#) about the critical role they play in fostering disability inclusion and the resources available to help them successfully do so.



arts.gov/ArtsCareersToolkit

- [Design for Accessibility: A Cultural Administrator's Handbook](#) is designed to help cultural organizations comply with Section 504 and the ADA, while making access an integral part of an organization's planning, mission, programs, and outreach.



- [Accessibility Planning and Resource Guide for Cultural Administrators](#) is a companion to the Design for Accessibility Handbook that outlines a step-by-step process for achieving accessible practices.
- The [Section 504 Self-Evaluation Workbook](#) is a tool to help Arts Endowment grant recipients in their efforts to comply with Section 504 and the ADA. This workbook, or a document containing similar information, must be kept on file by NEA funding recipients for three (3) years.
- The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts' [Office of Accessibility and VSA](#) strives to make cultural arts accessible through [access services for patrons and visitors with disabilities](#), professional development for cultural administrators, and career opportunities in the arts for people with disabilities.
 - [The VSA International Network](#) connects and leads a vibrant community of organizations and individuals working towards the full inclusion and participation of people with disabilities of all ages in artistic and cultural endeavors.
 - Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability (LEAD) is a national network of cultural administrators focused on expanding the breadth and scope of accessibility services and programming. The network [shares resources](#) and holds [workshops and an annual national conference](#).
- The Smithsonian Institution's [Accessibility Program](#) not only supports the institution's access services for visitors and employees, but the program also has created accessibility technical assistance resources for the cultural field.
 - The [Smithsonian Guidelines for Accessible Exhibition Design](#) is a tool to help designers, curators, registrars, conservators, collection managers, editors, educators, and other exhibition team members create fully accessible exhibitions.
- The [National Arts and Disability Center](#) at UCLA promotes the full inclusion of audiences and artists with disabilities into all facets of the arts community.
- The Institute for Museum and Library Services maintains an [Accessibility in Museums and Libraries](#) webpage of accessibility resources for museums, libraries, and archives.
- The [National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped](#) (NLS) is a program of the Library of Congress. Through a national network of cooperating libraries, it provides free Braille and audio materials for eligible borrowers in the United States.
- [Art Beyond Sight](#) strives to make art, art history, and visual culture accessible to people who are blind or have low vision by conducting educational conferences and creating resources for the field.

3. Web and Media Accessibility

These organizations can provide technical assistance, tools, and resources for

ensuring multimedia and electronic accessibility for people with disabilities.

- [National Center for Accessible Media](#) at WGBH seeks to expand access to media for people with disabilities through a variety of resources and programs, explores how existing access technologies may benefit other populations, and provides access to educational and media technologies for students with disabilities.
- [WebAIM](#) is a program based at Utah State University that provides comprehensive web accessibility technical assistance resources and software tools.
- [WAVE](#) is a free web accessibility evaluation tool that will evaluate accessibility of a specific page on a website simply by entering the web address.
- The [Web Accessibility Initiative](#) is an effort of the World Wide Web Consortium that works with organizations around the world to develop strategies, guidelines, and resources to assist in making the web accessible to people with disabilities.
- The [National Captioning Institute](#) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing a variety of services to ensure full media access, including captioning, subtitling, translation, and video description.
- [AbleGamers](#) works to improve access to digital entertainment for people with disabilities, including video games and apps.