



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Los Angeles River Center and Gardens
570 West Avenue Twenty-six, Suite 100
Los Angeles, California 90065
Phone (323) 221-9944 Fax (323) 221-9934

Accessibility Policy

Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits all state and local governments from discriminating on the basis of disability, but moreover, its goal is to promote equal access and full participation. The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) works to ensure that every program, service and activity is accessible to visitors of all abilities, including those with limitations. The MRCA strives to eliminate barriers that may prevent patrons with disabilities from accessing our facilities or participating in MRCA programs, services and activities. MRCA is committed to operating services, programs and activities so that the service, program, or activity, when viewed in entirety, is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.

MRCA public events, meetings and programs shall be non-discriminatory. No person may be excluded from participation in, admission or access to, denied the benefit of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any public events, meetings and programs on the basis of a qualifying disability. This policy outlines the policies, plans, programs and procedures MRCA staff will follow to ensure persons with disabilities are provided reasonable accommodations and access to public facilities, events, meetings and programs.

Information about accessible facilities and programs will be made readily available through our website and at our facilities and will be included in publications and informational materials. All agency managers, supervisors, and employees are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy.

Public and Non-public Areas

MRCA park managers may designate areas of facilities and parks that are open to the public and those areas that are not open to the public. MRCA is responsible for ensuring reasonable public accommodations in public areas during park hours. MRCA is responsible for ensuring reasonable accommodations in non-public areas only when those areas are open to the public for programming, events, meetings and by special permit.

Facilities

All newly built or substantially renovated facilities will adhere to the most current standards for accessible design, as applicable. Where designated trailheads are located beyond parking areas, an accessible path of travel shall be provided from accessible parking to at least one trailhead per trail. Existing facilities will be assessed for compliance to these standards, and a plan to remediate non-compliant features will be established and implemented. Improvements may be undertaken for the sole purpose of improving accessibility without requiring that a path of travel be provided. MRCA strives to make all public areas and features of park properties accessible, to the maximum extent possible

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without resulting in undue financial burden, fundamentally altering the nature of the service, program, or activity provided, or damage to historic property.

Wheelchairs may be used wherever pedestrians are allowed. Use of other power-driven mobility devices is governed by the *Policy on Use of Wheelchairs and Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices*¹.

Service Animals

Service animals² that have been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability will be allowed in all locations regardless of other pet policy restrictions, unless their presence poses a danger to themselves or the public using the facility. Emotional support animals³ are not service animals and may be treated in accordance with the facility's pet policy. Unless the service performed by the animal requires the animal to be off leash, all service animals should remain on leash at all times unless the animal is in a general off-leash area. Misrepresenting an animal as a service animal is service animal fraud—a crime—and shall be treated as such.

MRCA staff should not inquire into the disability of an individual, only if the animal is a service animal, emotional support animal or neither. For evidence that an animal is a service animal, the individual may present the following: identification cards, written documentation, presence of harnesses or tags, or verbal assurances from the individual with a disability using the animal if asked. If staff are uncertain that an animal is a service animal, they may ask one of the following:

1. What tasks or functions does your animal perform for you?
2. What has your animal been trained to do for you?
3. Would you describe how the animal performs this task for you?

A person claiming to be training a service animal must have documentation that they are licensed or authorized to train service animals and the animal must be leashed at all times and wearing some form of identification denoting that it is a service animal in training.

Parking

Only patrons with a current and valid disability license plate or placard may park in designated accessible parking spaces. Visitors with a current and valid disability license plate or placard may also park in any available public parking space, and are exempt from parking fees. All parking areas must include a designated parking area for people with a current disability license plate or placard.

1 See <http://www.mrca.ca.gov/>

2 Common service animals can include dogs and miniature horses. However, animals such as pigs and monkeys may also be considered service animals.

3 Emotional support animals, often "therapy dogs", are defined as those that provide therapeutic and emotional support. They do not necessarily perform any aiding task. Emotional support animals are different from and "psychiatric service animals," a type of service animal.

Programming

All newly developed programs and services will adhere to the most current standards for accessible design, as applicable. Existing programs and services will be assessed for compliance. Upon a timely request, programming may be relocated from non-accessible trails to accessible areas, including trailheads, if it would not fundamentally alter the nature of the program.

Public Events and Meetings

MRCA does not have a one-size-fits-all event policy. Accommodations shall vary depending on the nature of the event, the control MRCA has over the event, whether the event is open to public and what types of disabilities MRCA needs to accommodate. MRCA's meeting agendas and online materials shall include contact information for accommodation requests. Whenever portable restrooms are required for a public event, at least one unit must meet accessibility standards. Additional accessible units may be provided for large crowds.

All public parades and performances need to designate an area for people with disabilities to view the parade or performance. This area must be provided—without any additional fee—in an area where viewing is also free for non-disabled people and it must be monitored by staff to ensure visibility.

Special Use Permits

Special Use Permits shall include terms specifying the obligations of Permittees for public events. Park managers shall discuss with Permittees which specific facilities require additional measures for accessibility compliance.

Reasonable Accommodations

Requests from qualified persons⁴ for accommodations to participate in public programs or activities should be directed first to the division or office responsible for the program or activity. A person other than the individual with a disability may request a reasonable accommodation on behalf of the individual. Requests for accommodations for non-public events should be directed to the private host or Permittee.

An accommodation will be provided if it does not result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of the program or activity, impose an undue hardship by causing significant difficulty or expense when considering the agency's size, financial resources and nature and structure of its operation, does not constitute a violation of state or federal law, and does not jeopardize the agency's ability to perform the major function of its mission and operations. The MRCA is not required to provide personal items as accommodations.

Not all MRCA facilities are accessible. MRCA staff should do their best to accommodate disabilities in public facilities. During public events hosted by MRCA, when there is no

⁴ A qualified person is an individual who has a documented physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, who has a record of such impairment, or who is regarded as having such impairment.

accessible path of travel, MRCA staff will make arrangements to transport visitors between the event's facilities, including parking and restrooms.

Public Documents

The essential information in all official documents, published in hardcopy or online, shall use a standard font, such as Times New Roman or Arial, size 12 point or larger, and have high contrast between the text and background.

Accessibility Contact Information

When requesting accommodations, please contact us at least three (3) days prior to the date these services/items are needed.

General Parks and Facilities

ADA@mrca.ca.gov

Ranger Services, (310) 456-7049
(310) 858-7272 X 225

Employment-Related Concerns

Zagreb De La Torre, (323) 221-9944 x145
Zagreb.DeLaTorre@mrca.ca.gov

MRCA Governing Board Meetings

(310) 589-3230, x118

General Events Information

(323) 221-9944, x301

Events@lamountains.com

Los Angeles River Center & Gardens, Franklin Canyon Park,

Vista Hermosa Park, and Marsh Park

(310) 858-7272 x180

King Gillette Ranch and Upper Las Virgenes Canyon Open Space Preserve

(818) 878-0866 x221

Temescal Gateway Park and Temescal Canyon Conference and Retreat Center

(310) 454-1395 x221