



Forest
Service

Washington
Office

1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

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Route To:

Subject: Forest Service Policy Regarding Conferences and Meeting Facility Accessibility

To: Regional Foresters, Station Directors, Area Director, IITF Director, Deputy Chiefs and WO Directors

For the Forest Service to be an inclusive and culturally diverse organization, our programs and activities must be readily accessible to and usable by all employees and customers. To ensure that individuals with disabilities have complete access, all meetings (i.e., conferences, award ceremonies, public forums, family meetings, trainings, briefings, etc.) must be held in accessible facilities (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and FSM 1361.12, Meetings Management).

All correspondence and communications announcing such meetings and activities must contain the name, telephone number(s), along with a statement regarding teletypewriter (TTY) relay service access, and an email address of a point of contact (POC) who will assist people with special needs. The POC will coordinate all accessibility requests. In addition, depending on the demographics of the service area, the POC will be prepared to provide program information for public awareness in other languages.

The United States Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, Disability Rights Section has issued: ***Expanding Your Market, Accessible Information Exchange: Meeting on a Level Playing Field*** to provide guidance and procedures for holding accessible meetings. This tool refers to the Americans with Disabilities Act standards. While the Federal government must comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the evaluation and planning guidance for this document is still pertinent. To access this document, proceed to: <http://www.ada.gov/business/accessiblemtg.htm>.

Use the enclosed Event Requirements Checklist as a standard tool during the planning process for meetings. We cannot overlook this responsibility. I encourage you to implement this guidance in your daily operations as we strive to strengthen service delivery to all employees and customers. Contact your local civil rights staff if you have questions.

/s/ J. Lenise Lago
J. LENISE LAGO
Deputy Chief for Business Operations

Enclosure

cc: pdl wo cr directors

