

EVERY RIDE COUNTS

User Guide for People
With Visual
Impairments



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Introduction

Introduction

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), approximately 12 million people 40 years and over in the United States experience vision impairment, including 1 million with blindness ([CDC, 2024](#)). Many community members with low vision have unmet transportation and social service needs, particularly those living in rural areas or those facing financial barriers. While these services may exist locally, people who are blind or have low vision are too often excluded because information has not been made accessible or shared through trusted, familiar channels. People who are new to vision loss or blindness don't often know where to turn, and trusted partners cannot always reach them.

Flyers with small print, websites without alt text, or announcements made solely in visual formats can all exclude people with limited or no vision. Designing campaign materials and outreach efforts is not only a legal requirement under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act—it's a matter of fairness.

Intentionally including community members with lived experience and other relevant partners in the decision-making process creates campaigns that truly connect and support the people you intend to reach. Messages and materials should be meaningful and resonate with the intended audience, outreach methods should be tailored to their specific needs, and trusted sources should be used to effectively reach all members of the community.

The National Aging and Disability Transportation Center (NADTC) convened a panel of experts, including individuals with lived experience and professional partners, to share insights on how transportation providers can design and deliver outreach campaigns that reach and support people who are blind or have low vision. This document, informed by this expertise, is intended to be used alongside NADTC's Every Ride Counts campaign materials and other resources to enhance transportation promotion efforts and improve access for all.

About NADTC and Every Ride Counts

NADTC is a federally funded technical assistance center that supports the development and implementation of accessible transportation programs nationwide. NADTC is committed to ensuring that older adults and people with disabilities—including individuals with low vision and blindness—can access reliable transportation options that support independence, community engagement and quality of life.

Every Ride Counts is NADTC's comprehensive awareness campaign to promote the availability and accessibility of transportation options for older adults, people with disabilities and caregivers in communities around the country. The campaigns feature carefully crafted messages and materials that are customizable for your company and community. To access all of the Every Ride Counts materials, visit www.nadtc.org/everyridecounts/.

**Invite
Experience
and Expertise**

Invite Experience and Expertise to Shape Campaigns

Core Principles for Accessible Campaigns

Engaging people with lived experiences and relevant partner organizations connected to these communities should be done throughout every stage, from initial ideas to final delivery. Community members bring unique perspectives and insights that can help your organization understand their experiences and identify the messages, materials and outreach channels that will resonate most effectively.

Additionally, many local, state and national organizations specialize in creating accessible materials for people who are blind or have low vision. We encourage you to explore their resources and where possible, connect with local partners to design a campaign that reflects your community's unique needs and is informed by their expert guidance. A list of prominent organizations and links to their websites can be found in the Resources section at the end of this document.

Keep these considerations in mind as you begin:

- **Every community and organization is unique, so community engagement in campaign design can take many forms.** This might include holding focus groups with community members who have lived experience, consulting partner organizations that represent or have trusted relationships with blind people or people who have low vision, connecting with accessibility communication experts or engaging family members and caregivers. Consider your specific community, organizational context and campaign goals to determine who should be involved in campaign development.
- **Take time to get to know new collaborators.** Ask about their individual needs and preferences—create an environment where meetings and materials are accessible and where formats and opportunities support meaningful participation, feedback and collaboration.
- **Successful campaigns require ongoing refinement.** Maintain regular engagement with people who have lived experience to ensure your campaign remains relevant, effective and responsive to the needs of your intended audience.



Customize Messages and Materials

Customize Messages and Materials to Your Audience

Whenever possible, tailor your campaign messages to reflect the needs, motivations and concerns of your community members. When people feel seen, informed and supported, they are more likely to take action or engage with your organization or services.

As mentioned, at every stage of campaign development, it's essential to consult with individuals who are blind or have low vision, partner organizations and accessibility experts. Their insights will help your organization better understand the unique needs of these community members and ensure your language is welcoming and effective.

- Use simple, clear and respectful language. Avoid clinical, outdated or stigmatizing terms, and limit the use of acronyms unless they are well-explained and widely understood.
- As possible, provide training and support for all staff and drivers to ensure your entire team is prepared to deliver accessible communications and interact effectively with individuals who have low vision.
- Think beyond the message and consider the format. Effective communication isn't just about what you say, but how you present it. Be thoughtful and creative in how you design and share your materials.

Examples of effective communication approaches might include:

- Sharing specific contact information for mobility managers or transportation navigators who can provide one-on-one support and are familiar with services tailored to individuals with low vision.
- Ensuring that staff at your organization are also informed about local orientation and mobility programs for people with low vision or blindness and are prepared to share this information with community members as a resource to help build confidence and comfort with travel.
- Running all materials through an accessibility checker and having a person with accessibility needs review materials before launching to the public. Always test your materials with assistive tools or consult accessibility experts.

Design With Accessibility in Mind

Design With Accessibility in Mind

Thoughtful design choices play a critical role in making your materials accessible and effective for people with low vision. A good place to start is by understanding the difference between Section 508 and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).

- [Section 508](#) is a United States law that requires federal agencies and organizations that receive federal funds to make all digital information and communications accessible. It establishes minimum standards for accessibility guidelines. Whenever possible, aim to exceed these standards to achieve the highest level of real-world usability for screen readers and other assistive technologies.
- [WCAG](#), developed by the [World Wide Web Consortium](#) are internationally recognized standards for making web content accessible to people with disabilities. They provide a framework for building a web presence grounded in accessibility, privacy and security.



Keep these additional key design practices in mind to ensure your content is accessible:

- Add audio descriptions for instances when videos display only text on the screen or for a scene that is not described by sound.
- Share accessibility guidance with staff and partners involved in editing or exporting materials, and make sure that any accessibility additions exist within the native file. Once a document is finalized, use an accessibility checker to ensure accessibility features such as alt text, proper reading order, color contrast, and font formatting have not been lost or removed.
- Provide materials in multiple formats—print, digital, audio, video and braille versions. Use Every Ride Counts radio scripts.
- Ensure flyers, brochures and other print materials use large and easy to read font; high color contrast; and simple, clear layouts. Avoid using all capital letters to improve legibility for all readers.
- Create and launch digital ads that can be accessed with a screen reader. A screen reader is a type of assistive technology that reads content aloud when displayed on a computer or mobile phone and relies on properly structured content.
- Design an accessible resource that clearly outlines local transit options to ease uncertainty and promote confidence for new riders.
- Ensure digital ads have alt text, good heading structure, descriptive link text. Check the reading order and avoid using text in images. Describe all visual elements, such as images, logos, charts and graphics, that will appear in ads.
- The Every Ride Counts suite of materials includes an image gallery that reflects the diversity of community members, including people with low vision. The materials align with the guidance above by using legible, high-contrast fonts and colors and including alt text for visual content to support accessible and inclusive design. Additional resources on 508 compliance and accessible design are linked in the Resources section at the end of the document.

Distribute Information Through Trusted Networks

Distribute Information Through Trusted Networks and Local Partnerships

Social isolation is a common experience for individuals who are blind or have low vision, especially in low-income or rural areas. To effectively reach these community members, your organization should explore a wide range of creative outreach methods and collaborate with trusted local partners.

Consider which organizations already interact with your target audience, such as vision rehabilitation programs, independent living centers, senior centers, orientation and mobility (O&M) specialists, health care providers and home delivery services, and look for opportunities to build partnerships and cross-promote your services. O&M specialists teach individuals how to navigate their surroundings and can share your company's information with their clients. Sharing information through these trusted networks can help ensure that people who are blind or have low vision receive it in accessible formats, with enough detail and clarity to understand their transportation options, take next steps and know who to contact for help.

Share materials, attend events and make information accessible and available in locations your audience is likely to visit or engage with. Think beyond traditional formats and explore creative opportunities, such as bingo nights, fraud prevention newsletters, caregiver communications, community bulletin boards or other unique channels available in your community.



Resources

Resources

NADTC's Every Ride Counts Campaign Materials

NADTC's Every Ride Counts campaign offers several free resources to help organizations get started, including photos, postcards, flyers, infographics, posters and social media graphics. All of these materials can be found at the [Every Ride Counts web page](#).

Organizations Focused on Blindness and Low Vision

- [American Council of the Blind \(ACB\)](#) – ACB has states affiliates and local chapters that aim to increase the independence, security, equality of opportunity and quality of life for all blind and visually impaired people.
- [American Printing House for the Blind \(APH\)](#) – APH develops accessible educational and workplace tools, materials and technologies that help people who are blind or visually impaired live and work independently.
- [APH Connect Center](#) – APH Connect Center offers a directory of services as well as an information and referral center with an 800 number to help consumers and professionals find services.
- [Hadley Institute for the Blind and Visually Impaired](#) – Hadley offers free, practical learning resources and workshops for people with visual impairments and the professionals who serve them.
- [Mississippi State University Older Individuals who are Blind — Technical Assistance Center \(MSU OIB-TAC\)](#) – MSU OIB-TAC provides information and resources that guide programs toward best practices in promoting independence, community involvement and well-being for older individuals who are blind or have low vision.
- [National Center on Accessible Educational Materials \(AEM Center\)](#) – The AEM Center offers guidance, tools and training to help organizations design and deliver accessible materials and technologies for people with disabilities, including those with visual impairments.
- [National Center for Accessible Media \(NCAM\)](#) – NCAM pioneers accessible media and technology solutions, including guidelines for creating inclusive video, audio and digital communications for audiences with low vision.
- [National Federation of the Blind \(NFB\)](#) – NFB is the oldest and largest nationwide organization of blind Americans.

- [Orientation & Mobility Specialist Association \(OMSA\)](#) – OMSA is maintained and governed by O&M professionals working in the United States with the goal of teaching movement independence to people with visual impairments.
- [VisionAware \(by APH\)](#) – VisionAware, provides practical how-to guides and resources for living with blindness and low vision, including tips for making information and everyday communications more accessible.
- [VisionServe Alliance](#) – VisionServe Alliance is a consortium of U.S. and Canadian organizations and their leaders working collectively to advance the field dedicated to serving people of all ages with blindness and low vision.

508-Compliance and Accessible Design Resources

- [U.S. Department of Health & Human Services: Accessibility Training: Introduction to Accessibility and Section 508](#)
- [U.S. General Services Administration: How Section 508 Standards Benefit People with Disabilities](#)
- [Accessibility Checker: Mastering Section 508: A Complete Guide to Accessibility Compliance](#)
- [Level Access: Section 508: What It Covers and How to Comply](#)
- [Audio Eye: Section 508 Remediation: What It Is & How to Stay Compliant](#)
- [WAVE Web Accessibility Evaluation Tool](#)
- [The Viscardi Center Audio Description](#)
- [U.S. General Services Administration \(GSA\) Section 508](#)

Disclaimer: The links provided are for informational purposes only. The National Aging and Disability Transportation Center does not endorse, recommend, or promote any specific company, product or service mentioned in the linked content.

Special Thanks and Acknowledgements

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