Guide to Requesting Hearing Accommodation In a Public Venue

Writing a letter to a public venue, and following up with that venue if you are not contacted within a few days, can be an effective way to both receive accommodation for a specific event, and help educate venues about Assistive Listening Systems.

Below is suggested content for the letter, followed by a sample letter with embedded guidelines.

1. Date, Name and Contact information
2. State that you are writing to request accommodations pursuant to the ADA
3. Give the name, date and location of the event.
4. State that you have hearing loss.
5. Explain how your hearing loss will limit your participation or alter your experience.
6. Describe the accommodations you are requesting. Be as specific as possible (i.e., if you are requesting a piece of equipment, a device or a special service, please provide a description, manufacturer, where to order. Offer guidance and provide links as appropriate.
7. If you have had accommodations in the past, tell what they were and how they were effective.
8. Describe how the requested accommodations will help you participate, do your job or enhance the experience.
9. Request to be notified once the requested accommodations have been secured or put into place.
10. Thank the person for their assistance.

SAMPLE REQUEST FOR ACCOMMODATION LETTER
WITH GUIDELINES

<date>

Dear Event Coordinator <always use their real name; call the venue and ask who is responsible for ensuring access>,

Thank you so much for bringing Michael Paterniti to the Covington library on August 23rd. I'm a huge fan of his books, and I'm excited to meet him in person as he shares his book with us. <Start off positive, showing appreciation and building rapport.>

Several friends from my book group and plan to attend with me. Two of us have experienced profound hearing loss, and both of us wear hearing aids. <Explain your level of hearing loss, and if more than one person will attend, be sure to mention that! There's power in numbers.>

Per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), hearing accommodation is required in public venues upon request. I am writing in advance of the event to learn what types of hearing assistance are available? As we don't use sign language, an interpreter will not be of much help. Will the presentation be in a room with a hearing loop? <Introduce specific request>

In case you're not familiar with loops, they are used by other libraries and public places (such as the Bellevue Art Museum) to bring clear sound directly to a hearing aid. The T-coil in the hearing aid receives a signal not degraded by distance, noise, feedback, or reverberation. This assistive listening system is growing in popularity around the world as an affordable, nearly effortless way to provide accommodation. There's no need to plan ahead or check out devices—which you would need to maintain. I just show up, flip my hearing aid to the T-coil setting, and enjoy the event. <Short background on loop technology>

I'd very much like to attend Paterniti's talk, and to be able to hear his ideas and thoughts clearly makes the experience even more exciting and rewarding. <Express your enthusiasm> I'd also love to be able to share this event with my friends in the hearing loss community so they can enjoy it as well. <Let them know you want to bring others and that you will help publicize the event for them.>

If I don't hear back from you within a few days, I'll follow up with you to see what accommodations are available. I'm happy to provide more information to you, or you can visit hearingloss.org. Definitely do follow up, as your request can get lost in the shuffle and include a link for more information.>

Thank you again for all you bring to the Covington community. <Express appreciation once again, closing in an encouraging spirit.>

Sincerely,
Name, address, email, phone