

GARDEN STATE FILM FESTIVAL ADA/DEI POLICY



MISSION STATEMENT

The Garden State Film Festival is dedicated to developing, monitoring, and maintaining a safe, accessible, and respectful environment for the Garden State Film Festival guests, volunteers, filmmakers, crew, staff, and board of directors. We work to coordinate services and programming that will provide equal access to the widest possible audience, acknowledging race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, creed, and disability as aspects of diversity.

The Garden State Film Festival (GSFF) is committed to accessibility and offers free admittance to individuals who use wheelchairs, mobility aids, and/or other power-driven mobility devices and their aide/partner, making it the only event some individuals attend each year due to accessibility and/or financial barriers. GSFF does not receive any funding to offset the cost of those ticket prices. In addition, we are leading the way by encouraging our filmmakers to subtitle their films even if they are in English to accommodate our hearing-impaired patrons adding an under-served senior population to our attendee base. The COVID crisis helped further our accessibility goals as we presented virtually to people who could attend from their own homes. We hope to set a standard that others in our industry will replicate. Providing American Sign Language (ASL) is available with prior notice but providing CART or Real -Time Captioning for deaf- hearing communication, requires additional funding.

GARDEN STATE FILM FESTIVAL ADA POLICY (AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT)



The Garden State Film Festival does not discriminate on the basis of disability or diversity in admission or access to, treatment of, or employment in its services, programs, or activities. Upon request, accommodation will be provided to allow individuals with disabilities to participate in Garden State Film Festival services, programs, and activities with at least two weeks prior notice.

The Garden State Film Festival has a designated coordinator to facilitate compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as required by Section 35.107 of the U.S. Department of Justice regulations, and to coordinate compliance with Sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

While the above laws mandate equal access to people with disabilities, The Garden State Film Festival makes it a priority to establish a workplace and environment that embraces the spirit of the law ensuring an optimal experience for all.

Upon request, information will be made available in alternative formats such as Braille, large print with at least two weeks prior notice.

Please contact us at 877-908-7050 or info@gsff.org at least two weeks prior to a screening and we will hold it at the venue for you.



ADA ACCOMMODATIONS

The following information applies to in-person, and virtual Garden State Film Festival events and screenings:

ASL – American Sign Language – We provide ASL when requested 2 weeks in advance. Please contact us at 877-908-7050 or info@gsff.org to let us know which venue(s) you plan to attend, and every attempt will be made to accommodate you.

Assistive Listening Devices – Assistive Listening Devices are available with at least two weeks prior notice, in some venues for our annual festival. Please contact us at 877-908-7050 or info@gsff.org to let us know which venue(s) you plan to attend, and every attempt will be made to accommodate you.

Braille – Braille programs are available for our annual festival. As part of our green initiative, Braille programs will be created on demand with two weeks prior notice. Please contact us at 877-908-7050 or info@gsff.org at least two weeks prior to a screening and we will hold it at the venue for you.

Large Print – Large Print programs are available for our annual festival. As part of our green initiative, Large Print programs will be created on demand with two weeks prior notice. Please contact us at 877-908-7050 or info@gsff.org at least two weeks prior to a screening and we will hold it at the venue for you. Don't hesitate to contact us at 877-908- 7050 or info@gsff.org

Subtitles – Since many of our films come from non-English speaking countries around the world, many of our films are subtitled. All subtitled films are designated as such in our printed program and online film information. **Please note that GSFF creates entire film blocks for our hearing-impaired friends that include subtitles in all the films in the block and are designated as such in our program, website.

ADA ACCOMMODATIONS



Venues – The Garden State Film Festival presents in ONLY ADA compliant venues.

Website – Garden State Film Festival is committed to providing a website that is accessible to the widest possible audience, regardless of technology or ability. We are actively working to increase the accessibility and usability of our website and in doing so adhere to many of the available standards and guidelines. This website endeavors to conform to level Double-A of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1. These guidelines explain how to make web content more accessible for people with disabilities. Conformance with these guidelines will help make the web more user friendly for all people. This site has been built using code compliant with W3C standards for HTML and CSS. The site displays correctly in current browsers and using standards compliant HTML/CSS code means any future browsers will also display it correctly. Whilst www.gsff.org strives to adhere to the accepted guidelines and standards for accessibility and usability, it is not always possible to do so in all areas of the website. We are continually seeking out solutions that will bring all areas of the site up to the same level of overall web accessibility. In the meantime, should you experience any difficulty in accessing www.gsff.org website, please don't hesitate to contact us at 877-908- 7050 or info@gsff.org

Wheelchairs, Power-Driven Mobility Devices, and Walkers – Wheelchair and other Power-Driven Mobility Devices seating is available on a first come first serve basis in each venue. All Wheelchair and other Power-Driven Mobility Device users are admitted FREE along with one helper. Ushers will assist those with walkers to their seat. Walkers must be stored in the lobby until requested at the conclusion of the performance.

GARDEN STATE FILM FESTIVAL DEI POLICY (DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION)



It is the commitment of the Garden State Film Festival to provide, support and advance a culture of inclusion. Our organization celebrates and promotes the diversity of our world through international, independent filmmaking.

No person, in whatever relationship with the organization, shall be subjected to discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, creed, color, nationality, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, marital status, civil union status, domestic partner status, affectional or sexual orientation, atypical hereditary cellular or blood trait, genetic information, liability for service in the Armed Forces of the United States, disability, or other protected categories or activity (i.e., opposition to prohibited discrimination or participation in the complaint process). Sexual harassment is a form of unlawful gender discrimination and, likewise, will not be tolerated.

We hold it as our priority and responsibility to foster an inclusive and respectful environment, and product, that remains discrimination and harassment-free, throughout all components of our festival, and the planning thereof, for our filmmakers, patrons, supporters, employees, and the communities we represent.

We value and embrace the differences of all our stakeholders, including but not limited to our employees, volunteers, patrons, vendors, consultants, and partners, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, cultural background, native language, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, physical and mental ability, education, experience, family or marital status, socio-economic status and BIPOC in all aspects of the organization.

GARDEN STATE FILM FESTIVAL DEI POLICY (DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION)



Our staff and board of directors will continue to develop and evaluate comprehensive plans to maintain accountability around diversity and inclusion.

This includes:

- Our establishment of a designated committee and chairperson to facilitate an open-door protocol to receive and assist with any questions or concerns surrounding our policy practices.
- Access and encouragement to participate in ongoing training in areas of opportunity equality, trust building, discrimination awareness and harassment awareness.

It is our continued effort to create a platform for the diverse voices and perspectives of our artists, and constituents, that will break systemic barriers, and strengthen our ability to make a productive impact locally, nationally, and internationally.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH OUR PATRONS WITH DISABILITIES



Patrons who have disabilities will feel most comfortable at our place of business if you consider these suggestions for effective communication.

- Do not be afraid to make a mistake when meeting and communicating with someone with a disability. Try following the suggestions below. Imagine how *you* would react if you were in similar situations. Keep in mind that a person who has a disability is a person, and, like you, is entitled to the dignity, consideration, respect, and rights you expect for yourself.
- Treat adults as adults. Address people with disabilities by their first names only when extending the same familiarity to all others present. (Never patronize people by patting them on the head or shoulder.)

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH OUR PATRONS WITH DISABILITIES

- Relax. If you don't know what to do, allow the person who has a disability to put you at ease.
- If you offer assistance and the person declines, do not insist. If it is accepted, ask how you can best help, and follow directions. Do not take over.
- If someone with a disability is accompanied by another individual, address the person with a disability directly rather than speaking through the other person.

PEOPLE FIRST TERMINOLOGY



- Place the person before the disability.
Say “person with a disability” – rather than “disabled person.”
- Avoid referring to people by the disability they have, i.e., “an epileptic,” “blind people.” A person is not a condition. Rather, refer to “a person with epilepsy,” or “people who are blind.”
- People are not “bound” or “confined” to wheelchairs. They use them to increase their mobility and enhance their freedom. It is more accurate to say “wheelchair User” or “person who uses a wheelchair.”

PHYSICAL DISABILITIES



- Do not make assumptions about what a person can and cannot do. A person with a physical disability is the best judge of his or her own capabilities.
- Do not push a person's wheelchair or grab the arm of someone walking with difficulty, without first asking if you can be of assistance. Personal space includes a person's wheelchair, crutches, or other mobility aid.
- Never move someone's crutches, walker, cane, or other mobility aid without permission.

When speaking to a person using a wheelchair for more than a few minutes, try to find a seat for yourself so the two of you are at eye level.

VISUAL DISABILITIES



Identify yourself when you approach a person who is blind. If a new person approaches, introduce him or her.

- It is appropriate to touch the person's arm lightly when you speak so that he or she knows you are speaking to him or her.
- Face the person and speak directly to him or her. Use a normal tone of voice.
- Don't leave without saying you are leaving.
- If you are offering directions, be as specific as possible, and point out obstacles in the path of travel. Use clock cues ("The door is at 2 o'clock").
- Alert people who are blind or visually impaired to posted information. Never pet or otherwise distract a guide dog unless the owner has given you permission.
- You may offer assistance if it seems needed, but if your offer is declined, do not insist. If your offer is accepted, ask the person how you can best help.

HEARING DISABILITIES

- Ask the person how he or she prefers to communicate.
- If you are speaking through an interpreter, remember that the interpreter may lag a few words behind especially if there are names or technical terms to be finger spelled so pause occasionally to allow him or her time to translate completely and accurately.
- Talk directly to the person who is deaf or hard of hearing, not to the interpreter. However, although it may seem awkward to you, the person who is deaf or hard of hearing will look at the interpreter and may not make eye contact with you during the conversation.
- Before you start to speak, make sure you have the attention of the person you are addressing. A wave, a light touch on the shoulder, or other visual or tactile signals are appropriate ways of getting the person's attention.

HEARING DISABILITIES

- While you are writing a message for someone who is deaf or hard of hearing, don't talk, since the person cannot read your note and your lips at the same time.
- If you do not understand something that is said, ask the person to repeat it or to write it down. The goal is communication; do not pretend to understand if you do not.
- If you know any sign language, try using it.
- It may help you communicate, and it will at least demonstrate your interest in communicating and your willingness to try.

HEARING DISABILITIES

- Speak in a clear, expressive manner. Do not over-enunciate or exaggerate words.
- Unless you are specifically requested to do so, do not raise your voice. Speak in a normal tone; do not shout.
- To facilitate speech reading, face into the light, and keep your hands and other objects away from your mouth.
- If the person is speech reading, face the person directly and maintain eye contact.
Don't turn your back or walk around while talking. If you look away, the person might assume the conversation is over.

SPEECH DISABILITIES

- Talk to people with speech disabilities as you would talk to anyone else.
- Be friendly; start up a conversation.
- Be patient; it may take the person a while to answer.
- Give the person your undivided attention.
- Ask the person for help in communicating with him or her. If the person uses a communication device such as a manual or electronic communication board, ask the person how best to use it.

SPEECH DISABILITIES

- Speak in your regular tone of voice.
- Tell the person if you do not understand what he or she is trying to say. Ask the person to repeat the message, spell it, tell you in a different way, or write it down.
- To obtain information quickly, ask short questions that require brief answers or a head nod. However, try not to insult the person's intelligence with over-simplification.

COGNITIVE DISABILITIES

- Treat adults with cognitive disabilities as adults.
- When speaking to someone who has a cognitive disability, try to be alert to his or her responses so that you can adjust your method of communication if necessary. For example, some people may benefit from simple, direct sentences or from supplementary visual forms of communication, such as gestures, diagrams, or demonstrations.
- Use language that is concrete rather than abstract. Be specific, without being too simplistic. Using humor is fine, but do not interpret a lack of response as rudeness. Some people may not grasp the meaning of sarcasm or other subtleties of language.

COGNITIVE DISABILITIES



- People with brain injuries may have short-term memory deficits and may repeat themselves or require information to be repeated.
- People with auditory perceptual problems may need to have directions repeated, and may take notes to help them remember directions or the sequence of tasks. They may benefit from watching a task demonstrated.
- People with perceptual or “sensory overload” problems may become disoriented or confused if there is too much to absorb at once. Provide information gradually and clearly. Reduce background noise if possible.
- Repeat information using different wording or a different communication approach if necessary. Allow time for the information to be fully understood.

COGNITIVE DISABILITIES



- Don't pretend to understand if you do not. Ask the person to repeat what was said.
- In conversation, people with mental retardation may respond slowly, so give them time. Be patient, flexible, and supportive.
- Some people who have a cognitive disability may be easily distracted. Try not to interpret distraction as rudeness.
- Do not expect all people to be able to read well. Some people may not read at all.
Please note: This material is based in part on Achieving Physical and Communication Accessibility, a publication of the National Center for Access Unlimited, and Community Access Facts, an Adaptive Environments Center publication.



SERVICE ANIMAL POLICY

The **Garden State Film Festival** is committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and seeks to provide the best possible experience for our guests. We welcome guests with disabilities who wish to bring their **Service Animals** with them but do ask them to check in with staff or a volunteer to alert them to their presence.

SERVICE ANIMAL POLICY



I. The Basics

Definition of a “Service Animal”

As of September 15, 2010, under the Title II and III regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a service animal is defined as:

1. **a dog** (*note one exception below*)
2. individually trained to do work or perform tasks

for the benefit an individual with a disability (including a physical, sensory psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability).

NOTE - EXCEPTION: *Miniature horses qualify as a service animal if: (1) individually trained as a service animal, (2) its type, size, and weight can be accommodated in the facility; (3) the handler has it under sufficient control; (4) it does not urinate or defecate in the facility; (5) it does not cause a fundamental alteration or direct threat.*

SERVICE ANIMAL POLICY

There is no official certification or licensing of service animals. Training can be done by anyone and any organization, including the owner/handler. The dog is not required to wear anything indicating that it is a service dog, and the patron does not have to possess identification, certification, license or paperwork for the dog. Venues **may not require documentation or certification** for the dog, **nor ask** about the **patron's disability**.

To determine whether a dog is a service dog, staff should focus on:

1. whether the dog is a pet; and
2. what task or work it is trained to perform.

Work and tasks may include picking up and returning dropped items, carrying things, walking close to a person to keep them from falling, preventing or disrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors, alerting their owners to impending seizures, alerting to sound, etc.

NOTE: *Not all trained behaviors qualify a dog as a service animal. The following are not "tasks" or "work":*

1. *A dog whose mere presence is a crime deterrent*
2. *A dog who only provides emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship*

SERVICE ANIMAL POLICY



The following are NOT considered to be service animals:

1. Animals that are not a dog.
2. Therapy animals; comfort pets; companion animals; and "social/therapy" animals.
3. Dogs training to be service animals are technically not service animals.

There is no obligation or requirement to allow these animals in the building or venue, but anor

Where are Service Animals Allowed to Go?

Service animals must be allowed in all areas of the facility where people are allowed unless the dog poses a direct threat, a fundamental alteration, is not housebroken or is not under the control of the person with the disability.

What Constitutes a “Direct Threat” or “Fundamental Alteration”

A service dog creates a **fundamental alteration** if it interferes with the performance/event beyond what is tolerated of the general audience. For example, during a performance the service animal is barking, whining, running around, etc. A service animal can be considered a **direct threat to the health or safety of others** if it is snapping, growling, biting, urinating, defecating, blocking egress, etc organization may decide to allow them.

SERVICE ANIMAL POLICY

I. Sample Policies and Procedures

Sample Service Animal Policy

Service dogs* are allowed wherever people are allowed, unless the dog poses a direct threat, a fundamental alteration, is not housebroken or is not under the control of the person with the disability.

** Under limited circumstance a miniature horse is also a service animal.*

Sample Procedures for Handling Service Animals

In addition to writing a service animal policy, outline simple steps for staff to take when encountering a patron with an animal.

SERVICE ANIMAL POLICY



Example 1: A set of clear and simple procedures may be all you need:

Step 1: Politely stop the patron and notify him/her that pets are not allowed in the building.

Step 2: If the patron says the dog is his/her service animal, allow the patron to enter with the animal.

Step 3: If you have questions or concerns about an animal, please contact *(fill in the name of designated staff person or department)*.

Example 2: Consider writing more detailed instructions for staff who work with patrons and visitors on a regular basis. Include a script so they know what they can and cannot ask.

1. Start the conversation by politely stopping the person as s/he enters with the animal:

Staff *(in a neutral voice as a statement)*: ***"I'm sorry; the (fill in name of venue) does not permit pets or animals in the building (or facility)."***

SERVICE ANIMAL POLICY

1. WAIT for the patron's response: Individual: ***"This is my service dog."***
or ***"I have a disability, and this is my service animal."***

NOTE: People may describe the dog by the category of tasks it performs, such as a guide dog, hearing dog, psychiatric dog, etc.

If appropriate or necessary staff may inquire further to adequately identify the role of the dog by asking the following two questions:

Staff: ***"Is the dog is required because of a disability?"***

and/or

Staff: ***"What task(s) or work, is your dog trained to perform?"***

If the patron states the task(s) or work the dog is trained to perform, and those tasks meet the disability-related needs of the person with a disability,
the patron and dog are allowed into the facility **provided** it does not pose a direct threat or fundamental alteration (e.g., is not under the control of its handler, or urinates or defecates in the building).

SERVICE ANIMAL POLICY



1. If staff feels a service dog poses a direct threat, fundamental alteration, is not under control or not housebroken they should:
 1. Notify (fill in the name or department) who is designated to respond to this issue.
 1. Designated staff will then ask **the handler** (patron or visitor) **to correct the situation and bring the dog under his or her control.**
 - a. A service dog must have a harness, leash, or other tether and be under the control of the handler at all times.
 - i. Exception: If the handler is unable to use such devices because of his or her disability or those items would interfere with the service dog's safe, effective performance of work or tasks, the service dog must be under the handler's control by the use of voice control, signals, or other effective means.

If the handler does not take effective action to correct the situation, designated staff will ask the handler to **remove the service dog** from the premises with the understanding that the handler is welcome to return without the dog. The **handler must be allowed to return without the dog** if he/she desires.

Staff and volunteers will report any aggression, injuries, or damages caused by a service dog to (fill in the name or department) and designated staff will report them to the local animal control agency, regardless of the circumstances. Animal Control determines whether the dog was "at fault."

SERVICE ANIMAL POLICY



I. OTHER LAWS AND REGULATIONS

Other federal and local laws may have different criteria and definitions of “service animal.” For example, the Fair Housing Act and the U.S. Department of Transportation regulations do permit animals other than dogs to be recognized as service animals, and permit comfort pets, companion animals, and “social/therapy” animals, in housing and on airplanes and trains. Some patrons and visitors may expect the same accommodations when coming to your facility. Such an expectation may be incorrect and the venue does not have to provide access for these animals. You should always be sure you know and understand what laws and regulations apply to your venue/situation.

Additionally, should County, City or State regulations restrict or ban dogs based on breed, that restriction or ban does not apply to a service dog.

Contact Us

Email: info@gsff.org

Phone: 877-908-7050

Mailing address: GSFF, 711 Boston Blvd., Sea Girt, NJ 08750



12 WAYS TO PREPARE



**Sign up
for Alerts
and Warnings**



Make a Plan



**Save for a
Rainy Day**



**Practice
Emergency
Drills**



**Test Family
Communication
Plan**



**Safeguard
Documents**



**Plan with
Neighbors**



**Make Your
Home
Safer**



**Know
Evacuation
Routes**



**Assemble or
Update
Supplies**



**Get Involved in
Your Community**



**Document and
Insure Property**



RESOURCES

ASBURY PARK

<https://www.cityofasburypark.com/198/Emergency-Preparedness>

NJ OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

<https://www.nj.gov/njoem/plan-prepare/your-kit-plan.shtml>



RESOURCES

ASBURY PARK & MONMOUTH COUNTY

Important Numbers - Report All Emergencies to 911

- Emergency: 911
- City Hall: 732-775-2100
- Department of Public Works: 732-775-0900
- Fire Department (non-emergency): 732-775-6300
- Jersey Central Power & Light (to report power outages): 800-544-4877
- Monmouth County Health Department: 732-431-7456
- Monmouth County SPCA (to report injured or stranded animals that needs help): 732-542-0040
- NJ Natural Gas (to report gas leaks): 800-427-5325
- Police Department (non-emergency): 732-774-1300

Nearby Hospitals

- Jersey Shore University Medical Center
1945 State Route 33, Neptune, NJ 07753
(732) 775-5500
www.hackensackmeridianhealth.org
- Monmouth Medical Center
300 2nd Ave, Long Branch, NJ 07740
(732) 222-5200
www.rwjbh.org

RESOURCES CRANFORD



Important Numbers - Report All Emergencies to 911

- Emergency: 911
- **Police Department**
(908) 272-2222
- **Fire Department (non-emergency): Non-emergency: (908) 709-7360**
- Jersey Central Power & Light (to report power outages): 800-544-4877
- Health Department: (908) 709-7238
- NJ Natural Gas (to report gas leaks): 800-427-5325
- **Police Department (non-emergency): 732-774-1300**

Nearby Hospital

- **Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Rahway**
865 Stone St, Rahway, NJ 07065
[\(732\) 381-4200](tel:(732)381-4200)
<https://www.rwjbh.org/rwj-university-hospital-rahway/>

RESOURCES

See something,
say something.



Learn first aid skills so
you can help others.



Before you run, know the exits.



Help law enforcement.



Find a place to hide.



Seek help to cope with trauma.



Run



Hide



Fight