

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
Accessibility Assessment
Summary Report



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United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
Accessibility Assessment Summary Report
Assessment Date: March 1-2, 2011

Background

The National Center on Accessibility was contracted by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum to conduct a physical and programmatic review of the Museum. NCA consultants conducted a two-day on-site accessibility assessment that included a tour of the Holocaust Museum and met with staff to review interpretive, exhibit, and audio-visual programs within the physical facilities. The assessment included an inspection of physical facilities to determine any major areas of barriers to Museum programs and services. This report includes NCA recommendations and opportunities to make the museum experience more accessible to visitors with disabilities.

The following documents were used as reference for review of the physical and programmatic elements based on the legislative mandates and best practice regarding accessibility for people with disabilities:

- [Architectural Barriers Act](#) of 1968 as amended (U.S. Access Board, 2004; General Services Administration, effective date May 8, 2006);
- Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended in 1978, Section 504;
- Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 508;
- [National Park Service Programmatic Accessibility Guidelines for Interpretive Media](#) (2009); and
- Smithsonian Guidelines for Accessible Exhibition Design for best practices.

Locations Identified and Assessed

The Holocaust Permanent Exhibition (Floors 2-4)

Remember the Children: Daniel's Story Permanent Exhibition (Floor 1)

Hall of Remembrance Memorial Areas (Floor 2)

Children's Tile Wall Memorial Area (Lower Level)

Wexner Learning Center (Floor 2)

Survivors Registry (Floor 2)

Anti-Semitism Exhibit (Lower level)

Rubenstein Auditorium (Lower level)

Meyerhoff Theater (Lower level)

Museum Café (Ross Administration Center)

General Issues throughout Exhibit Areas

Visitor Information

When planning a trip to a museum, people often seek information from museum brochures and websites. Accessibility information such as physical access features, procedures to request accommodations (i.e. sign language interpreters), and availability of publications in alternate formats can all assist visitors with disabilities in planning their trip.

- The Museum website lists accessibility information on a secondary page of the website under "plan your visit". Areas addressed include parking, general statement on physical accessibility, availability of wheelchairs and visual aids, information about the guided highlights tours with a two week notice requirement and that audio portions of films have text accompaniments. The

use of the symbols for closed captioning (CC) and the International Symbol for Accessibility ((SA) are listed. Since subtitles or captioning are provided in open mode, the symbol for open caption (OC) should be used.

- The FAQ section on the website addresses accessibility in question #14 and deals with assistive listening devices available in the theaters, a sign language interpreter policy with 2 weeks notice for public programs and accommodation contact information.
- Public programs do not have assistive listening devices available

Publications

An Accessibility Guide is available on the website in PDF format which is not accessible for screen readers. Request for a large print version of the accessibility guide is available from the information desk. At the time of the visit, the staff and volunteers did not know where to locate the alternate format of the guide. ID cards are also available in large print and Braille from the information desk. Other publications are not advertised as available in alternate formats and how one would request such is not advertised.

Recommendation: Provide information brochures on the website in alternative formats to PDF. Formats such as HTML, or txt would be accessible by persons who use screen readers. Train staff at the information desk about the availability and location of publications in alternate formats.

The Museum Accessibility Guide is not reflective of the latest accessibility features or descriptions. Some of the accessibility icons are incorrectly used in describing accessibility features. Films and videos that are captioned or subtitled are opened captioned and the OC rather than CC icon should be used. Assistive listening devices provided in the two theaters is illustrated using the icon for Audio Description (AD) and should have the ALD icon. Additionally TTYs are no longer available in the lower level restrooms.



Recommendation: Update the Museum Accessibility Guide with current information.

Visitor Orientation

Visitor orientation can be provided through signage, maps, models, and publications designed to welcome and orient the visitor to the Museum. There is a Museum model available for visitors who take the Guided Highlights tour, but it is not generally available to visitors without prior reservation. In the Holocaust Permanent Exhibition each floor has an exhibit floor map. These maps are a missed opportunity for a tactile overview of the exhibit space for persons who are blind.



Recommendation: Provide a tactile map of the exhibit layouts on each floor to provide an orientation for persons who are blind.

Videos

Many of the videos throughout the Permanent Exhibit have no sound. In some instances there are screens of videos with sound and some without. It is difficult for persons with hearing loss or who are deaf to discern which videos have sound.

Recommendation: For those videos without sound, signage should be installed that indicate there is no sound.

A number of videos with sound are subtitled and not captioned. Subtitles are used to translate dialogue into a different language and are primarily intended for hearing audiences. Subtitles rarely convey nonverbal sounds like music or sound effects. Captions or subtitles for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

(SDH) are primarily intended for people with hearing loss. Captions and SDH provide not only the dialogue, but also identify the speaker and nonverbal sounds that individuals with hearing loss cannot hear. Subtitles and/or captioning on many videos are difficult to read due to type color (yellow) or white text over light colored background.

Assistive Listening

A portable assistive listening system with 16 receivers was recently purchased for use in the Museum. An assistive listening system in the two theaters consists of infrared, built in transmitters; neither of which works very well. Currently the portable transmitter from the portable system is being shared between the two theaters. There is reduced capacity since units are shared between theaters and the portable system.

Recommendation: Purchase and install new assistive listening systems in the two theaters and make the portable system available for use in tours and public programs. Staff and volunteers need to be made aware of the availability of the portable system and train in its use.

The audio components of the exhibits, videos and films do not have an assistive listening system available. There are many instances in the Museum where there is sound bleed among audio components.

Recommendation: Bring in a consultant to evaluate what audio system is best for all of the facilities and audio needs. A system could have multiple uses in addition to assistive listening— audio description and foreign language capability. Note. This recommendation will be noted in the summary recommendations and not repeated verbatim.

Tactile Opportunities

Maps of various types are used throughout the museum to illustrate a variety of themes. None of the maps are tactile or they are under Plexiglas and therefore do not effectively communicate those themes to persons who are blind. Many of these maps could be represented with a tactile equivalent.

Recommendation: Evaluate where tactile maps and/or models could be developed in addition to the existing maps to provide more effective communication for persons who are blind.

Tactile model of the building is available and part of the Guided Highlights tour. While orientation and navigation are somewhat limited by design—the intent is for the environment to be somewhat confusing to contribute to the experience—greater availability of a tactile model of the building for persons who are blind is needed to effectively communicate the space.

Audio Description

A Guided Highlights Tour is offered with two weeks notice required for visitors with visual impairments and consists of a docent tour of the Permanent Exhibition using visual descriptive language. The tour is time limited and staff dependent. An audio description tour is needed to provide more access to the exhibits and to provide more effective communication of the many elements within the Museum.

Recommendation: Development of an audio description tour that is available whenever a blind visitor wants to visit is recommended giving the visitor a choice of what they want to hear and when. The tour should offer levels of information for the visitor to drill down for more details. The current audio throughout the museum is good, moving, and meaningful but doesn't give the whole picture to a person who is blind. Audio description would be very important in Daniel's Story for children.

Video Labels

The existing labels on video frames (i.e. Internment Camps – 3rd floor) are not always easy to read if the lighting is low. The frames are black and the letters are off-white.

Exhibit Text

Much of the exhibit text is to be read from a distance but the size of the font is often too small. Text is often too high or too low to be read. Font sizes for exhibit labels and panel text should be chosen based on the intended reading distance of that text. Due to the low lighting conditions within much of the Museum, font sizes should be slightly larger and contrast between the text and background should be 90-99% to increase readability.

Summary of Findings

Holocaust Permanent Exhibit

Fourth Floor

ENCOUNTERING THE CAMPS

The video “Dachau Liberation” has no sound.

Recommendation: Install signage indicating that no sound is available for persons who are deaf.

BEFORE THE HOLOCAUST

This exhibit has five screens of video with no sound; a map etched into Plexiglas shows the area of continental Europe where Jews lived prior to the Holocaust.

Recommendation: Install signage indicating that no sound is available for persons who are deaf.



NAZI GERMANY 1933-1938

This exhibit has several video screens and two videos have sound delivered from sound tubes hanging from the ceiling. It is difficult to discern which videos have sound due to sound bleed from this exhibit and from the nearby theaters. The videos with sound are subtitled with text difficult to read when projected over black and white images. Sounds include noise of crowds, parades that are not indicated in the subtitling and may add to the “emotion” of the exhibit.

Recommendation: Install signage indicating that no sound is available for persons who are deaf. Provide descriptions of ambient sound tracks that are part of the exhibits. This also informs hearing visitors. Investigate a different delivery of sound other than the sound tubes. Assistive listening recommendation applies here.

Some exhibit panels are very low below 20 inches above the finished floor. In “The Science of Race” exhibit text is blocked by other exhibit panels if viewed from a seated position.

Recommendation: Exhibit text should be viewable by persons seated in wheelchairs, children and persons of short stature. Raise the exhibit panel to make text viewable from seated and standing positions.

FILMS: NAZI RISE TO POWER/ANTISEMITISM

Videos in two small theatres have fixed rows of bench seating with back support and no armrests; each bench can hold 6-7 people. There are no designated wheelchair spaces available with adjacent companion seating. The seating arrangement does not comply with ABAAS 221.2.1.



Recommendation: If seating capacity is 26-50 seats then two wheelchair spaces are required with companion seating adjacent to the designated wheelchair space. Provide wheelchair spaces by removing part of the fixed seating in the front and back rows.

Some ambient sound bleeds from these two films into the adjacent exhibit area.

Recommendation: Provide an alternative sound delivery system for films and the adjacent exhibit area to reduce sound bleed. Assistive listening recommendation applies here.

GYPSY WAGON/ROMA EXHIBIT

The reader rail exhibit panel is at 40 inches above the finish floor. Persons who are seated, children, or persons of short stature may have difficulty reading the panel at that viewing height. A vertical barrier shall be constructed to provide unobstructed viewing over the barrier by persons in wheelchairs with a maximum height of 36 inches.

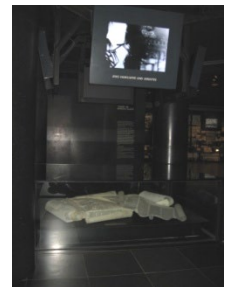


Recommendation: According to the NPS Guide for Interpretive Media “Reader rail panels shall have a maximum height of 30 inches from the floor to the front bottom edge of the panel. The angle of the panel should be 30 degrees. Reader rail panels shall meet the requirements for Protruding Objects under ABAAS 307.2.” An alternative position would be to place the panel on a standalone pedestal inside the railing at a height that can be viewed by all or to provide a cut out of the current railing with the panel positioned as indicated above.

Two new angled Plexiglas box exhibits have been added to the Gypsy exhibit. They both contain low exhibit panels with very small fonts.

NIGHT OF BROKEN GLASS

This exhibit consists of four large black pillars with Torah scrolls in the exhibit case. Four video screens are positioned above the exhibit case with videos with no sound. There is no color contrast between the pillars to aid persons with low vision to navigate the environment.



Recommendations: Install signage on the video screens indicating no sound. Install a strip of contrasting color to the bottom of the pillars to provide contrast between the floor and the pillars.

Two large before and after photos have labels that cannot be easily discerned when lighting is low.

Recommendation: Install new labels with greater contrast for reading in low light.

THE NAZI STATE

“Nazi Society” video is subtitled in yellow text that is difficult to read. Assistive listening is not provided and is essential to this story as contains speeches by Hitler.

Recommendation: Assistive Listening recommendation applies here.

REFUGEES

The video “The War Begins” plays on an angled large screen TV set into recessed window. As it is positioned visitors cannot read captions from a seated position (48” to bottom of window).

Recommendation: Raise the screen or lower the window so captions can be read from a seated position

BORDER SHIELD

A red and white border shield blockade used at the Poland/Germany border is positioned in the exhibit floor and is 41 ½ inches to bottom which is not cane detectable (ABAAS 307.2).

Recommendation: Add Plexiglas or other barrier beneath the border shield at a maximum height of 27 inches.



GERMAN EXPANSION MAPS

The German Expansion maps are placed under Plexiglas and are a missed opportunity for a tactile experience for visitors who are blind.

Recommendation: Provide alternate maps that can be tactilely explored in conjunction with an audio described tour.



MURDER OF THE HANDICAPPED

Some of the text on the exhibit panels is fading or has been rubbed off.

Recommendation: Replace the text labeling.

[Across Bridge of Lost Communities to north side]

AMERICAN RESPONSES (1933-1939)

This area consists of sixteen small individual cubicles with small video screens and 3 handheld units for audio. Each offers 5 different programs to watch and each program is selected by touching the desired selection on the screen. The instructions on the screen are to “Touch Screen to Begin”. There is no tactile or audio navigation for the screens and therefore they are not operable by persons who are blind.

Recommendation: Provide audio navigation and/or redundant tactile buttons on the screen frame. An alternative is to provide audio feedback and touching the screen twice or lingering on it to activate a selection (like the iPad, iPhone). Ensure that the handsets have volume controls and are t-coil compatible.



ON THE EVE OF DESTRUCTION

In this area of the Museum there are photos of Jewish pre-war life on walls, four benches in the room, and in center of room, a Plexiglas case holding the Haggadah. The displayed material lays flat and is unable to be read from a seated position. The display case is an obstruction in the circulation path for persons who are blind as it exceeds the maximum height of 27 inches above the finish floor (ABAAS 307.2).

Recommendation: Angle the displayed text so that it is positioned 32” to the bottom of the case, 40” to the top. Lower the display case so that it is cane detectable and so that the information inside the case can be read from a seated position.



A SHTETL

The Shtetl Exhibit is a floor to ceiling collection of photos spanning two floors and viewable from each floor.

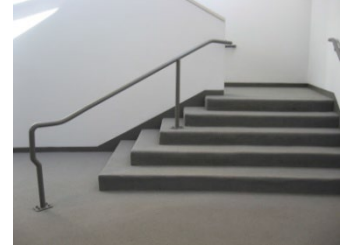
Recommendation: Include description in the audio description tour.

STAIRS FROM 4TH FLOOR TO 3RD FLOOR

Stairs between 4th and 3rd floors have handrails less than 34 inches to the top of the gripping surface.

The requirement is that the height of handrails to the top of the gripping surface be between 34 inches

minimum and 38 inches maximum (ABAAS 505.4). The bottom 5 stairs are angled with the handrail extending over the corner of the steps and not in the direction of the stair (ABAAS 505.10). This can be especially dangerous for visitors who are blind. The extension at the bottom extends 2 feet from the bottom step creating a protruding object and tripping hazard. In addition, if the stairs are approached along the wall between the wall and the end railing, a blind pedestrian could run into the railing and not be able to continue up the stairs.



Recommendation: Raise the handrails to a minimum of 34 inches to the top of the gripping surface. Reposition the handrail at the bottom to come straight off the stairs instead of the corner with an extension in accordance with ABAAS 505.10. Block off the approach to the stairs at the bottom between the between the wall and the handrail.

Three benches are located at the bottom of the stairs on the 3rd floor that are 19 ½ inches to the top of the seat cushion and have no back support or armrests. Benches shall be 17-19 inches to the top of the bench seat.

Recommendation: Lower the bench seat height to 19 inches maximum. One option is the cut off a portion of bench legs.

Third Floor

At beginning of the third floor, there is a small ramp that meets guidelines but the handrails are low at 31 ½ inches high; the gripping surface is square and 2 ¾ inches wide with obstructions in the gripping surface. A second ramp (wood) is just past the rear end of the train car. The slope meets standards but wood handrails are square, 30 inches above the floor and do not have a continuous gripping surface.

Recommendation: Raise or install handrails to a minimum of 34 inches and a maximum of 38 inches. Make the gripping surface with a circular or non-circular cross section complying with ABAAS 505.7 and should be continuous along their length (ABAAS 505.6).

DOCUMENTING LIFE AND DEATH IN THE GHETTO

This exhibit has very small font sizes on the exhibit panel. The text on the rear panel is not visible unless the visitor is right in front of the glass because it is blocked by an angled exhibit panel in front. A visitor in a seated position would not be able to read the bottom of the text.

Recommendation: Raise the rear exhibit panel so the bottom text clears the height of the front angled panel.



Rail cases along Ghetto route are not readable for people in wheelchairs and those of short stature due to height and degree of angle. The rail to which it is attached is 38 ¾ inches high. Panels are almost horizontal.

Recommendation: Place the rail cases at an angle so they can be viewed by persons of short stature or who are seated in a wheelchair.

MOBILE KILLING UNITS

Three videos are shown in this area – two are considered graphic and are blocked by concrete walls at 41 inches high. A small label signifying the videos as graphic is on front of wall and is easily blocked by visitors. The video screens cannot be viewed by people of short stature or those seated in wheelchairs. The original solution for accessibility was to install a very small screen that is raised from behind the wall and locked in place with a pin. The unit is very heavy, high and not an equal experience. The most recent alternative



suggestion by the Museum is to provide a screen on the front of the wall and have visitors use a swipe card to activate it. The unit would turn off when the film is over. NCA does not recommend this solution for a number of reasons. First, a visitor would have to know in advance to request the swipe card before going up to the exhibit area, and this would be the only exhibit requiring such access. Secondly, placing a screen on the front of the wall makes the graphic video viewable by any passerby and thereby we question why any visitor would need to be screened from its viewing via the privacy wall. And lastly, the location of the exhibit is in an area that can get congested with people stopping to look over the privacy wall and the screen on the front of the wall most likely will get blocked by the crowds.

Recommendation: The Museum should determine if these videos are still considered too graphic for viewing. At the time of installation, these were deemed too graphic, but may not be so by today's standards. If not, then remove the privacy wall. If they are continued to be viewed as too graphic then consider moving the videos to a privacy station nearby so that the screen can be placed in a lower viewable position for viewing from a seated position. An alternative option is to place the videos in a cubicle arrangement similar to the American Responses exhibit on the fourth floor, somewhere in the general exhibit area if possible.



WARSAW GHETTO UPRISING

The exhibit panels sit 46 inches back from railing with 18 point font making it difficult for a visitor with low vision to read. The map of the ghettos is not provided in tactile format.

Recommendations: Provide a smaller tactile map of the ghettos.



DEPORTATIONS

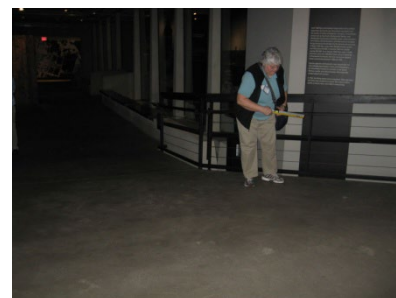
The railcar has a wall of photos alongside it.

Recommendation: Provide audio description of the photos in an audio description tour.

CONCRETE RAMP

Ramp (concrete) leading down from railcar area to the concentration camp area exceeds running slope requirements at 9.5 percent at the top. The ramp widens at the top (12' 4") so the handrail angles along the path of travel. The handrail is 33 inches above the floor.

Recommendation: Raise handrails to minimum 34 inches and maximum 38 inches. **Recommendation for the slope—did we have one?**



VOICES OF AUSCHWITZ

Within glass-walled rooms, stories told by Holocaust survivors are told. The audio speakers are in the floor and the concrete walls provide poor acoustical quality. Sound bleed occurs within the room. The poor sound quality, overlapping sounds and speaker accents all contribute to difficulty for persons with hearing loss. Scripts of the audio programs are provided

Recommendation: Provide some sound cushioning in the space to improve sound quality. Add assistive listening recommendation. Provide scripts in large print and Braille versions.

BIRKENAU BARRACKS

The barracks house two authentic bunks from the concentration camp and visitors are instructed not to touch them with signage that is visible only on the front of the bunks after visitors have entered the

barracks. Without the opportunity to tactially examine the bunks, visitors who are blind cannot benefit from this exhibit.

Recommendation: Provide a smaller scale model of the bunks that can be tactilely examined or replaced one bunk with a replica that can be touched. Add signage (Do Not Touch) on the side of bunks that should not be touched so visitors can see them when they enter the exhibit.

Due to its graphic nature, the Medical Experiments video is viewed over a privacy wall at 48 inches high and is not accessible to viewers in wheelchairs.

Recommendations: Provide access to this video in a privacy cubicle that can be accessed by wheelchair users.

The model of the crematorium covers the entire back area of the barracks exhibit. This is not effectively communicated to persons who are blind since the model is so large, does not have any tactile components and is not audio described.

Recommendation: Include a description of the model in the audio description tour. Create small models that can be displayed along a reading rail of each major component of the crematorium for tactile examination.

Post and beams in front of the Crematorium model are less than 80 inches above the floor and do not provide the required vertical clearance (ABAAS 307.4). A total of four beams are at less than 80 inches above floor.

Recommendation: Direct visitor traffic away from the four beams by inserting a barrier around the post out to the point where 80 inches clearance is achieved or by placing a barrier in the circulation path thus rerouting visitor traffic away from the protruding beams.



STAIRS FROM 3RD FLOOR TO 2ND FLOOR

The handrails along the stairs are at 32 inches high that does not meet the requirement of 34 inches minimum and 38 inches maximum (ABAAS 505.4).

Recommendation: Raise the handrails to 34 inches minimum and 38 inches maximum.

Second Floor

WORLD AT WAR: GERMAN COLLAPSE

Three 3-D maps show the German collapse and all are covered in Plexiglas. These maps could be made tactile to better communicate the information to persons who are blind.

Recommendation: Provide tactile maps of the German retreat and complement with the audio description tour.

RESCUERS WALL

There was a small touch screen in this exhibit that didn't work. The leading edge created a protruding object 11 inches from the wall at 28 inches above the floor (ABAAS 307.2).

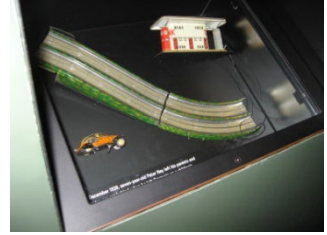
Recommendation: Repair the screen to working order and either lower it to a maximum 27 inches from the floor or provide a cane detectable barrier underneath.



CHILDREN OF THE HOLOCAUST

This exhibit contains display boxes with children's items in them under glass. The text or labeling in the exhibit boxes is located on the front bottom making it difficult to read if a visitor is short or in a seated position. The display also has small video screens with subtitles and no sound.

Recommendations: Move the exhibit labels to a higher position on the display boxes so they can be read from a seated position. Also place signage on the video screens indicating there is no sound.



THE KILLERS

This exhibit has four video screens with three handsets.

Recommendation: Ensure that the handsets have volume control and are t-coil compatible.



The ramp just past the children's area has 7.4-9.5% running slope that exceeds the maximum of 8.33% with metal handrails at 33 inches above the floor, square with obstacles.

Recommendation: Raise handrails to 34 inches minimum, 38 inches maximum above the floor to the top of the gripping surface (ABAAS 505.4) and provide a continuous gripping surface. **When renovations are conducted, reduce the slope of the ramp to 8.33% or less. I seem to remember Michael saying that this area of the museum was going to going through a rennonvation.**

FILM: TESTIMONY

The film is shown in a small amphitheater with 5 benches with back support and no armrests. There are no wheelchair spaces except at the top and no companion seating provided. The side aisles are steps with metal handrails with square gripping surfaces and obstacles.

Recommendation: Provide companion seating on the back row of the amphitheater (moveable chairs) and designate this area as reserved for wheelchair seating. Replace handrails with gripping surfaces per ABAAS 505.7 and continuous along their length-ABAAS 505.6.



AMERICAN RESPONSES (1940-1945)

This area consists of eight small individual cubicles with small video screens that play 5 different audio programs. The instructions on the screen are to "Touch Screen to Begin", and then programs are selected by touching the desired selection on the screen. There is no tactile or audio navigation for the screens and therefore are not operable by persons who are blind.

Recommendation: Provide audio navigation and/or redundant tactile buttons on screen frame. An alternative navigation is with audio feedback and touching the screen twice or lingering on it to activate a selection (like the iPad, iPhone). Assistive listening recommendation applies here.



Ramp to the left of the small amphitheater that leads to the second floor exit has handrails at 33 inches above the floor with a squared gripping surface with obstacles. Slope was OK.

Recommendation: Replace handrails with gripping surface, minimum height requirement of 34 inches to the top of the gripping surface and continuous gripping surfaces along its length that meets ABAAS 505.

HALL OF REMEMBRANCE

One set of stairs next to the lift in the circular room has continuous handrails but the extension at the top is less than the required 12 inches and the extension must run in the direction of the stairs.

Recommendation: Add an extension to the top that meets the 12-inch requirement (ABAAS 505.10).

WEXNER LEARNING CENTER

The Wexner Learning Center contains ten computers provided at desks that are all mouse driven and do not allow for keyboard navigation that may be needed by persons who are blind or have limited manual dexterity to control a mouse. There is no screen reader software available for the persons who blind.

Recommendation: Provide alternative input methods into the computers available including keyboard navigation capability and screen reader software.

In the “Genocide” exhibit regarding Darfur, Sudan videos play in opposite corners, each with sound cones. However, there is competing audio coming from this exhibit and including that coming from a video in the adjacent room.

Recommendation: Assistive listening is important to be provided in this area. Evaluate the sound delivery systems in the Genocide exhibit, lower the volume or provide sound via headphones. Adjust the sound coming from the adjacent room or utilize a system that does not have such high levels of sound bleed.

REGISTRY OF JEWISH HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

This area has eight computers that are all mouse driven and do not allow for keyboard navigation that may be needed by persons who are blind or have limited manual dexterity to control a mouse. There is no screen reader software available for the persons who blind.

Recommendation: Provide alternative input methods into the computers available including keyboard navigation capability and screen reader software.

Video is showing on a large screen with four speakers suspended from the ceiling. Sound is uneven and distorted in some speakers.

Recommendation: Investigate a different sound delivery system that has more even and undistorted sound. Assistive listening recommendation applies here.

STEPS FROM THE 2ND FLOOR TO 1ST FLOOR

The handrails along the stairs are at 32 inches high that does not meet the requirement of 34 inches minimum and 38 inches maximum (ABAAS 505.4).

Recommendation: Raise the handrails to 34 inches minimum and 38 inches maximum.

First Floor

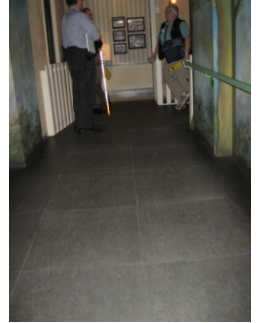
DANIEL’S STORY

An audio description tour is needed for this exhibit area. There are some tactile and interactive exhibits but they don’t make sense for someone who is blind unless there is some kind of audio description to tell the story. Audio description is also needed to explain the deteriorating conditions of the environment as you progress through the exhibit.

The opening video requires assistive listening. It should also be available throughout the tour of the exhibit for persons with hearing loss to experience the ambient sound that sets the mood throughout the exhibit.

The ramp up to Daniel’s house has a handrail on only one side at 33 inches above the floor (too low) and a second rail is required (ABAAS 505). Another route intersects this ramp but there is no level area provided for clear turning space. The slope exceeds 5 percent at the intersection.

Recommendation: Raise the one handrail to a minimum of 34 inches to the top of the gripping surface and install a second handrail on the other side of the ramp at the same height. Provide a level surface at the intersection of the two routes.



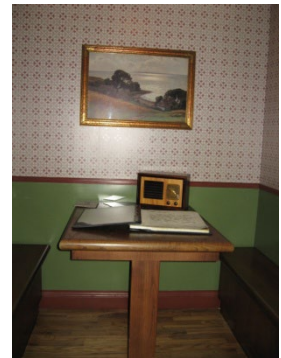
The map of Europe in Daniel’s bedroom could be made tactile by outlining the border of Germany.

There are four different windows that can be opened for varying views; each required 7 pounds of force or more to open.

Recommendation: Adjust the opening force required to 5 lbs. or less (ABAAS 309.4)

The small table in the “dining table” area that holds Daniel’s diary does not have knee and toe clearance for a forward approach for a wheelchair.

Recommendation: Reposition the table to allow for a forward approach.



Entrance and exit to exhibit is through thick curtains that may be difficult to maneuver for someone who uses a mobility device or who is blind.

Recommendation: Provide a pull back on one side of the drapes to provide easier passage through.

Upon exiting there are stations with handsets that continue the story. These were in varying states of repair – some audio was faint, another didn’t work. An alternative for visitors who are deaf shall be provided.

Recommendation: Assistive listening recommendations are applied here. Handsets should have volume control and be t-coil compatible. For visitors who are deaf either captioned text or a printed transcript must be provided.

STEPS FROM 1ST FLOOR TO LOWER FLOOR

The handrails along the stairs are at 32 inches high that does not meet the requirement of 34 inches minimum and 38 inches maximum (ABAAS 505.4).

Recommendation: Raise the handrails to 34 inches minimum and 38 “ maximum.

Lower Level

ANTI-SEMITISM EXHIBIT

“A Dangerous Lie: the protocols of the Elders of Zion”

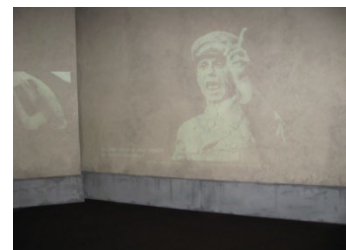
In the Gonda Education Center - Anti-Semitism video is shown in small walled-off space; 13 minutes long.

Recommendation: Assistive listening recommendation applies here.

“State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda”

In the Kimmel-Rowan Gallery the exhibit panels have very small font and competing audio.

Recommendation: Assistive listening recommendation applies here.



“Nazi Propaganda and the Final Solution” film in small theater area is shown on a 3-sided screen – two side screens show different images than center screen. Three speakers are suspended from ceiling. Two wood benches are provided with one end of each having a small grab bar attached as an armrest.

Recommendation: Assistive listening recommendation applies here.

In the “Purging Germany of Propaganda” exhibit, a Plexiglas exhibit box holding a headset from the Nuremberg Trials has a leading edge of 44 inches above the floor protruding 7 inches from the wall and is not cane detectable.

Recommendation: Install an extension to the box that provides a cane detectable barrier at 27 Inches maximum above the floor (ABAAS 307).



RUBENSTEIN AUDITORIUM

The Rubenstein Auditorium has thirteen rows of 14 seats (minus two from back row) or 180 seats. The required number of wheelchair seating spaces for an auditorium of this size is 5 with adjacent companion seating (ABAAS 221.2.1). Only two wheelchair spaces exist on the back row. The only way to access the front of the auditorium or the stage is to use the very steep side aisles with a running slope that exceeds 8.33 percent up to 17.1 percent. There is an elevator to reach the stage level. There are 4 steps on the left side of the stage with a handrail on only one side at 39 inches above the floor. The ramp to access the rear of the theater has handrails at 32 inches above the floor.

Recommendation: Ideally seating should have horizontal and vertical dispersion but is not required for assembly areas under 300 seats. To accommodate the required 5 spaces, add three additional wheelchair spaces on the back row for wheelchair seating and companion seating.

Lower the handrail on the left side of the stage to a height not to exceed 38 inches maximum or 34 inches minimum (ABAAS 505.4).

Raise the handrail along the ramp to access the rear of the theater from 32 inches to a minimum of 34 inches and a maximum of 38 inches (ABAAS 505.4).

MEYERHOFF THEATER

The Meyerhoff Theater seats 450. For a theater of this size, six wheelchair seating spaces with adjacent companion seating are required (ABAAS 221.2.1). Wheelchair seating is available on the front and back rows of the theater.

The lift to access the lobby and rear of the theater did not operate correctly. The upper door of the lift was very heavy. The door on the bottom does not fully open and closes too quickly; the ramp did not lower. Public can use the large elevator to get to the lower lobby in order to access the theater via the side ramps.

Recommendation: The lift to get the public from the top to the entrance of the theater needs to be repaired and tested frequently by staff to ensure it is operational. Uses other than the transport of visitors should not be allowed as that can contribute to mechanical failures.

No accessible route onto the stage was noted from inside the theater during the visit.

Recommendation: Investigate a portable vertical lift to get users up to stage level.

There are ramps on either side of the theater; each has thick carpeting that can significantly increase the amount of force needed to propel a wheelchair over the surface.

Recommendation: When carpet is replaced, choose one with a pile height no greater than 1/2 inch (ABAAS 302.2).

CAFETERIA

Some self-service shelves and dispensing devices are out of reach range that is 48 inches maximum. The child booster seats block the clear floor space at the public pay telephone.

Recommendation: Move the booster seats out of the clear floor space of the public pay phone. The café will be undergoing some renovation and as that occurs, reach ranges for self-service and dispensing devices should be adjusted.



RESTROOMS

The restrooms throughout the Museum had very similar barriers relative to signage lacking Braille, raised letters, and the International Symbol for Accessibility (ISA) and placement not on the latch side of the door; grab bar heights, various dispenser heights, mirror heights, changing table heights, and door opening forces.

General **Recommendations:** Purchase signs for all accessible restrooms that have Braille, raised letters, pictograms and the ISA and placed on the latch side of the entry doors (ABAAS 703). Mirrors at accessible sinks need to be lowered or a full length mirror installed where possible; grab bars need to be repositioned (in most cases lowered); changing tables lowered; coat hooks lowered; toilet paper dispensers and/or seat cover dispensers repositioned; compliant signage with Braille, raised letters and pictograms placed on the latch side of the bathroom doors; baby changing tables lowered ABAAS Chapter 6 provides the standards for toilet compartments.

The following are a summary of the barriers for each restroom by floor location.

Lower level restrooms

Women's – Noncompliant signage is located on the wall to the entrance; all lavatories are accessible but one is designated with a sign; all mirrors exceed the maximum height to the edge of the reflective surface of 40 inches and are at 41" to reflective surface. A large trash receptacle is located in the doorway; grab bars in accessible stall too high; rear bar too close to side wall; seat cover dispenser obstructs use of side bar; toilet paper dispenser is too close to toilet (should be 7-15" in front of rim); hook on stall door is too high; baby changing table is too high.

Recommendation:

Second floor restrooms

Men's and Women's – Noncompliant signage located on the door; 12 pounds of force to operate; door swings into clear floor space of the accessible lavatory; grab bars in accessible stall too high; seat cover dispenser obstructs use of side bar; toilet paper dispenser is too close to toilet (should be 7-15" in front of rim); hook on stall door is too high; baby changing table is too high.

Third floor restrooms

Men's and Women's - Noncompliant signage is located on the door; both doors exceed 5 pounds of force to operate; grab bars in accessible stall too high; seat cover dispenser obstructs use of side bar; toilet paper dispenser is too close to toilet (should be 7-15" in front of rim); hook on stall door is too high; baby changing table is too high; mirrors exceed 40 inches to bottom of reflective surface

Fourth floor restrooms

Men's and Women's – Noncompliant signage located on the door; grab bars in accessible stall are too high; seat cover dispenser obstructs use of side bar; toilet paper dispenser is too close to toilet (should be 7-15" in front of rim); hook on stall door is too high; baby changing table is too high; mirrors exceed 40 inches to bottom of reflective surface

Men's – the stall door opens into the clear space of the stall; it should open out

Restrooms at Meyerhoff Theater

Men's and Women's – At the entrance to each, an old telephone stand protrudes from the wall into the path of travel – 4 ½ inches at 31 ¾ inches above the floor. For toilet rooms that have six or more toilet stalls and/or urinals, both an accessible stall and ambulatory stall are required. There is no ambulatory toilet stall in either restroom. Grab bars in accessible stalls are too high; seat cover dispenser obstructs use of side bar; toilet paper dispenser is too close to toilet (should be 7-15" in front of rim); hook on stall door is too high; baby changing table in women's room is too high; mirrors exceed 40 inches to bottom of reflective surface.

Additional recommendation: Remove the old telephone stand or install an extension to the leading edge so that it is cane detectable (maximum height 27 inches from the floor).

Basement single user restrooms

Men's and Women's – Noncompliant signage is located on the doors; doors require 10 pounds of force to operate. All grab bars are too high. Lavatories exceed 34 inches to top of counter. Men's paper towel dispenser is out of reach range and is a protruding object at 4 3/8 inches from the wall at 38 inches above the floor.

Cafeteria restrooms

Men's and Women's – Noncompliant signage is on located on the doors. The accessible stalls do not meet the required dimensions

Men's – The door requires 12 pounds of force to operate; the urinal does not meet depth requirements at 11 inches; the toilet seat cover dispenser obstructs use of the side grab bar

Women's – The stall door overlaps the clear floor space at the lavatory counter; sanitary product dispenser is out of reach range

Drinking fountains

There are 6 drinking fountains, all located near restrooms. All are single units installed for use by visitors in wheelchairs. Five of the units have a spout height that exceeds the 36 inch maximum (ABAAS 602.4). There are no higher units for standing persons.

Recommendation: When replacing the water fountains, replace with hi-low units.