

Accessible Events: Tips for ADA-Friendly Planning



Stockton University values diversity and seeks to promote access to employment and educational opportunities. As such, it is committed to full compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 701 et seq. ("Section 504") and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. §§ 1201-12213 as amended ("ADA"), and provides reasonable accommodations to qualified employees and students with disabilities to allow for full participation in the University's employment and educational programs and activities

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Key Definitions

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in everyday activities.

Digital Accessibility: The design and development of digital content, tools, and technologies that can be used by people with a wide range of disabilities. It ensures that content is perceivable, operable, understandable, and robust, as outlined in the WCAG 2.1 AA standards.

WCAG 2.1: Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 covers a wide range of recommendations for making web content more accessible. Following these guidelines will make content more accessible to a wider range of people with disabilities.

Alt Text: A written description of an image that is added to digital content to help people who use screen readers understand what the image shows. It also displays in place of an image if it fails to load.

Public Accommodations: An entity that provides goods or services to the public. The ADA prohibits discrimination in public accommodations based on disability.

ADA Title II: Requires equal access to public services, including education for students with disabilities.

Why Accessibility Matters

1. Creates inclusive experiences

2. Reduces barriers and increases participation

3. Ensures legal compliance and supports ethical responsibility

For questions about accessibility or to request an accommodation, please contact the Office of Event Services & Campus Center Operations at 609.652.4878 or event.services@stockton.edu at least 5 business days in advance of your participation or visit.

For more information, visit [the Disability, Accessibility and Accommodation webpage](#).

Complying with ADA Requirements

Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in public life, including events.

- **Reasonable Accommodations:** Respond promptly and at no cost to attendees
- **Program Accessibility:** Entire event must be accessible, not just specific areas
- **Avoid Segregation:** Integrate accessible spaces and services throughout events
- **Physical Access:** Entrances, restrooms, parking, and seating must meet ADA standards
- **Effective Communication:** Provide auxiliary aids and services (i.e. interpreters, captioning, Braille or large print, assistive listening devices as needed)
- **Know the Law:** ADA ensures equal access to programs, services and events

Standard Accessibility Symbols



1. **Wheelchair Symbol:** Accessible for individuals with mobility impairments
2. **TTY/Text Telephone:** Device for people who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech impairments to communicate via text over phone lines
3. **Assistive Listening System:** Availability of hearing assistance devices
4. **Volume Control Telephone:** A phone with adjustable volume
5. **Sign Language Interpreter:** Sign Language interpretation services are provided
6. **Accessible to Blind/Low Vision:** Facilities, signage, or pathways are usable by people who are blind or have low vision
7. **Braille:** Written materials, signage, or labels include Braille
8. **Closed Captioning (CC):** Videos or presentations include captions for people who are deaf or hard of hearing

NPS graphics sourced from public domain

Facility, Layout & Technology Considerations

Physical Access

- Confirm ramps, elevators, and doors are functional
- Ensure routes are smooth, not slippery; consider non-slip doormats
- Avoid crushed stone, gravel, and grated surfaces on pathways
- Avoid thick carpets or uneven flooring
- Provide accessible parking or shuttle service
- Ensure emergency exits accommodate all guests
- Provide ADA designed restroom facilities

Hearing & Vision

- Use microphones
- Provide assistive listening devices or hearing loops
- Hire American Sign Languages (ASL) interpreters when requested
- Use closed-captioning on recordings and real-time captioning (CART) for presentations
- Minimize background noise
- Avoid flashing or moving imagery and strobe lights
- Avoid visual movement in presentations
- Use accessible fonts and avoid all capital letters

Accessible Layout/Stadium Seating

Stadium Seating

- At least one percent of all stadium seating must be wheelchair seating locations.
- A companion seat must be provided next to each wheelchair seating location.
- Removable or folding seats can be provided in wheelchair seating locations for use by persons who do not use wheelchairs.
- If more than 300 seats are provided, wheelchair seating must be provided in more than one location, dispersed seating.

Layout Design

- Ensure use of handrails and ramps for raised surfaces
- Provide adequate aisle spacing
- Provide wheelchair cutouts and companion seating
- Provide furniture with varying heights
- Counters should not exceed 36 inches
- Consider all sight lines
- Use trip guards to cover wires

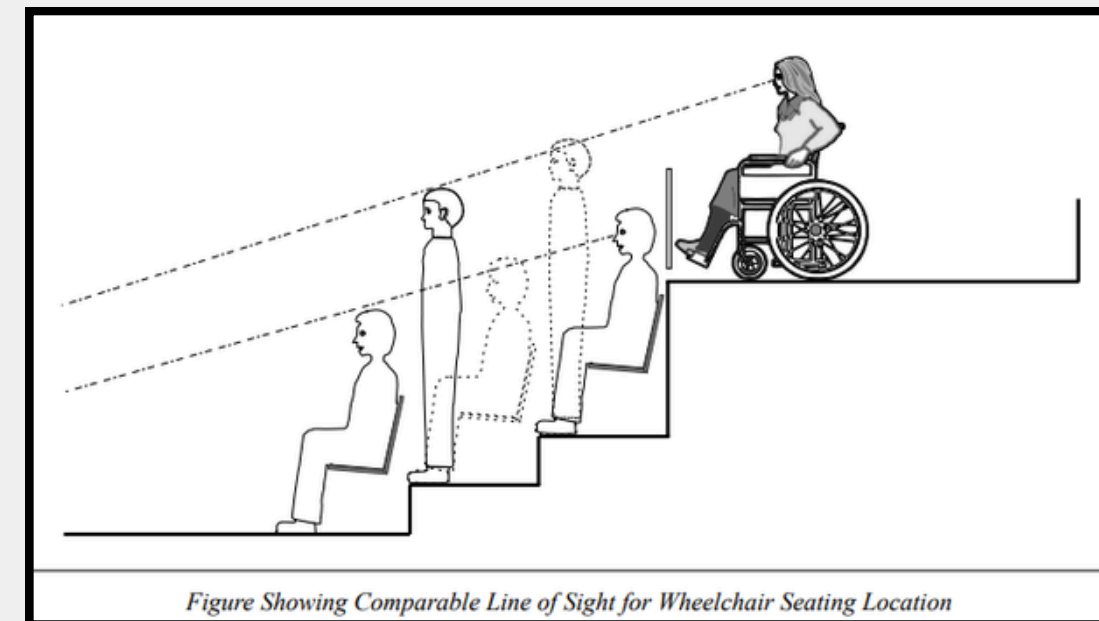


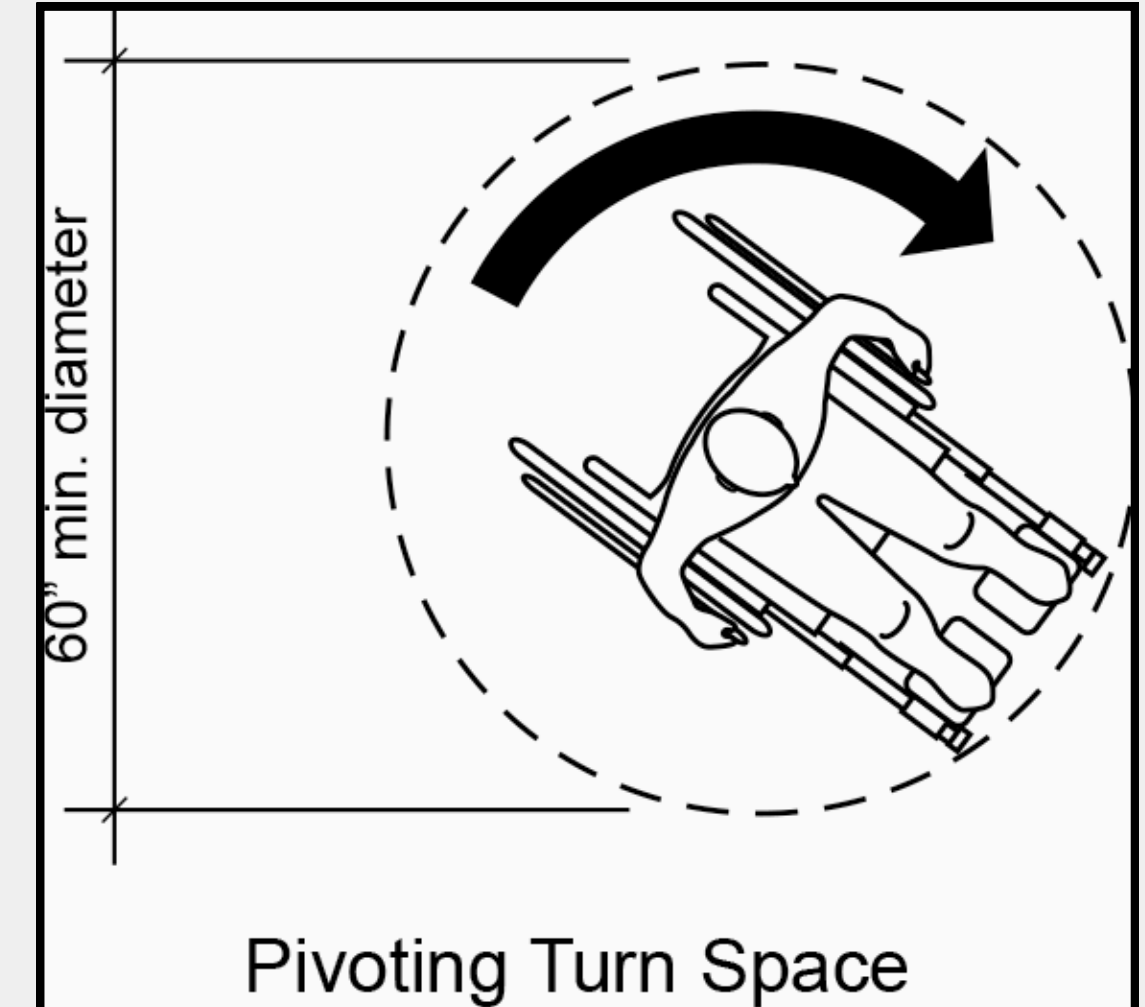
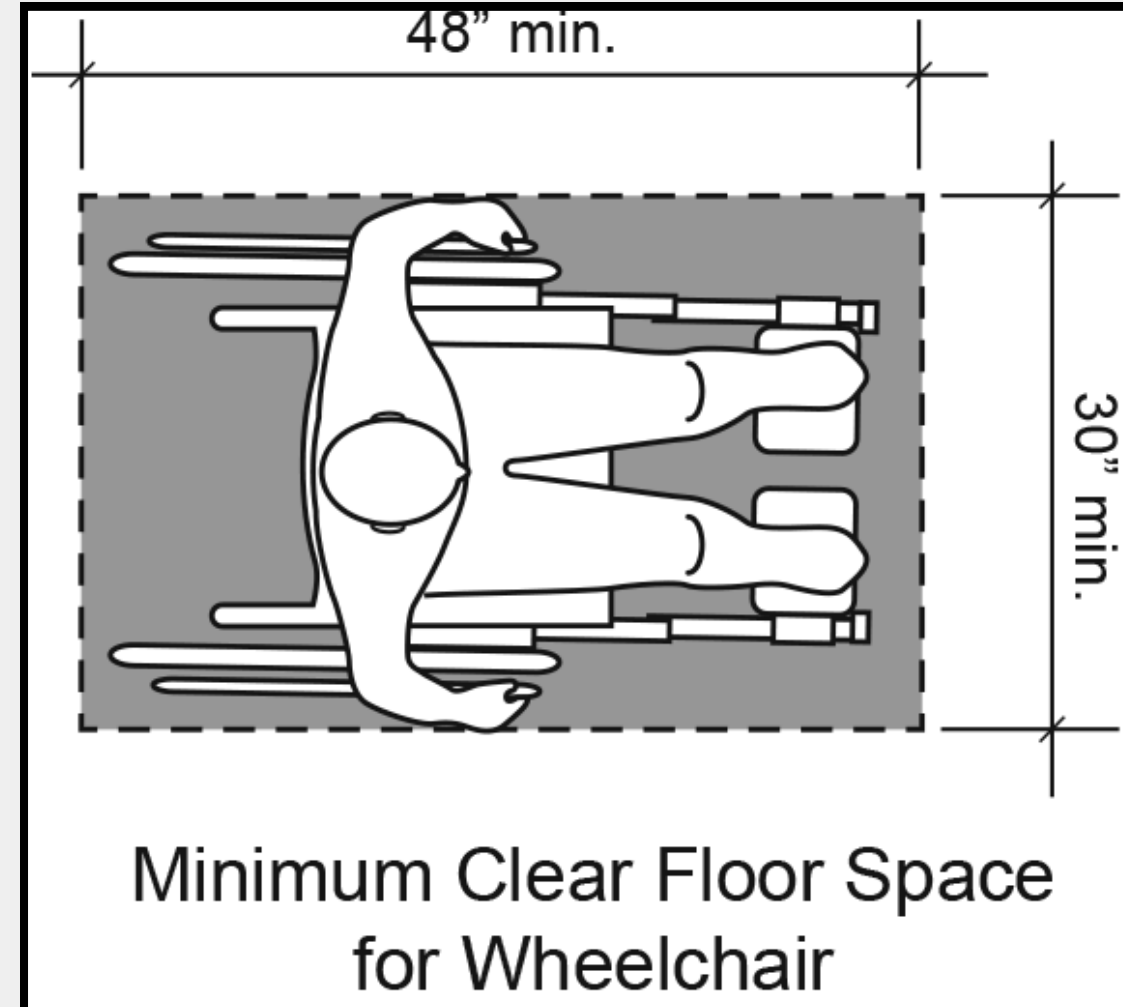
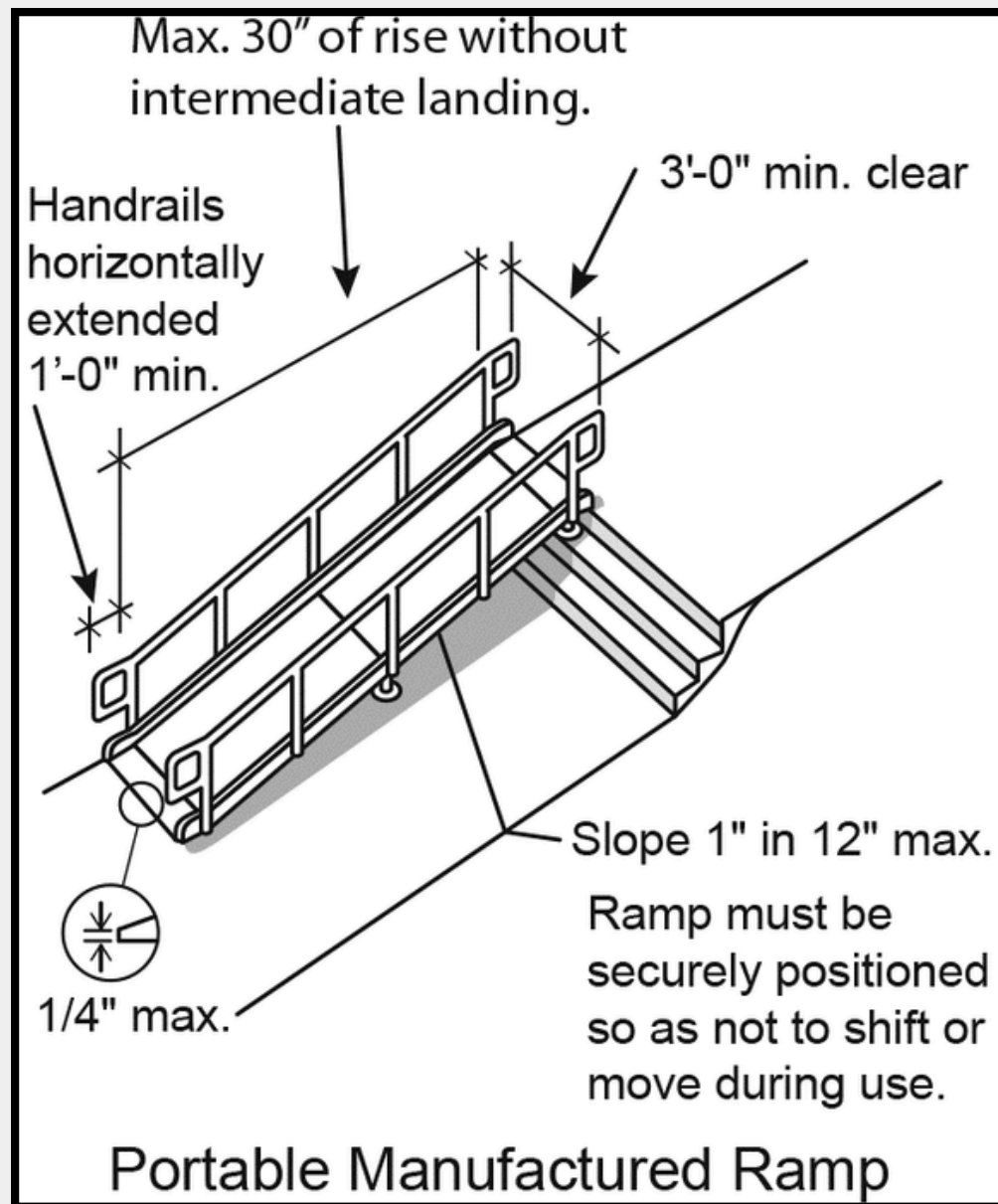
Figure Showing Comparable Line of Sight for Wheelchair Seating Location

Key Measurements: Spacing

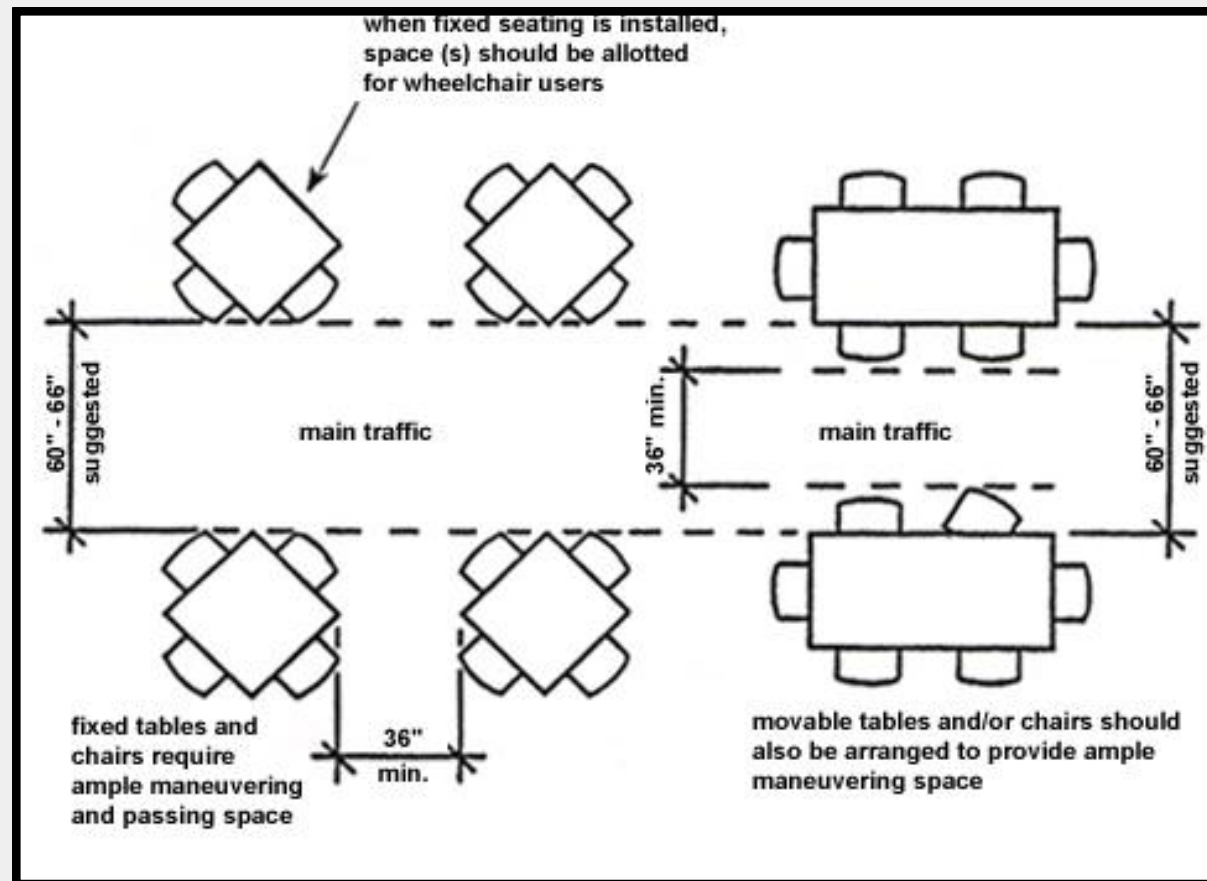
Slope: 1":12"
Maximum

Space: 48" x 30"
Minimum

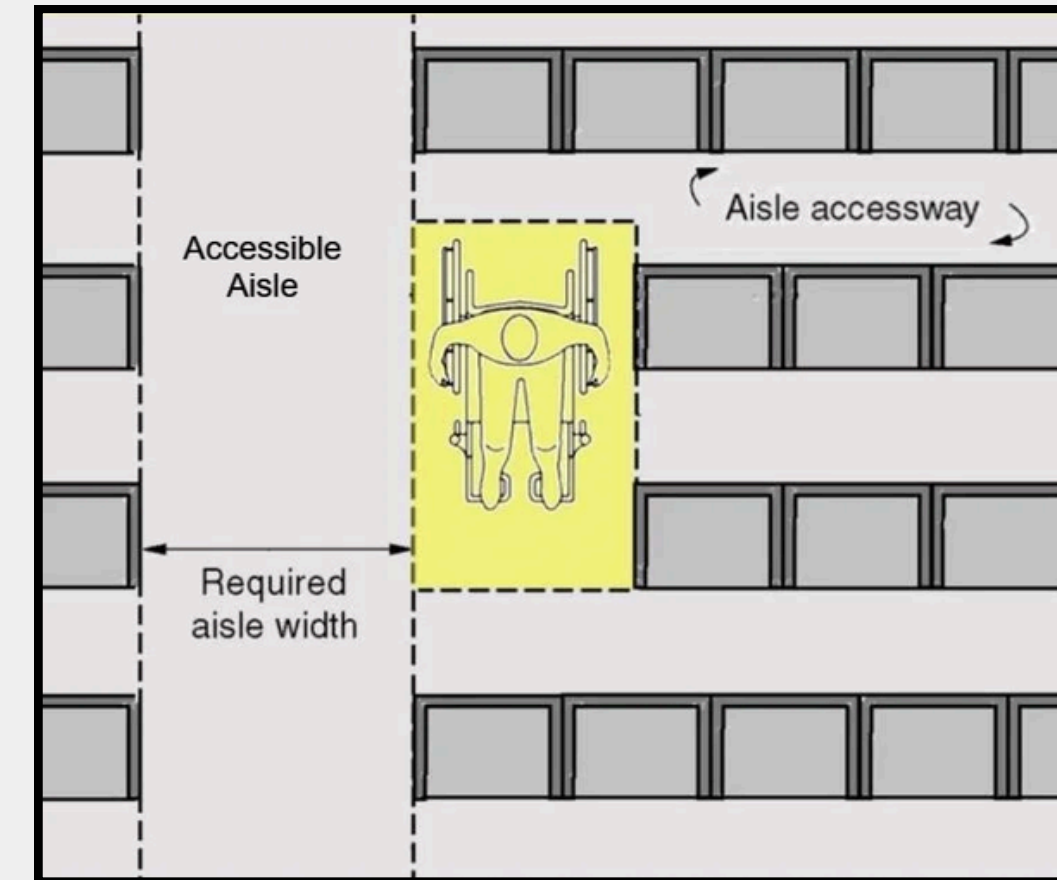
Pivot: 60"
Minimum



Key Measurements: Aisles



Source: bfmseating.com



Source: Inspectionsada.com

- Aisles should be a minimum of 36" between tables or for one way traffic and 60" for two-way traffic
- Wheelchair spaces adjoin accessible routes
- Accessible routes should not overlap wheelchair spaces

Food Allergies

The ADA defines a disability as: “a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.” Severe food allergies can impair eating, digesting, and even breathing during an allergic reaction.

Considerations

- Collect allergy information during registration
- Clearly label ingredients and allergens
- Offer pre-plated meals
- Offer packaged allergen-safe options with labels
- Prevent cross-contact
- Train staff on precautions and emergency response



[Stockton University's](#)
Food Allergy Friendly Campaign

Digital Accessibility

Alternative (alt) Text for Images

- Include alt text with every image to ensure your content is accessible to all users. Consider these best practices:
 - Describe the image based on its purpose and how it connects to the surrounding content
 - Write concise, meaningful descriptions that focus on what users need to understand
 - Avoid phrases like “image of,” “picture of,” or “graphic of,” since screen readers already identify images
- Some platforms generate automatic alt text; always review it for accuracy and edit as needed

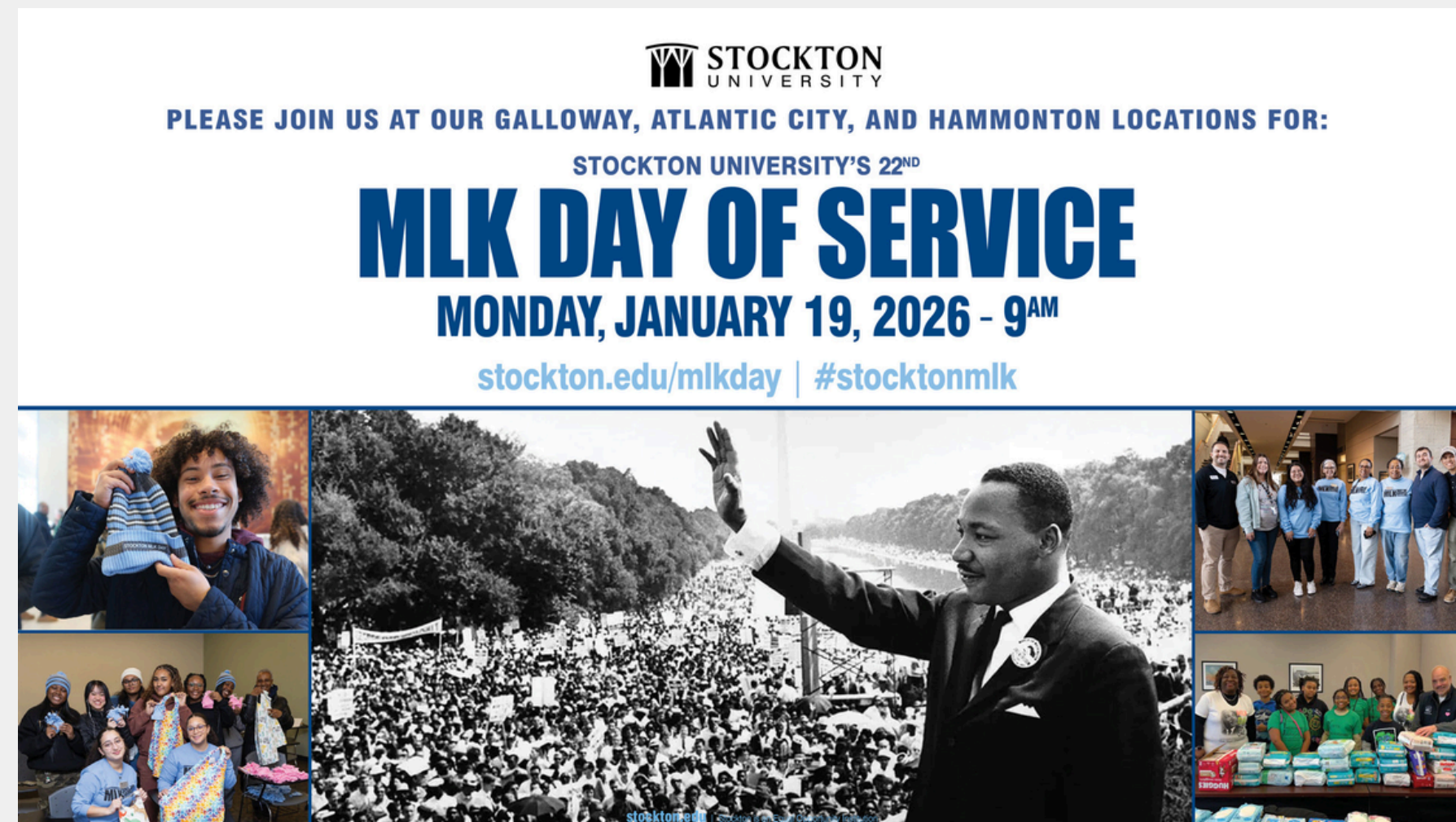
Images With Text

- Whenever possible, do not create images of text. Actual text is much more flexible than images since it can be:
 - read by a screen reader
 - resized without losing clarity
 - translated in a modern browser
- Background and text colors can be modified to suit the reading preferences of users.
- Images that contain text must include meaningful alt text or be paired with equivalent on-page text. The image should never be the only place where required information appears.

Digital Accessibility

Color and Contrast

- Ensure that color is not the only visual means of distinguishing a visual element.
 - Information conveyed by color should also be paired with text or another type of visual indicator.
 - Ensure that foreground and background elements provide enough contrast for readability.
- Tip:* Black font on white background has a very high contrast.



[Image Source:](#)

Office of Community Engagement Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service, Stockton University

Digital Accessibility Resources

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 AA

- Digital content (webpages, documents, emails, etc.) must adhere to the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.1 AA](#).

Selected Programs

- [Office 365](#) - Run the Accessibility Checker in Outlook, Word, Excel, or PowerPoint
- [Modern Campus CMS](#) - Keep up to date on accessibility best practices when editing webpages
- [Adobe Acrobat](#) - Learn how to ensure PDFs are accessible using Acrobat Pro

Stockton University

- Web editing (Modern Campus CMS) - Web Communications
- Office 365 & Adobe Acrobat - ITS Helpdesk
- Blackboard Courses - Center for Teaching and Learning Design (CTLTD)

Marketing Statement

Consider including this statement on marketing materials:

For questions about accessibility or to request an accommodation, please contact the
Office of Event Services & Campus Center Operations
609.652.4878 or event.services@stockton.edu
at least 5 business days in advance of your participation or visit.

Stockton University ADA Contacts

University ADA-504 Coordinator

Dr. Valerie O. Hayes, Esq.
609-652-4695

Valerie.Hayes@stockton.edu

For questions about or guidance on disability, access, and accommodation resources at Stockton University.

Student Disability Services

Provides information on the Learning Access Program (LAP) and services for students with disabilities.

Reasonable Accommodation
Process for Students

Employee Workplace Accommodation

Provides information on disability and employment accommodation for current Stockton employees and applicants for employment at Stockton.

[Reasonable Accommodation
Process for Employees](#)

Student Accommodations

Learning Access Program
J-204

609-652-4988

lap@stockton.edu

Information and Technology Services Help Desk

Galloway Campus
D-121

609-652-4309

helpdesk@stockton.edu

Atlantic City
AC-219

609-652-4309

helpdesk@stockton.edu

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