

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH POLICY 04-01-09

CATEGORY: FACILITIES
SECTION: Control and Assignment
SUBJECT: Off-Campus Conference Facilities
EFFECTIVE DATE: April 26, 1994
PAGE(S): 2

I. SCOPE

This policy applies to all conferences, workshops, meetings, seminars, or other University-sponsored educational programs open to the public and held at off-campus locations not owned or operated by the University of Pittsburgh. For purposes of this policy, an Off-Campus University Conference is one for which the University, or any school, department, or affiliate thereof, participates actively in planning the facilities. This policy establishes a procedure for determining that all off-campus facilities used for such educational events are accessible to individuals with disabilities and in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

II. POLICY

When contracting for off-campus rental sites for University-sponsored conferences, best efforts must be used to choose a location which is fully accessible or capable of accommodation, and meets all applicable ADA criteria.

The University shall inquire as to accessibility of the facilities, or portion thereof, as part of any initial inquiry into potential rental sites. When negotiating a contract for such a site, the University will require a certification from the owner of the off-campus site regarding accessibility of the facilities or any accessibility deficiencies. In determining accessibility, federal guidelines shall be used as the evaluation criteria.

The University will require the off-campus site owner to provide reasonable accommodations to any registrant requesting accommodation based on accessibility deficiencies of the chosen site, if any.

The University conference planner should make best efforts to identify in advance the need for any auxiliary aids and services which are not a fixture of the off-campus facility and which may be provided by the conference, such as, but not limited to, large print materials or assistive listening devices.

Any University personnel, including University faculty, administrators, staff, students, or their agents who plan off-campus conferences (Off-campus Conference Planner) shall, as part of the planning process, determine the accessibility of the proposed off-campus site. See Procedure 04-01-09, Off-Campus Conferences.

University planners shall use best efforts to choose a location which is fully accessible or which meets all applicable ADA criteria. All other things being equal, preference will be given to a public accommodation which has in place an implementation plan to increase accessibility through barrier removal and structural modifications over a period of time.

The Office of Conference Coordination will maintain a list of hotels, conference centers, and other potential meeting sites, which have provided accessibility information to the University. The Office of Conference Coordination will request accessibility information on an annual basis of off-campus meeting facilities frequently used in the Pittsburgh areas and will advise off-campus sites that certification will be required for any University-sponsored off-campus educational event. The Office of Conference coordination will maintain and update any accessibility information provided to it in response to these inquires.

As part of the initial inquiry of all potential rental sites, University planners shall contact

the Office of Conference Coordination to determine if a current certification is available for an off-campus site under consideration. For those off-campus sites which have not provided a current certification to the Office of Conference Coordination within one year prior to the proposed off-campus educational event, and which are being considered beyond the initial inquiry state of planning an event, University conference planners must request certification as part of the evaluation process. See Procedure 04-01-09.

If it is determined by the evaluation process that the selected site has certain accessibility barriers, the University conference planner, in consultation with Facilities Planning Division, Facilities Management, or other knowledgeable sources, shall require the off-campus site to provide reasonable accommodations to any registrant requesting accommodation, in sufficient time to relocate the conference, if necessary.

The University conference planner, if possible, shall ensure that each contract between the University and the owner of an off-campus site includes a representation and warranty of the owner that the entity is in compliance with the public accommodation provisions of the ADA and shall further contain a clause indemnifying the University (or an affiliated contracting entity) in the event the University (or the affiliated contracting entity) incurs any liability or loss arising out of or related to a claim of non-accessibility or claim related thereto under the ADA.

Registration forms for off-campus conferences shall contain a section on requests for accommodation of registrants and shall contain the following language:

"We encourage participation by all interested individuals and use best efforts to choose a location which meets the criteria of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Notwithstanding our best efforts, the program location may not satisfy all of the federal accessibility standards. If you have a disability, advance notification of any accommodation will help us better serve you. Inquires concerning accommodations should be addressed to (name, address, and phone number of University conference planner) at least two weeks in advance of the date of the conference."

The Office of Conference Coordination will include a copy of this policy and associated procedure in its conference planning packets.

Requests for variance from this policy shall be directed to the Chancellor and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

III. REFERENCE

[Procedure AO 26, Off-Campus Conference Facilities](#) (formerly 04-01-09)