

THINK ACCESSIBILITY: ACCOMMODATIONS TIP SHEET

A quality experience is one of the most important things you can offer your customers. Accessibility removes barriers so everyone feels welcome when they visit your business.

North Americans with disabilities spend an estimated \$19 billion per year on travel—and that doesn't include the friends and family they travel with. Here's how you can attract new and returning business from this important sector:

BOOKING

- Offer multiple options for booking, including web, email, text and phone
- Include images on your website of accessible features like entrances, reception, rooms, bathrooms and on-site amenities, as well as detailed accessibility information
- Ask every visitor whether they have specific needs or requirements
- Offer a range of contact methods for questions, feedback and complaints



Fairmont Empress, Victoria
Photo: Jordan Dyck

RECEPTION

- Avoid soft or thick pile carpeting, or loose mats
- Make sure staff are on-hand to assist with luggage when requested
- Have at least one low counter
- Install a hearing loop at reception and in conference facilities
- Provide information in large print
- Offer seating
- Ensure staff are aware of transportation companies that are disability-friendly

GUESTROOMS

- Ensure guestrooms provide clear spaces to walk or roll without bumping into furniture
- Make sure light switches, thermostats and electrical outlets are accessible for people in wheelchairs to reach using one hand
- Install telephones with large buttons that are compatible with hearing aids
- Wash bed linens and towels with non-perfumed and eco-friendly detergent
- Offer rooms with a roll-in shower

- Install non-slip bathroom floors (wet and dry)
- Install handheld shower heads and lever taps
- Install toilet and shower grab bars
- Offer bath mats, shower stools, toilet seat height raisers and commode chairs

DINING

- Use plain English and large fonts on signage and menus
- Take room service orders via text to assist deaf guests
- Provide adequate space in restaurants or cafés for wheelchairs to move between areas
- Provide a separate quiet space in the restaurant for guests who are hard of hearing or have cognitive disabilities
- Provide a selection of seats with and without arms
- Offer reading glasses or a flashlight, if needed
- Have a list, or ensure staff are aware of local and accessible restaurants

CHECKOUT

- Offer flexible arrangements for checkout
- Ask customers for feedback
- If you've implemented changes as a result of feedback, follow up with the visitor who suggested the changes so he or she is aware

EXTRAS

- Create a Welcome Kit, in large print, with accessibility information about your business, nearby attractions, transportation and sites of interest
- Have vibrating alarm clocks with flashing lights available for loan
- Use visual and vibrating alerts for emergencies
- Ensure your staff understand and have recorded guests' evacuation requirements in case of emergency



Oak Bay Beach Hotel
Photo: Jordan Dyck