

"For my house shall be a house of prayer for all people"
Isaiah 56:5

LOW COST ACCOMODATIONS FOR ACCESSIBILITY IN YOUR SYNAGOGUE

List compiled by
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If you can't afford to:	Try this low cost alternative:
Add a ramp or electric chair lift to your elevated bima	Place a torah reading table in front of the first row of seats and conduct torah services from there
Install a push-button electric door opener at the building entrance	Provide an old-fashioned door opener in the form of a volunteer from the congregation before and after services
Set aside additional handicap parking spaces in front of your building	Offer valet parking for those who need a handicap parking space
Add a drinking fountain at wheelchair level	Place a paper cup dispenser next to the drinking fountain at the correct height; be sure to keep the dispenser filled with cups
Build special spaces for wheelchair users in an existing sanctuary	Change one or two seats at the ends of several rows into removable seats; level the floor for a wheelchair
Remove the stairs to your bima	At minimum, add handrails for those who are unsteady on their

	feet
Add a wheelchair accessible stall in the existing bathrooms	Build a “Family Restroom” that is large enough for a wheelchair as well as baby strollers, etc.
Install special washbasins in all restrooms	Replace short faucets with longer, kitchen-style faucets and replace round knob handles with longer lever-style handles; cut away the cabinet below at least one sink so a wheelchair can roll under the countertop

Install all new light switches throughout the campus	Add “wall switch extenders” to lower switches up to 12 inches
Widen all doorways into rooms to accommodate wheelchairs	Replace existing door hinges with offset door hinges to gain a couple of inches of width
Widen all doorways into rooms to accommodate wheelchairs	Replace single doors with double doors
Replace all doorknobs throughout the campus	Add “door knob extenders” over the existing doorknobs to create a lever handle
Replace stairs throughout the campus	Add rough-surfaced, non-skid strips to all stairs
Purchase large print or Braille prayer books	Use the office copier to enlarge the specific pages of Shabbat and holiday services - and - order Braille prayer books from the Jewish Braille International in New York City
Produce large print or Braille newsletters and other	Produce enlarged versions and/or audiocassette tapes of newsletters

congregational notices and correspondence	and other correspondence for those who have vision impairment
Provide large print prayer books	Attach full-page plastic magnifiers with a cord or ribbon inside a number of prayer books that are available upon request
Hire a certified, licensed sign language interpreter for services, classes or special events	Visit the local college that offers sign language interpreter training to seek an affordable teacher or advanced student
Purchase a TDD/TTY for phone calls to or from a Deaf person	Most Deaf people will contact you by e-mail or use the government-mandated “relay system” for phone calls; train your office staff to use the “relay system”
Provide transportation to the synagogue for people who cannot leave their homes	Arrange for a speaker phone at that person’s home and arrange for them to hear the services – or – videotape a service for them to enjoy (ahead of time if use of electronic devices is prohibited)
Include students who have unacceptable behavior in the school	Arrange for tutoring in that child’s home or supervised residence (this could be a bar mitzvah student or confirmation class project)
Transport a child in a wheelchair to a second floor classroom (with no elevator)	Relocate that child’s classroom to the first floor, if only for one year to accommodate that need
Create a separate youth group for children with special needs	They don’t want a separate youth group; train the youth group leader and volunteers to provide the necessary supports for inclusion

NO COST ACCOMMODATIONS

- ~~ Have volunteer “greeters” who will arrange to meet individuals or families that include a person with a disability at the entrance to your synagogue and accompany them at services ~~

- ~~ Train High Holiday ushers to greet Deaf individuals and guide them to reserved seating for those using an interpreter (If necessary, provide ushers with something in writing to communicate with a non-verbal individual ~~

- ~~ Post signs that indicate the location of accessible restrooms ~~
 - ~~ Place an additional mezuzah at your entrances at wheelchair user level ~~

 - ~~ Place a box of kippot at the entrance to your sanctuary at wheelchair user level ~~

 - ~~ Place signs in a prominently displayed location to let your congregants and guests know that you have large print or Braille prayer books, wheelchair seating, a sign language interpreter and/or assistive listening devices, etc. ~~

- ~~ Post a sign that indicates that you have a “quiet room” near the sanctuary and social hall for individuals who become overwhelmed by their emotions or the external stimuli and need a place to retreat until they can rejoin the services or activities ~~
 - ~~ Include the universal symbols for accessibility and disability resources in all of your written material, marketing and publicity ~~

~~ Train all employees in using “People First” language when talking about and with individuals who have disabilities ~~
