

Community Assessment for Accessible Rural Events

Using the Attendee Survey: a How-To Guide



Part of the **Community Assessment for Accessible Rural Events (CAARE) Toolkit**



Research and Training Center
on Disability in Rural Communities

Find the CAARE toolkit online:

www.rtc.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/community-assessment-for-accessible-rural-events

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The **Community Assessment for Accessible Rural Events, or CAARE, Toolkit** was created to help community members make sure their rural community events are accessible and inclusive. There are resources in the CAARE Toolkit to help with Planning, Indoor, and Outdoor Events. There are checklists of accessibility issues to consider, surveys about accessibility for event attendees, and additional resources where you can find more information, guidance, and resources to help make your event accessible for all.

Note: some of the considerations mentioned in the Toolkit checklists might not apply to your rural event. Every rural community is different and has different needs– there is no one-size-fits-all solution. What may work for one community event may not work for another.

This Toolkit is designed to be a starting place for event organizers, disability advocates, and attendees to address accessibility and usability issues in their communities.



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Acknowledgments

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Part 2: Links to the Tools in This Guide

- 8 [Event Accessibility Quick Assessment \(PDF\)](#)
- 8 [Attendee Survey \(PDF\)](#)
- 8 [Survey Data Template \(Microsoft Excel file\)](#)
- 8 [Brief Event Report Template \(fillable PDF\)](#)

Using the Attendee Survey: A How-To Guide

This guide will help you get started using the Attendee Survey, a tool to help event planners and disability advocates learn about accessibility at rural community events by surveying people who attended the event.



Introduction

Research shows that people with disabilities who attend and participate in community events are able to engage and connect with family, friends, and other community members, share and gain knowledge and skills, and create space for collaborative and economic opportunities.

For example, these events provide a place for those who are self-employed to promote and market their goods or services, and to connect with others who have similar interests.

Are events in your local community accessible? One way to find out is to ask. This guide will help you learn how to work with event planners before, during, and after the event to make sure accessibility is a priority, and to collect information from people during the event.



Levels of Engagement

One and Done:

Work with a single event that you care about, collecting information one year and work with the event organizers to help make the event more accessible.



Focused and Ongoing:

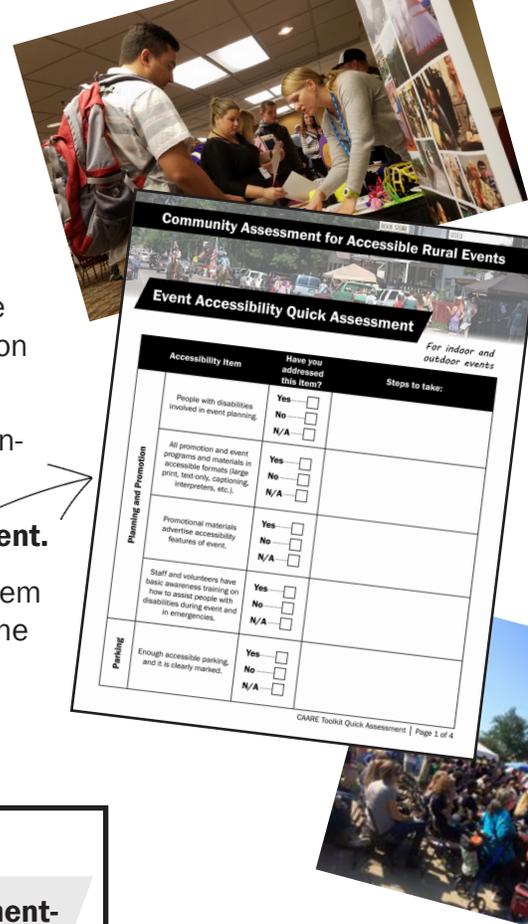
Work with a single event that you care about, collecting information over multiple years and work with the event organizers to help make the event more accessible.

Multiple Events:

If you are looking to become known as an accessibility ambassador in your area, this might be the level of engagement for you! Work with multiple events that you care about, collecting information and working with them either in a one-and-done fashion or a focused and ongoing model.

How to Get Started

1. Contact event organizers and ask if they are interested in better understanding accessibility at their event.
2. Ask if your Center for Independent Living (CIL) or organization can have a booth or table at the event to gather additional one-on-one information about accessibility and to promote your services to event participants.
3. Ask if you can attend planning meetings or meet with organizers one-on-one a few times to determine how you will complete the assessment.
4. Have the organizers complete the **Event Accessibility Quick Assessment**.
 - Event organizers may not know how to improve accessibility. Ask them about the accessibility items they are most interested in, and use the online CAARE toolkit to explore solutions.



Find the CAARE toolkit and other resources online:

www.rtc.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/community-assessment-for-accessible-rural-events

Planning the Assessment

Questions to ask the organizers:

- About how many people attend the event?
- How do people enter and leave the event?
- Where would be a good place for survey collectors to station themselves to catch people for the short survey as they are leaving the event?
- Is there anyone who would like to volunteer to help collect surveys and talk to people at the event?

“Thoughtful planning that

includes people with disabilities

can lead to

changing cultural norms,

reducing exclusion,

and opportunities for

new connections

and

self-development.”



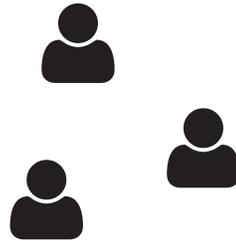
Rayna Sage and Erin Flores, in “Disability and Rural Events: The cultural reproduction of inclusion and exclusion.” (Routledge 2019).

Day of the Event

People needed:

Ideally, you will have 2 or 3 people to help do the survey:

- 1 person to staff the CIL table
 - 1 (or 2) people to collect surveys and talk with folks
- If you want, you can rotate roles.



What to bring with you:

- Clipboards (one for each person collecting surveys)
- Copies of the **Attendee Survey** (including a few large print)
- Pens
- Notebook (or another way to take down notes)
- Contact information or business cards from your CIL, in case people have questions later
- Any other promotional materials you want from your CIL (for example, about upcoming events or trainings)

A sample of the 'Attendee Survey' form titled 'Community Assessment for Accessible Rural Events'. The form includes instructions and a table for rating statements on a scale from 1 (Not at all) to 5 (Completely). The statements cover various accessibility aspects like parking, entrances, pathways, ramps, surfaces, door widths, door handles, bathrooms, and signage. A pencil icon is shown writing on the form.

How to gather information:

- As people at the event walk by your table, ask them if they would like to take a survey.

You could say something like, “Hi! Would you like to take a survey about accessibility? It will only take a few minutes. We’re going to use this information to help make sure that this event is accessible for everybody.”

- Sometimes people will want to share more information and comments than will fit on the survey. Or, they might just want to share a comment without filling out the survey. If that’s the case, listen carefully and after they leave, jot down a few bullet points from your conversation in the notebook.
- Some people may not want or be able to take the survey, and that’s ok. Be sure to thank them for their time.
- Be sure to thank people who take the time to fill out the survey or provide any feedback.

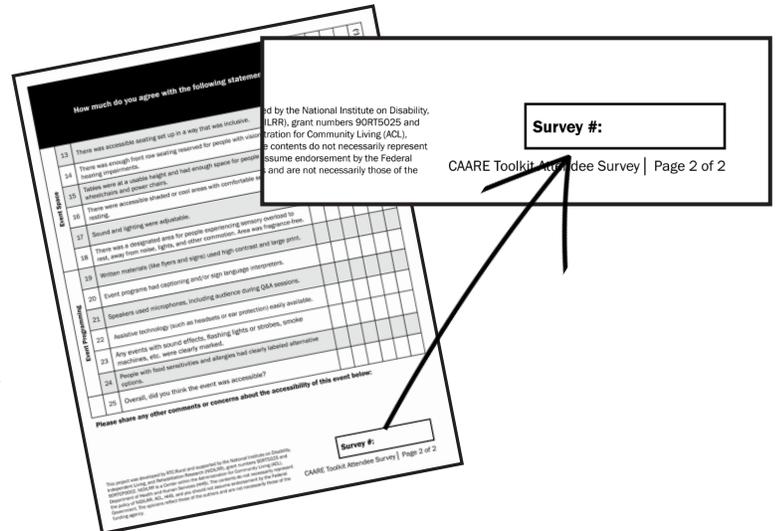


After the Event

Step 1: Prepare the Attendee Surveys

1. Collect all the surveys together in one place.
2. Write a unique survey number on each survey in the **Survey #** box, which is on the bottom of page 2 of the Attendee Survey.

If you are doing multiple events, you might want to give it a number that is unique to the event (for example, event #100, survey #1 = 101).

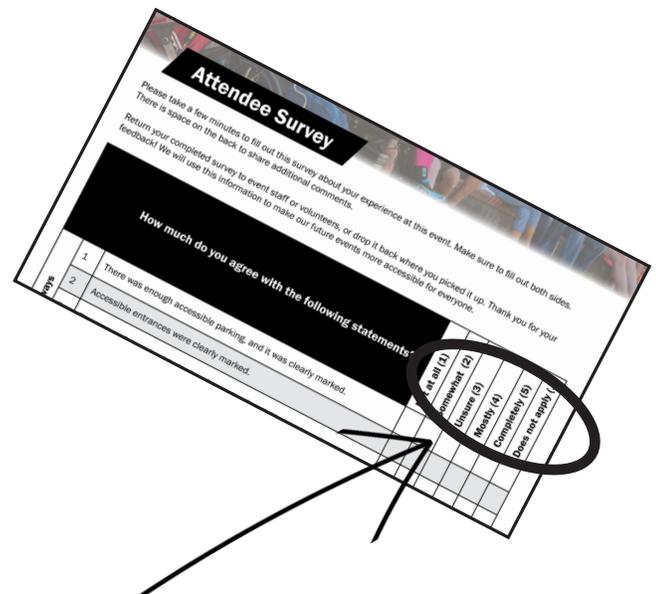


Step 2: Enter Data

1. Open up the **Survey Data Template** Excel file and save it as a new file.
2. Click to the tab at the bottom that says **Attendee Survey Data**. This is where you will enter the information from each survey.
3. Start entering the information from each survey. All of the information from one survey will be put into one horizontal row in the file.
 - In column B, enter the name of the event.
 - In column C, enter the Survey #.
 - In column D, enter the year.
 - In the rest of the columns enter the number associated with the answer for each of the survey questions. Enter the answer for the first question in the column labeled Q1, the answer for the second question in the column labeled Q2, and so on.
 - Each answer choice on the Attendee Survey has a number after it in parentheses.
 - Not at all = 1
 - Somewhat = 2
 - Unsure = 3
 - Mostly = 4
 - Completely = 5
 - Does not apply = . (a period)



See the **Survey Data Template Excel** for a filled out example.



4. Once all the surveys are entered, click the **Findings** tab at the bottom of the window.
 - Here you will see the average scores for the event in the different accessibility areas.
 - These scores will fill in automatically using the data you entered in the Attendee Survey Data tab. (The Excel file is set up so that this will happen).
 - You can use these scores to understand if people think the event is accessible.
 - A 5 is the highest score, meaning that the people who took the survey thought that accessibility item was completely accessible. A 1 is the lowest score, meaning people thought that accessibility item was not at all accessible.
- Remember, this survey tells you what people think about accessibility, which may or may not be an accurate picture of how accessible the event actually is.
 - For instance, people might not realize that all of the buildings have accessible entrances around the back because there is no signage.
 - If this is the case, you can use this information to brainstorm solutions. Maybe you would have more signs, or station volunteers by the front entrances to share accessibility information.

Step 3: Create a Report

1. Open the **Brief Event Report Template** and save it as a new file. Use the name and date of the event to name the file.
 - For example, “Accessibility Brief Report Summer Picnic 2019.”
 2. Start filling out the report.
 - In the **Event and Assessment General Information** section, fill out each section with:
 - The event name
 - Survey date (the date you went to the event and asked people to fill out surveys)
 - The event contact person
 - Report prepared by (name of the person, or people, who helped prepare this report)
 - Date (the date you put together the report)
 - The number of surveys collected
 - The number of people who attended the event (estimate)
 - In the **Summary of Quick Assessment Goals**, summarize the information you gathered from the Event Accessibility Quick Assessment you did with the event organizers prior to the event.
 - In the **Summary of the Attendee Survey**, fill out the average scores for each accessibility issue.
 - These scores are in the Findings Tab of the Excel file.
 - In the Comments section, write out any relevant comments that people may have written on the survey. If there are multiple comments that say the same thing, you can combine them.
 - In the **Next Steps!** section, fill out recommendations for future events. These should be realistic and reflect the goals of the organizers. Link to resources, if you can.
3. Once you have the report filled out, review it for any typos or mistakes.
 4. Then, save the file. Once it’s saved on your computer, prepare a copy to send to the event organizer. You could email them the file, or print out and mail them the report.

See pages 3 and 4 of the **Brief Event Report Template** for a filled out example.



