

## POLICY DIRECTIVE

(signature pending)  
Stephanie Pollack, Secretary and CEO

MassDOT & MBTA  
Applicability

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### 1.0 Purpose

This policy outlines criteria that must be fulfilled in order to ensure that all MassDOT public meetings are fully accessible to persons with disabilities. This document will also address issues related to attendees with limited English proficiency.

The ability to access and participate in state government, including participating in public meetings, is a fundamental right protected by both State and Federal law. The Massachusetts Public Accommodation Law and the Americans with Disabilities Act mandate that persons with disabilities must not be denied participation in public meetings, and that reasonable accommodation requests made by attendees shall be honored. For these reasons, when planning and executing public meetings, MassDOT personnel must ensure that all aspects of the meeting are accessible to persons with disabilities.

Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Commonwealth Executive Order 526, MassDOT must also ensure that programs and activities do not discriminate based on race, color or national origin, age, disability and sex, among other protected categories. A public participation plan is being developed for Title VI purposes, which should be consulted by meeting planners in coordination with this Accessible Meeting Policy to ensure that MassDOT includes Title VI constituencies in transportation programs and activities. The method for determining whether and/or what non-English languages need to be translated or interpreted is called a “four factor analysis.” Essentially, to determine whether translation is needed, meeting planners must analyze the number of limited English proficiency persons (LEP) by language group where a meeting will be held, the frequency of contacts with the program, the importance of the program and cost factors.

This document will provide guidelines for ensuring the accessibility of public meetings hosted by MassDOT. Components such as the meeting location, room setup, alternate formats and translations of handouts, and the requirement to provide CART and/or sign language and/or foreign language interpreters upon request will be discussed.

## **2.0 Definitions**

### **2.1 *Public Meeting***

Any meeting open to the general public, hosted by or on behalf of the MassDOT, during which information is shared.

### **2.2 *Attendee***

An individual attending a public meeting.

### **2.3 *Reasonable Accommodation***

Any reasonable service, aid, modification or adjustment to the public meeting that gives a person with a disability the opportunity to be an active participant in the meeting process.

### **2.4 *Path of Travel***

A continuous, unobstructed way of pedestrian passage by means of which an area may be approached, entered, and exited.

### **2.5 *TTY (Text Telephone)***

An electronic device for text communication via a [telephone](#) line, used when one or more of the parties has a hearing or speech-related disability. Public payphones equipped with TTY have a small keyboard that pulls out underneath the phone. Note: TTYs are gradually phasing out for many people due to the increased use of voice and video relay, but they will remain in use for some period into the future.

### **2.6 *Clear floor space***

The minimum unobstructed floor or ground space required to accommodate a single, stationary wheelchair and occupant.

### **2.7 *Wheeled mobility device***

Means by which some individuals with physical disabilities travel throughout their environment. Commonly refers to such devices as wheelchairs (manual and motorized) and scooters. Non-traditional wheeled mobility devices may include Segways and bicycles.

### **2.8 *American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreter***

An individual trained to facilitate communication between a deaf American Sign Language user and hearing individuals via American Sign Language.

### **2.9 *Assistive Listening Device***

An electronic device used by individuals who are hard of hearing to amplify sound. The assistive listening device is usually used as a system where the audio source is broadcast [wirelessly](#) over an FM frequency. The person who is listening may use a small FM [Receiver](#) to tune into the signal and

listen at their preferred volume. There are other forms of Assistive Listening Devices that exist and could be used as alternatives.

## **2.10** *CART (Computer Assisted Real-time Transcription)*

A trained operator uses keyboard or stenography methods to transcribe spoken speech into written text. This may be done either on site or remotely by using a voice connection such as a telephone, cell phone, or computer microphone to send the voice to the operator and the real-time text is transmitted back over an Internet connection. For meeting rooms without an internet connection, it is possible to establish connectivity via a WIFI router connection or by using a wireless “hot spot.”

## **2.11** *Video Remote Interpreting*

A contracted video service that allows individuals who are Deaf to communicate over webcams/video phones with hearing people in real-time, via a sign language interpreter.

## **2.12** *Video and Telecommunication (Voice) Relay Services*

Video Relay Service (VRS) is a form of Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) that enables persons with hearing disabilities who use American Sign Language (ASL) to communicate with voice telephone users through video equipment, rather than through typed text. Video equipment links the VRS user with a TRS operator – called a “communications assistant” (CA) – so that the VRS user and the CA can see and communicate with each other in signed conversation. The VRS caller, using a television or a computer with a video camera device and a broadband (high speed) Internet connection, contacts a VRS CA, who is a qualified sign language interpreter. They communicate with each other in sign language through a video link. The VRS CA then places a telephone call to the party the VRS user wishes to call. The VRS CA relays the conversation back and forth between the parties -- in sign language with the VRS user, and by voice with the called party. No typing or text is involved.

Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) is a telephone service that allows persons with hearing or speech disabilities to place and receive telephone calls. TRS uses operators, called communications assistants (CAs), to facilitate telephone calls between people with hearing and speech disabilities and other individuals. A TRS call may be initiated by either a person with a hearing or speech disability, or a person without such disability. When a person with a hearing or speech disability initiates a TRS call, the person uses a teletypewriter (TTY) or other text input device to call the TRS relay center, and gives a CA the number of the party that he or she wants to call. The CA in turn places an outbound traditional voice call to that person. The CA then serves as a link for the call, relaying the text of the calling party in voice to the called party, and converting to text what the called party voices back to the calling party. VRS and TRS are overseen by the Federal Communications Commission and private contractors who perform the intermediary communication service are reimbursed for this service.

## **2.13** *Closed Captioning*

A term describing several systems developed to display [text](#) on a [television](#), computer or [video screen](#) to provide additional or interpretive information to viewers/listeners who wish to access it. Closed captions typically display a [transcription](#) of the [audio](#) portion of a [program](#) (either [verbatim](#) or in edited form), sometimes including non-speech elements.

## **2.14** *Descriptive Video/Described Narration*

A feature that makes television programs, videos, films, and other visual media accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired by providing descriptive narration of key visual elements in programs. Key visual elements in a program that a viewer who is visually impaired would ordinarily miss are described by voice. Actions, costumes, gestures and scene changes are just a few of the elements that, when described, engage the blind or visually impaired viewer with the story.

## **2.15** *Limited English Proficient (LEP)*

Individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English can be limited English proficient, or “LEP.” These individuals may be entitled to language assistance with respect to a particular type of service, benefit, or encounter.

## **2.16** *Four Factor Analysis*

Federal DOT guidance outlines **four factors** recipients should consider to assess language needs and decide what steps they should take to ensure meaningful access for LEP persons:

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by a program, activity, or service of the recipient or grantee.
2. The frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with the program.
3. The nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the recipient to the LEP community.
4. The resources available to the MassDOT and overall cost.

In each instance, this analysis will enable MassDOT staff to determine the extent of language assistance that must be provided to enable LEP individuals to participate in a program or activity. For further information, including answers to specific situations that meeting planners may encounter, planners should consult the ADA Coordinator, the Title VI Specialist and/or the Language Access Plan.

## **2.17** *Vital Document*

A vital document is determined by the context of a program, service or activity, and can include but not be limited to an application, notice, complaint form, legal contract, and outreach material published by a covered entity in a tangible format that informs individuals about their rights or eligibility requirements for benefits and participation.

## **2.18** *Language Access Plan*

Under Federal Executive Order Executive Order 13166, each Federal agency is required to prepare a plan to improve access to its federally conducted programs and activities by eligible LEP persons. Each plan is required to be consistent with the standards set forth in related guidance, and shall include the steps the agency will take to ensure that eligible LEP persons can meaningfully access the agency's programs and activities. Just as federal agencies must have LEP Plans, as a condition of receiving federal financial assistance, they must establish guidelines for recipients such as MassDOT to comply with Title VI and LEP requirements, including the provision of language assistance, as needed.

### 3.0 Scope

All public meetings hosted by, or on behalf of, MassDOT.

### 4.0 Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the MassDOT staff or Department(s) charged with the coordination of the public meeting to ensure that the public meeting is accessible to all. The local contacts for the meeting facility, in conjunction with the responsible MassDOT staff, are responsible for filling out the “Accessibility Checklist for Meeting Planners” in Attachment 6.1 to ensure the space is accessible prior to the meeting.

### 5.0 Policy

#### 5.1 General Considerations

**5.1.1** Public meeting planners shall identify at least one person who is responsible for making sure that the public meeting is accessible for all attendees. This individual shall serve as the contact for attendees requesting reasonable accommodations. See, Attachment 6.1 for a Checklist for Meeting Planners.

**5.1.2** Public meetings should be planned and publicized as early as possible—ideally, at least 21 calendar days, but no less than 14 days in advance.

5.1.2.1 Meeting notices should include a date by which attendees should request reasonable accommodations—typically ten days before the meeting.

Note: After the cutoff date, staff must still try to provide an accommodation but should not guarantee the provision of the requested accommodation. Since it is so difficult to schedule CART and/or sign language interpreters with less than 2-3 weeks’ notice, most meetings should be publicized with 21 days notice. This allows attendees ample opportunity to request and receive appropriate reasonable accommodations.

**5.1.3** Attendees shall not be charged for any reasonable accommodation provided.

#### 5.2 Choosing a Location

**5.2.1** Access to Nearby Transportation. All public meetings shall be within ¼ mile of an accessible bus stop or rail station, where feasible.

5.2.1.1 The path of travel from the transit stop to the meeting location shall be accessible. Specifically, it should be:

5.2.1.1.1 At least three feet wide

5.2.1.1.2 Unobstructed (not blocked by trash cans, light poles, etc.)

5.2.1.1.3 Free of steps, drop-offs or curbs

**5.2.2** Parking. If parking is available to meeting attendees, meeting planners shall ensure that the number of accessible parking spaces available complies with state and Federal regulations. See, Attachment 6.2 for state and Federal regulations regarding accessible parking.

5.2.2.1 The path of travel from the accessible parking to the meeting location shall be accessible. Specifically, it shall be:

5.2.2.1.1 At least three feet wide

5.2.2.1.2 Unobstructed (no trash cans, light poles, etc.)

5.2.2.1.3 Free of steps, drop-offs or curbs

**5.2.3** Identifying the Accessible Entrance. If the main entrance to the building (in which the public meeting is being held) is not the accessible entrance, a sign containing the universal symbol of accessibility with an arrow appropriately pointing to the accessible entrance shall be posted at the main entrance.

**5.2.4** Ensure the alternate accessible entrance is unlocked and available to be used independently and that the path of travel to the alternate entrance is well lit (if the meeting is taking place at night). If the door is locked and intercom service or another format is used to gain access, an attendant must be at the door to accommodate deaf or hard of hearing individuals, as well as others with disabilities.

**5.2.5** Accessible Restrooms. If restrooms are available for use by the public then all public meetings shall have at least one accessible restroom for men and one accessible restroom for women, or one accessible gender neutral restroom. See, Attachment 6.3 for state and Federal regulations regarding accessible restrooms.

5.2.5.1 The accessible restrooms shall be within reasonable proximity to the meeting room.

**5.2.6** Accessible Telephones. If two or more public payphones are available at the meeting facility, at least one should be:

5.2.6.1 Equipped with TTY

5.2.6.2 Mounted no higher than 48" from the floor and provide clear floor space 30" wide and 48" wide (so that attendees using wheeled mobility can properly access the phone).

5.2.6.3 MassDOT should notify the facility owner if the facility does not comply with the accessible telephone requirement.

**5.2.7** The Meeting Room: The meeting room in which the public meeting will take place shall be made accessible for persons with disabilities. The following shall be provided:

5.2.7.1 An integrated seating area for wheeled mobility device users shall be made available.

5.2.7.1.1 If possible, meeting planners should remove several chairs to accommodate potential attendees who use wheeled mobility devices.

Note: Remove a chair to the side and to the rear of the designated space to ensure enough room for the wheeled mobility device.

5.2.7.1.2 Such spaces for wheeled mobility device users shall be dispersed throughout the room, and not clustered all in one section (e.g. all in the front or all in the back). This allows attendees using wheeled mobility a variety of seating/viewing options.

5.2.7.2 Space for Sign Language, CART and Foreign Language Interpreters

5.2.7.2.1 A well-lit area and chairs facing the audience shall be made available for sign language interpreters at the front of the room (likely just off to one side of the main presentation area). If a CART provider is to be used, a small table for the laptop and space for a screen and projector should be provided near an electrical outlet.

5.2.7.2.2 Priority seating at the front of the audience and in direct line of sight of the interpreters/CART provider shall be provided for attendees who are deaf/hard of hearing.

5.2.7.2.3 For foreign language interpreters, there is a need for space where they can sit with the individuals who require language assistance.

5.2.7.3 Aisles within the meeting room shall be

5.2.7.3.1 Clear of tripping hazards (e.g. electric cords).

5.2.7.3.2 At least 3 feet wide.

5.2.7.4 Microphones. The microphones used at public meetings shall be available on a stand that is adjustable in height.

Note: While wireless microphones have become popular, some attendees with disabilities will not be able to hold a microphone independently. In this situation, allowing an attendee use of a microphone stand adjusted to their height is almost always preferable to holding the microphone for them. Alternatively, and particularly for larger meetings, staff with a floating microphone would be preferable to facilitate communication.

5.2.7.5 Podiums. If any attendee may have an opportunity to speak at a podium, meeting planners shall ensure that either:

5.2.7.5.1 The podium is height adjustable, or

5.2.7.5.2 A small table is provided to the side of the podium.

5.2.7.5.2.1 The table shall be between 28 and 34” inches in height.

5.2.7.5.2.2 There shall be at least 27” of knee space from the floor to the underside of the table.

5.2.7.5.2.3 If a microphone is provided at the podium, one shall also be provided at the small table.

5.2.7.6 Raised Platforms. If any attendee may have an opportunity to move onto a raised platform or stage during the meeting, the raised platform or stage shall be accessible by:

5.2.7.6.1 A ramp that

5.2.7.6.1.1 Is at least 3 feet wide.

5.2.7.6.1.2 Does not have a slope that exceeds 1/12.

5.2.7.6.2 Platform lift

5.2.7.7 High Speed internet Connection. Public meeting rooms shall provide for a high speed internet connection to allow attendees who rely on video remote interpreting or CART. There should also be a conference capable telephone with a speakerphone function available.

### **5.3 American Sign Language and Foreign Language Interpreters, Assistive Listening Devices, CART and Video Remote Interpreting.**

**5.3.1** American Sign Language and/or foreign language interpreters shall be provided at all public meetings upon request. See, Attachment 6.4 for information on how to request an interpreter.

5.3.1.1 To ensure their availability, interpreters should be requested at least two weeks in advance of the public meeting.

5.3.1.2 The cost associated with providing sign language or foreign language interpreters shall be paid for by the Department hosting the event.

**5.3.2** Assistive Listening Devices. Assistive Listening Devices for attendees who are hard of hearing shall be provided at all public meetings upon request. See, Attachment 6.5 for information on how to provide assistive listening devices.

**5.3.3** CART services shall be provided at all public meetings upon request (See Attachment 6.6 for information on how to provide CART services.). Staff should schedule or make requests for CART services at least two weeks in advance of the meeting, and preferably as soon as an attendee makes this need known. When remote CART services are to be used (the CART reporter is not in the room), staff should try to provide the reporter any



technical terms or acronyms to be used, as well as the names of key meeting attendees before the meeting date.

- 5.3.4** Video Remote Interpreting shall be provided at all public meetings upon request via a computer/laptop with a webcam and high speed internet connection.

Note: Video Remote Interpreting is a relatively new form of technology and may be an adequate alternative to providing ASL interpreters in certain situations. However, if an attendee requests Video Remote Interpreting, ASL interpreters will be an adequate substitute, if the meeting planner cannot secure the requested technology.

## **5.4 Alternative Formats and Translation of Handouts/Presentation Material**

Large print versions of all printed material shall be available at all public meetings. If requests for additional alternative formats are made in advance of the meeting (within the timeframes below), these formats must be available for the start of the meeting. If requests for alternative formats are made at or following the meeting, the alternative format must be provided within seven days of the request.

These requirements are the same with respect to translation into foreign languages, where the language requested is identified through application of the four factor analysis process, set forth in the MassDOT Title VI Language Assistance Plan. When a language group is small, defined as 5% or 1,000, whichever is less, of the population of persons eligible to be served or likely to be affected or encountered, foreign language translations of “vital documents” should be provided, and non-vital documents may be orally translated. This requirement does not affect the requirement to provide meaningful translation to one or more in a small group of LEP individuals through competent oral interpreters or translation where language services are needed and are reasonable.

### **5.4.1 Creating Alternative Formats**

See attachment 6.7 for step by step instructions on creating alternative formats.

### **5.4.2 Large Print Version**

5.4.2.1 At least five copies of any text-based printed material to be handed out during the meeting shall be in large print.

5.4.2.2 Large print meeting materials shall:

5.4.2.2.1 Be created using "Arial" font with a font size of 16 pt.

5.4.2.2.2 Have the same information as the original handout.

5.4.2.2.3 Have the highest contrast possible (e.g. black on white).

5.4.2.2.4 If graphics (such as images, tables, or graphs) are used in the original document, the same graphics shall be included in the large print version of the document.

5.4.2.2.4.1 If graphics are used in the large print document, a brief description of the image shall be provided. Image descriptions shall be brief and provide the viewer of the document with a general idea of what is in the image.

5.4.2.2.4.2 If tables or graphs are used in the large print document, a summary of the table or graph shall be provided.

### **5.4.3 Electronic Version**

5.4.3.1 If an electronic version of materials is requested within 24 hours in advance of the meeting, this version shall be available for the meeting, if no advance request is made but rather is requested at or after the meeting, then meeting materials shall be made available electronically, within 7 calendar days of the request.

Note: Whenever possible, meeting planners should bring several copies of an electronic accessible version of the meeting material to the public meeting. Some individuals with visual impairments or other disabilities may attend with portable screen reading software that would allow them to access electronic material during the meeting.

### **5.4.4 Braille Version**

5.4.4.1 If a Braille version of materials is requested within one week in advance of the meeting, this version shall be available for the meeting, if no advance request is made but rather is requested at or after the meeting, then Meeting materials shall be made available in Braille within 7 calendar days of the request.

### **5.4.5 Audible Version**

5.4.5.1 If an audible version of materials is requested within one week in advance of the meeting, this version shall be available for the meeting, if no advance request is made but rather is requested at or after the meeting, then meeting materials shall be made audible, within 7 calendar days of the request.

### **5.4.6 Foreign Language Version**

5.4.6.1 If a common foreign language version of materials is requested within one week in advance of the meeting, this version shall be available for the meeting, if no advance request is made but rather is requested at or after the meeting, then Meeting materials shall be made available in the language requested within 7 calendar days of the request.

### **5.4.7 Other requests for alternate formats**

5.4.7.1 Individual attendees may have unique specifications for alternate formats. All reasonable requests for alternate formats shall be honored upon request,

within 7 calendar days of the request.

- 5.4.8** Meeting attendees will not be charged for any cost affiliated with the creation of alternate formats of meeting material.

## **5.5 Publicizing the Meeting**

- 5.5.1** Public meetings shall be publicized as early as possible—ideally, at least 21 calendar days in advance, but never less than 14 days in advance. This allows attendees time to submit requests for reasonable accommodations and for meeting planners to set deadlines for accommodation requests to be made in a timely manner. The meeting publicity also needs to be translated into the languages that are identified through application of the four factor analysis set forth in the MassDOT Title VI Language Assistance Plan.
- 5.5.2** In addition to any other means, all public meetings shall be posted on [www.mbtta.com](http://www.mbtta.com) or <http://www.massdot.state.ma.us>
- 5.5.3** All meeting notices shall include:
- 5.5.3.1 The statement “This location is accessible to persons with disabilities”
  - 5.5.3.2 A brief listing of accessibility features that either are available or may be made available upon request during the public meeting (e.g. sign language, CART, assistive listening devices and/or foreign language interpreters).
  - 5.5.3.3 Information on how to request reasonable accommodations by phone, e-mail or fax and the deadline for requests.
  - 5.5.3.4 Information on how to request foreign language interpreter assistance.
  - 5.5.3.5 See Attachment at section 6.7 for a sample meeting posting.

## **5.6 Additional Considerations**

- 5.6.1** Within 48 hours, meeting planners shall follow-up with attendees who have requested reasonable accommodations to let them know their request has been received and will be honored to the extent possible.

<p>Note: Especially in the case of ASL interpreters, the meeting planner may not know of their availability until 24 hours prior to the meeting. It is reasonable to let people know their request has been received and that it is in the process of being put in place, however if no interpreter is available people need to be notified and alternate plans must be made – such as CART or Video Relay.</p>
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- 5.6.2** Emergency Preparedness

5.6.2.1 In the event of an emergency, some attendees with disabilities may not be able to evacuate independently. Meeting planners shall familiarize themselves with the evacuation plan for the meeting space.

5.6.2.2 At the beginning of each meeting, meeting presenters shall announce the safety briefing--including information regarding where those attendees who would require assistance should wait during an emergency.

**5.6.3** When opening a public meeting, presenters shall announce:

5.6.3.1 The presence and function of sign language interpreters (if interpreters are in the room), and/or CART providers

5.6.3.2 That assistive listening equipment is available

5.6.3.3 The location of accessible restrooms

5.6.3.4 The safety briefing (see 5.6.2.2).

**5.6.4** When presenting, presenters at public meetings shall:

5.6.4.1 Speak slowly and clearly so that the sign language interpreters have time to interpret.

5.6.4.2 Verbally describe information presented visually (e.g. PowerPoint) so that attendees with visual impairments can access the information.

5.6.4.3 Ensure that any videos/DVDs shown during the meeting are encoded with closed captioning and are shown on a closed caption compatible device. Subtitles are an acceptable alternative.

5.6.4.3.1.1 Provide an alternate version of the video/DVD with descriptive video/described narration. (See Attachment 6.9 for captioning resources.)

Note: It may not always be a good choice to use a described video in an open meeting as this can be a problem for other viewers.
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## 6.0 Attachments

### 6.1 Accessibility Checklist for Meeting Planners

Meeting Date:

Meeting Time:

Subject of Meeting:

Location:

MassDOT Attendees:

- ☐ Is there at least one person or Department who is responsible for ensuring that the public meeting is accessible for all attendees?  
Print Name/Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Publicizing Meeting:

- ☐ Has the public meeting been publicized at least 3 weeks in advance?
- ☐ Has the meeting been publicized on the MassDOT or MBTA website?
- ☐ Has the meeting been publicized in the required foreign languages and ethnic newspapers for the relevant populations in the community where the meeting is to be held?
- ☐ Does the public meeting notice include accessibility information, how to request a reasonable accommodation, relevant dates for making requests and information on whom to contact to request a reasonable accommodation?
- ☐ Does the public meeting notice include information on how to request foreign language interpreters?

Facility:

Date of Facility Assessment: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Where applicable (in areas where public transportation is available), is the meeting location 1/4 mile or less from the nearest accessible bus stop or rail station?
- ☐ Where applicable, is there an accessible path of travel provided from the public transportation stop to the meeting location and meeting room?
- ☐ If parking will be available at the meeting location, are there accessible parking spaces available (review # of car and van accessible spaces)?
- ☐ Is there an accessible path of travel provided from the accessible parking area to the meeting area?
- ☐ If the main entrance to the building is not accessible, is there directional signage towards the accessible entrance?

- ☐ Is the accessible entrance unlocked and able to be used independently? If the meeting is taking place at night, is the path leading to the alternate entrance well lit?
- ☐ If there are restrooms that are open to the public, is there a pair of accessible restrooms available within close proximity of the meeting area? If not, is there at least one accessible gender neutral restroom?
- ☐ If there are public phones, is there at least one accessible (TTY and within appropriate height range) telephone available?
- ☐ If a stage or platform will be used during the public meeting, is it accessible?
- ☐ If a podium will be used during the public meeting, is the podium height- adjustable? If not, is there a small table (between 28 and 34 inches in height) provided to the side of the podium?
- ☐ Is there a high speed internet connection within the meeting space?

Ensuring Appropriate Accommodations:

- ☐ Have sign language and foreign language interpreters, if requested, been reserved for the public meeting?
- ☐ Have CART services, if requested, been reserved for the public meeting?
- ☐ Are Assistive Listening Devices available for the public meeting? Does someone know how to use the device? Have you checked the devices at least 24 to 48 hours before the meeting and rechecked immediately before the meeting starts? (Note: For large meetings, to avoid the loss of equipment, it is reasonable to ask for a driver's license or other ID as collateral.)
- ☐ Are at least five large print copies of meeting handouts available?
- ☐ Are printed materials available upon request, in alternative formats and/or relevant foreign languages?
- ☐ Are film or video presentations closed captioned and audio described?

Facility/Room Setup (prior to meeting):

- ☐ If the main entrance to the building is not accessible, is the accessible entrance unlocked?
- ☐ Is there an integrated seating area for individuals who use a wheeled mobility device in the meeting room?
- ☐ Is there seating available for attendees who are deaf or hard of hearing, and have requested an accommodation, near the front of the meeting room so that attendees may see the interpreter/captioner, or lip read?
- ☐ Is there an appropriately lit area in the front of the room for sign/foreign language interpreters and/or CART providers?
- ☐ Are the aisles at least three feet wide and clear of obstacles or tripping hazards?

- ☐ If microphones are used during the public meeting, are adjustable microphone stands available for attendees? Can staff be used as floaters with microphones as an alternative?

For recordkeeping and reporting purposes, please submit a copy of this completed checklist to:

Massachusetts Department of Transportation  
Office of Diversity and Civil Rights  
10 Park Plaza, Suite 3170  
Boston, MA 02116  
(For MassDOT hosted or sponsored meetings)

Or

Department of System-Wide Accessibility  
MBTA  
10 Park Plaza, Suite 4470  
Boston, MA 02116  
(For MBTA hosted or sponsored meetings)

## 6.2 Ensuring adequate accessible parking

- 6.2.1** See [http://www.mass.gov/Eeops/docs/dps/aab\\_regs/521023.pdf](http://www.mass.gov/Eeops/docs/dps/aab_regs/521023.pdf) for Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (MAAB) regulations
- 6.2.2** See <http://www.access-board.gov/ada-aba/final.cfm#a502> for Americans with Disabilities Act Architectural Guidelines (ADAAG)

## 6.3 Accessible Restrooms

- 6.3.1** See [http://www.mass.gov/Eeops/docs/dps/aab\\_regs/521030.pdf](http://www.mass.gov/Eeops/docs/dps/aab_regs/521030.pdf) for Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (MAAB) regulations
- 6.3.2** See <http://www.access-board.gov/ada-aba/final.cfm#a603> for Americans with Disabilities Act Architectural Guidelines (ADAAG)

## 6.4 How to request sign language, CART Providers or foreign language interpreters

### 6.4.1 Sign Language Interpreters

- Complete and submit an on-line request for interpreting services through the Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing's (MCDHH) website
  - Go to <http://mass.gov/mcdhh>
  - Click on "Interpreter/CART referral services"
  - Select "Request an Interpreter on-line"
  - Note: A copy of the Request Form is attached at 6.7, for reference.
- Requests should be submitted within 21 days, but no later than 14 calendar days in advance of the meeting to ensure interpreter availability.
- If the meeting is cancelled or rescheduled, interpreter requests must be canceled at least 48 hours advance in order to avoid being billed for the service. CART providers must be cancelled no later than 72 hours in advance of the event.
- Interpreters invoices are billed as a minimum of two hours.
- For meetings that are anticipated to last more than 75 minutes, two interpreters shall be provided. In most situations, one CART provider is sufficient if the meeting is no longer than three hours.

### 6.4.2 How to reserve CART Providers

Complete and submit an on-line request for interpreting services through the Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing's (MCDHH) website

Go to <http://mass.gov/mcdhh>

Click on "Interpreter/CART referral services"

Click on "[CART \(Communication Access Realtime Translation\) Providers](#)"



Click on “Request a CART Provider” and follow listed directions  
Note: A copy of the Request Form is attached at 6.7, for reference.

### **6.4.3 Foreign Language Interpreters/Translators**

- MassDOT’s policy combines the use of bilingual staff, interpreter services and translated materials to communicate effectively with persons who are not fluent in English. When a request for oral interpretation is made, or a significant language speaking population is expected to attend a public meeting, the following steps should be reviewed and carried out to ensure compliance with Title VI requirements.
- Conduct a four-factor analysis as to the kind of meeting in question and the populations that are in the affected communities, using the language group maps that are contained in the Language Assistance Plan. Identify the languages that are likely to be needed and consult with the Office of Diversity and Civil Rights Title VI Coordinator and/or Specialist for assistance with any problems concerning the language groups that may require interpreter services.
- Identify the source for interpreter services, recognizing that most providers require one-two weeks advance notice of a meeting, based on the language(s) to be interpreted.

#### **6.4.2.1 Interpreter Resources**

Projects should have a line item in the budget allocating funds for translation/interpretive services for public meetings. When additional resources are needed for unexpected or unanticipated documents or meetings, there may be funds available. Please contact your department manager to make a request through Budget to secure state or federal funds, as needed. For shared services or internal operations where there may not be a project number, please contact the Chief Administrative Officer of MassDOT to secure the funds.

#### **6.4.2.2 Request and cancellation timeframes**

- Requests should be submitted at least 14 calendar days in advance of the meeting to ensure interpreter availability
- If the meeting is cancelled or rescheduled, interpreter requests must be canceled at least 48 hours advance in order to avoid being billed for the service
- Interpreter invoices vary by provider but may have a minimum of two to three hours.
- For meetings that are anticipated to last more than 75 minutes, two interpreters shall be provided.

## **6.5 How to reserve assistive listening devices**

### **6.5.1 Contact MassDOT Facilities at 857-368-9560.**

- 6.5.2** Departments that frequently host public meetings are encouraged to purchase Assistive Listening Devices so that they are readily available.
- 6.5.3** Currently OTA/THE RIDE owns Assistive Listening Devices that other departments can reserve and sign out for a public meeting.

Contact:

Carol Joyce-Harrington, OTA/THE RIDE  
617-222-2256 or [CJoyce-Harrington@MassDOT.com](mailto:CJoyce-Harrington@MassDOT.com)

**6.6** How to Create Alternate Formats

**6.6.1** Electronic Version

- 6.6.1.1 Accessible electronic formats include email, and Microsoft Word Document (DOC or DOCX), a text file (TXT), or Rich Text Format (RTF).

Note: Some attendees requesting material electronically may have a visual impairment and use screen reading software. The formats referenced above are most compatible with such software.
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- 6.6.1.2 Public meeting materials that are created electronically shall:

- 6.6.1.2.1 Be created using "Arial" font and a font size of 16 pt.
- 6.6.1.2.2 Shall have the same information as the original document and shall have the highest contrast possible.
- 6.6.1.2.3 If graphics (such as images, tables, or graphs) are used in the original document, the same graphics shall be included in the electronic version of the document.
- 6.6.1.2.4 If images are used in the electronic document, a brief description (providing the viewer of the document with a general idea of what's in the image) shall be provided.
- 6.6.1.2.5 If tables or graphs are used in the electronic document, a summary of the table or graph shall be provided.

**6.6.2** Braille Version

- 6.6.2.1 Meeting materials that are in Braille shall:

- 6.6.2.1.1 Be created using contracted Braille (Grade 2) and single-spaced.
- 6.6.2.1.2 Braille documents shall have the same information as the non-accessible handout.
- 6.6.2.1.3 If tables or graphs are used in the regular document, a summary of the table or graph shall be provided in the Braille document.

6.6.2.2 In order to create a Braille document:

MassDOT's Central Planning Transportation Services (CTPS) currently owns and operates a Braille printer.

Contact:

Janie Guion, CTPS  
617-973-7507 or [jguion@ctps.org](mailto:jguion@ctps.org)

**6.6.3 Audible Version**

6.6.3.1 Public meeting material that is recorded audibly shall:

- 6.6.3.1.1 Have the same information that's printed on the original handout.
- 6.6.3.1.2 Be spoken clearly.
- 6.6.3.1.3 Shall describe images used in the original handout.
- 6.6.3.1.4 Shall provide an explanation of any table or graph is used in a meeting document: The meeting planner shall ensure that the audible explanation of the table/graph is clearly explained and represents the table or graph on the printed document.

## 6.7 Sample meeting posting (in an MBTA context)

Meeting Date	September 21, 20__
Meeting Time	1:00 P.M.-3:00 P.M.
Subject of Meeting	Judge Patrick King's Update on MBTA/BCIL Settlement Agreement
Location	State Transportation Building, 2nd Floor, Conference Rooms 2-3
MBTA Attendees	Department of System-Wide Accessibility

### Sample Text

Meeting Purpose - Judge Patrick King will be hosting a public meeting to discuss his assessment of the MBTA's progress towards compliance with the MBTA/BCIL settlement agreement. Please come to share your questions and comments regarding accessibility at the T.

Notice: This location is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (including but not limited to interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, open or closed captioning for videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats, such as audio tapes, Braille and large print), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity & Civil Rights Officer by phone at (857) 368-8580, TTD/TTY at (857) 266-0603, fax (857) 368-0602 or by email to [MASSDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us](mailto:MASSDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us). Requests should be made as soon as possible prior to the meeting, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten business days before the meeting.

**(Note: This notice should be translated into the languages other than English that are identified to be necessary for the Limited English Proficient populations represented in the area of the project or initiative to be invited to participate.)**

## 6.8 Resources for adding closed captioning and/or described narration to your video

- WGBH - <http://main.wgbh.org/wgbh/pages/mag/services/captioning/>
- 3 Play Media - <http://www.3playmedia.com/>
- Line 21 - <http://www.line21.tv/>
- TelePrint Digital Media - <http://www.tele-print.com/>
- Broadcast Captioning & Consulting Services - <http://www.closedcaptioning.com/>

## 6.9 Document History (Reserved)