



## Development and Retention

# Inclusive social events - Handout



# Inclusive social events

Connecting with your team in a social environment can be a great way to build and strengthen relationships, and to have fun. Everyone should be able to attend.

But what does 'fun' look like for everyone in your team? Have you considered an inclusive concept of 'fun' for your employees? How could you find out?

**There are four key elements to ensuring environments are communication accessible:**

1. People
2. Communication tools and resources
3. Written information
4. The physical environment.

Start with a conversation with your staff about what support they may need to fully participate in the social activity. Below is a guide and a checklist that can be used to assist with these conversations.

## 1. People

- Our team is aware of how to make environments and events communication accessible.
- Staff at the venue / activity are aware of communication access and know how to interact respectfully with people with communication access requirements.
- Enough time has been allocated for the event / activity to allow all attendees to actively participate.



### 2. Communication tools and resources

- Communication tools, such as picture menus or communication boards are available at the venue.
- Communication tools can be provided to use at the venue.
- Activities have been planned in a way that allows enough time and space for people with communication access requirements to participate actively.
- Activities that require time limited responses, like quizzes – have been considered to determine whether or not they are accessible?

### 3. Written information

- Written communications about the event have been sent out in advance, using plain language if required.
- Discussions have occurred with employees about what support they require to fully participate in the event, such as attendant care, work buddy, event reminders, transport arrangements, and accessing written materials at the venue.
- Registration for the event is via an accessible platform.

### 4. Environment

- The venue has appropriate lighting, neither too low for people to see each other, and use visual cues, effectively, or too bright and causing sensory discomfort.
- Noise levels at the venue are controlled, with background noise reduced and amplification appropriate for all attendees to here and participate in conversation.
- The space is physically accessible, including accessible toilets and reception desks at an accessible height.
- Entry to the venue is accessible and it is easy for everyone to move around the venue.
- Alternative options for participation have been offered, such as joining online.
- Quiet spaces are available if needed.
- The venue is easy to find.



- There is appropriate signage and wayfinding to the venue and information on accessing the venue has been provided ahead of time.
- The venue is located close to public transport or accessible parking.
- 'Buddies' have been offered to meet the employee ahead of time to assist with navigation.

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Here are some barriers faced by employees with communication access requirements at social events. What could you do to reduce or eliminate these barriers?

Barrier	Ideas to resolve	First steps
<p><b>Lack of accessibility:</b> Social events may not be planned with accessibility in mind, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The venue might not be wheelchair accessible.</li><li>• There might not be provisions for people with hearing impairments, such as (like sign language interpreters) or visual impairments, like material available in braille.</li></ul>		
<p><b>Communication barriers:</b> Social events often involve verbal communication and interactions. People with communication access requirements might face challenges in participating fully if there are no accommodations, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communication boards, assistive technology, or time for alternative communication methods.</li></ul>		
<p><b>Social stigma or lack of knowledge:</b> Co-workers and event organisers may not be aware of the needs of individuals with disabilities or may have misconceptions about their abilities to participate in social events. This can lead to exclusion which may be unintentional.</p>		



<p><b>Assumption of preferences:</b> There might be assumptions made about what individuals with disabilities enjoy or are capable of participating in, which can lead to them being excluded from invitations or planning discussions.</p>		
<p><b>Physical barriers:</b> Even if the venue is accessible, the layout or activities may pose physical challenges for individuals with certain disabilities, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If an event involves physical activities that are difficult for someone with mobility impairments, such as bowling or mini golf.</li></ul>		
<p><b>Cultural or social norms:</b> Some social events may reinforce cultural or social norms that unintentionally exclude individuals with disabilities, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Activities that heavily rely on non-verbal cues or require high literacy levels can be challenging for those with communication disabilities or low literacy.</li></ul>		
<p><b>Lack of inclusive policies:</b> Organisations may not have policies in place that explicitly promote inclusion in social events, leading to oversight or neglect of the needs of individuals with disabilities.</p>		



### For more information:

- [Hosting accessible and inclusive in-person meetings and events](#)

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This information provides guidance on how to support communication in the workplace with people who have communication access requirements. It should not be relied upon in relation to employment law matters - independent advice should be sought.