

Accessibility at CWA Events

For All


The CWA Member Accessibility
Survey Report

CWA

1. Executive Summary

In 2025, the CWA Accessibility Committee launched a national survey to explore how members experience accessibility at CWA events. The initiative followed Resolution 79A-23-08, passed during the 79th CWA Convention, which called for an inclusive approach to event planning and participation for CWA National meetings.

The survey received 801 responses and provided rich narrative insights into the accessibility barriers, supports, and recommendations from members and retirees across the country. The findings underscore the importance of inclusive planning and proactive accessibility supports and accommodations to ensure full and equal participation by all members. Accessibility at CWA meetings enriches the union experience for everyone.



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2. Key Findings

Survey participants (or “respondents”) identified a range of challenges related to accessibility. The most common themes included difficulty navigating venues due to physical mobility limitations, communication problems caused by a lack of interpreters or use of microphones, and the absence of remote attendance options for those unable to travel.

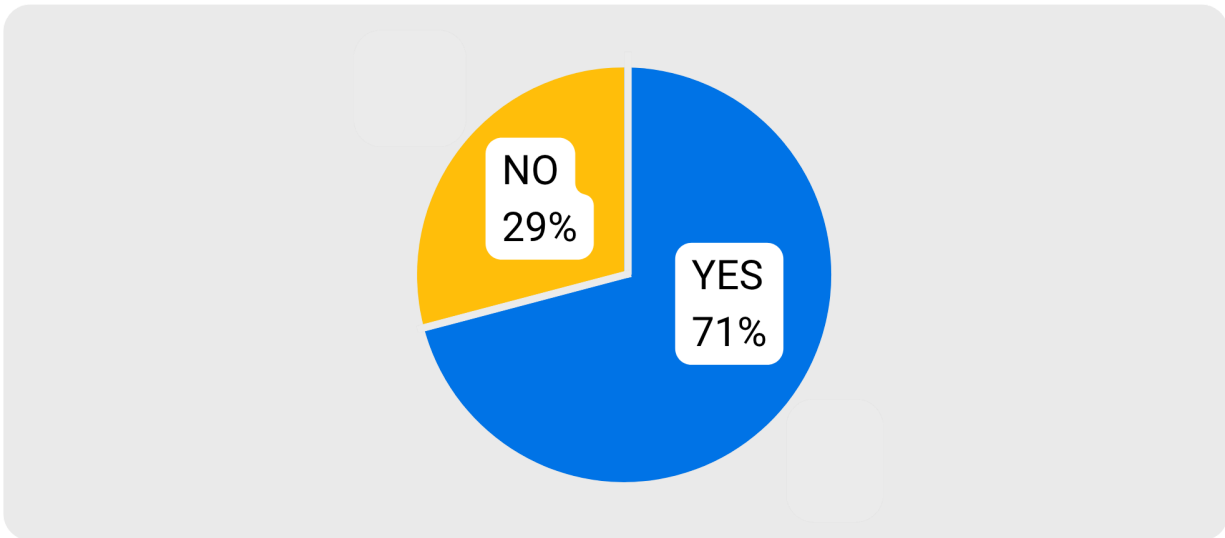
Some members mentioned that event notices failed to include information about available supports or whom to contact with questions about accessibility concerns. Other responses highlighted the value of being able to review presentation materials in advance or having designated quiet rooms during larger/longer meetings.

Several members pointed out a lack of consistent standards across events, urging the union to treat accessibility not as an afterthought but as a foundational principle. Most importantly, when asked, “Do you think you would be more involved in CWA meetings/events if the event was more accessible?” the overwhelming majority of respondents (71%) indicated that they would be more involved.



Survey Question #5

Do you think you would be more involved in CWA meetings/events if the event was more accessible?



Value	Percent	Count
Yes	71.1%	431
No	28.9%	175

Total: 606

3. Accessibility Categories

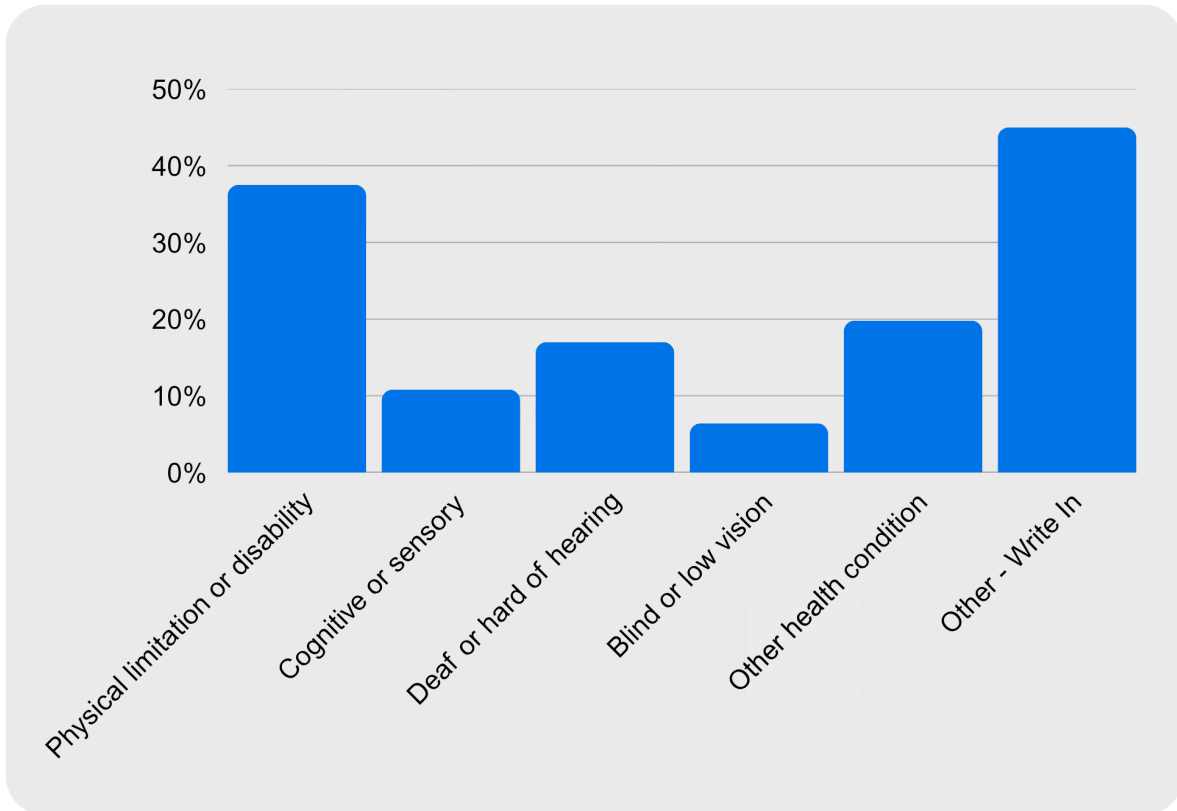
Current and retiree members selected from six broad accessibility categories that applied to their needs. Respondents could select as many categories as applied. The largest group, with 149 individuals, identified with having a physical limitation or disability. This was followed by 131 respondents who selected “Other,” which often included needs related to chronic illness, mental health, or a general lack of access to accommodations. There were 62 respondents who reported other health conditions, 47 who were deaf or hard of hearing, 32 with cognitive or sensory needs, and 20 who were blind or had low vision.

Responses reflected a wide spectrum of accessibility needs within CWA’s membership and highlighted the importance of offering layered and varied forms of support to meet diverse requirements.



Survey Question #6

From the following dropdown list of categories, please choose your areas of need for accessibility supports or for an accommodation. Choose as many as apply.



Value	Percent	Count
Physical limitation or disability	37.5%	146
Cognitive or sensory	10.8%	42
Deaf or hard of hearing	17.0%	66
Blind or low vision	6.4%	25
Other health condition	19.8%	77
Other - Write In	45.0%	175

4. Participant Profile

In addition to accessibility categories, respondents shared information about their past participation in CWA events. One question regarding attendance at past CWA events asked respondents to describe their experiences in a free text box. As a result, the response format could not accurately count the events each respondent actually attended because the free text box field did not require respondents to name the CWA events they participated in, there was an overlap between categories, and varying details were provided by each respondent.

The following descriptions and numbers are based on responses using key words used in the description. A total of 23 respondents identified as retired or no longer working, suggesting a need for continued outreach to retirees. Thirteen respondents specifically mentioned attending a national CWA Convention, while four mentioned attending a specific CWA Conference. Nineteen reported participating in a District meeting, and ten described Local Union meetings. Another 44 respondents described involvement in alternative event formats such as protests, community actions, and training sessions. Importantly, 27 respondents said they had never attended a CWA event, and many cited accessibility barriers as the reason. Sixty-three members indicated they would prefer the option to participate in meetings remotely when possible, citing travel, physical strain, or caregiving responsibilities as limiting factors.

5. Recommendations Summary

Recommendations spanned the full lifecycle of event planning and implementation. During the initial planning phase, organizers were urged to select venues with level floors, wide doorways, and elevators, and to consider proximity to public transit and food options. Respondents recommended that hotels include handicapped-accessible rooms which are included in the block of rooms reserved by CWA if possible, and that venues have nearby parking and options for shuttle or golf cart transport where needed.

Pre-event communication should include detailed information about how to request accommodations, as well as advance notice of potential barriers and event agendas. During events, organizers are encouraged to ensure physical spaces remain clear and navigable, that microphones and captioning are reliably available, and provide sign language interpreters when requested. Quiet rooms, food labeling, and adequate break times were also emphasized. Having event staff identified and trained to recognize and respond to accessibility needs in real time was another critical recommendation. Virtual and hybrid participation options were desired by many respondents and should be considered when appropriate so that members, regardless of location or ability, have the opportunity to engage meaningfully.

6. Ongoing Commitments and Conclusion

The Accessibility Survey represents a meaningful step toward a more inclusive union culture. However, the work must continue. The Committee recommends expanding its membership in a future committee format to include individuals who expressed interest in getting involved, creating educational materials about accessibility, and sharing best practices with local and national leadership. As the survey and this report demonstrates, improving accessibility is about solidarity, equity, and enabling all CWA members to participate and contribute. Moving forward, the union's challenge is to embed these practices into every level of its operations so that all members, regardless of ability, can fully participate in the democratic life of the union.

7. Recommendations for Action by Chronologically Sorted Support Needs

Recommendations are presented in chronological order of the event planning lifecycle.

I. Initial Event Planning Phase:

A. Site selection for accessibility:

- Select fully accessible venues: level floors, wide doorways, elevators, and ramps (including to podiums).
- Hotel blocks should include handicapped accessible rooms.
- Minimize the distance between hotels and meeting areas.
- Available accessible parking: as near to the event as possible.
- Consider having scooters or wheelchairs available for rent or loan on-site.
- For long walks / large venues, including walkways:
 - Consider providing benches or rest areas
 - Reserve transportation like shuttles or golf carts
 - When arranging meeting rooms, prioritize locations near accessible entrances and elevators
 - Consider the proximity of the event venue to a variety of food options, including grocery stores, for attendees with dietary restrictions.
- Include hybrid participation options (e.g., Zoom) by default: venues need A/V capabilities to enable remote access.

B. Pre-Event Communication:

- Collect accessibility needs information.
- Establish a standard procedure to address accessibility needs (e.g., designated contact person, online request forms).
- Proactively inquire about food allergies and dietary needs.
- Provide notice (pre-event).
- Provide advance notice of meetings and events that clearly indicate the location and any known accessibility barriers.
- Include clear information about how to request accessibility accommodations in all event announcements and registration

materials, provide contact details for a designated person or a link to an online request form.

- Include information about programming in advance, where possible. (e.g., for outdoor events using bullhorns, notify attendees in advance to allow them to position themselves for their sensory needs).
- For events offering food, provide information about the types of meals and approximate times to allow attendees with dietary restrictions or health-related needs to plan accordingly.
- Inform attendees about transportation options such as shuttles or ride-sharing possibilities.
- Send reminders before events that also prompt attendees to submit accommodation requests if needed.
- For virtual meetings, provide clear instructions on how to join and navigate the platform (e.g., Zoom).

II. During the Event:

A. Venue and physical accessibility:

- Continually ensure wide and unobstructed pathways are maintained throughout the venue for individuals using mobility aids, including between seats in rooms, or between stalls or information desks.
- Designate seating areas for attendees with mobility issues or other needs.
- If transportation is provided, verify that it is actually accessible (e.g., buses with functioning ramps).
- Clearly mark handicapped accessible restrooms.
- Train event organizers/staff to assist attendees with wayfinding and accessing different areas, especially in large venues.
- Have clear signage and directions throughout the event space. Make sure to include signage and directions for alternate routes that may be more suitable or designated for access by individuals with wheelchairs or other needs.

B. Presentations and Materials:

- Ensure captioning is active for all videos and presentations.
- Have sign language interpreters readily available if requested.

- Always use microphones (and ensure speakers know how to use them properly) so everyone can hear clearly; have a back-up solution on hand for technical problems.
- Display presentation materials on sufficiently large and well-positioned screens.
- Have large print versions of essential documents (programs, agendas) available.
- For virtual components, ensure moderators facilitate inclusive participation and provide technical assistance if needed.

C. Other On-site Supports:

- Provide quiet spaces/rooms.
- For longer events, ensure sufficient break times to accommodate various needs.
- Provide and clearly label food options so individuals can choose items based on health needs or preferences, such as nut-free, gluten-free, etc.
- Provide a list of ‘Friends of Bill’ and other support meetings available in the area.

III. Broader process improvements:

- Develop clear guidelines and processes for event organizers, explaining how to provide common accessibility supports like captioning, interpretation, and alternative formats for materials.
- Normalize having a hybrid component to in person events, for members who cannot come in person to the event.
- Include information about how to request accommodations in all event announcements and registration materials.
- Ensure that event organizers/staff are trained to identify accessibility issues (like blocked doorways or seating arrangements that block mobility aids).
- Ensure that event organizers/staff are aware of where restrooms are, particularly handicap accessible restrooms.

IV. Continuation of Accessibility Committee Activities:

- Continue the work to continue making accessibility improvements at CWA. The CWA Accessibility Survey was only the beginning.
- The CWA Accessibility Committee was a Convention Resolution Committee formed to carry out the resolution directives in a limited timeframe. Committee members strongly recommend expanding the CWA Accessibility Committee function in some format to include more members who expressed an interest in their survey responses on working on accessibility issues.
- Develop educational materials about accessibility and different accessibility categories.

8. Closing Statement

The primary goals of Resolution # 79A-23-08 – to establish a CWA Accessibility Committee, to conduct a survey of CWA members regarding accessibility needs and experiences, and to produce a report making recommendations for best practices – have been met. Improvements are already underway to reach the final goal of making future Conventions and other National meetings as accessible as possible for all our members. Lastly, there is a need to expand and continue the work needed to ensure all CWA meetings are accessible for all CWA members.

Appendix

Detailed Analysis of CWA Member Accessibility Survey Results

1. Background

Delegates met at the 79th Communications Workers of America Convention held in St. Louis, Missouri, beginning on July 10, 2023 through July 12, 2023. During the Convention, delegates passed resolution number 79A-23-08 entitled “Ensuring Accessibility at CWA Meetings for All.”

In an effort to better understand and address the accessibility needs of CWA members, the CWA Accessibility Committee, created as a result of the Convention resolution, conducted a comprehensive survey examining experiences at CWA events. While Resolution 79A-23-08 was focused on future CWA Conventions and other National meetings, the Accessibility Survey enabled members and retirees to provide feedback on a range of union meetings and events. The goal was to identify common barriers, highlight successful accommodations, and provide informed recommendations for improving access. The analysis draws on narrative responses from 801 members who shared barriers, successful accommodations, and ideas for improving CWA event accessibility for greater inclusion. CWA stands by the belief that improving accessibility benefits everyone and makes participating in the union easier and more welcoming.

To effectuate the will of the delegates from CWA’s 79th Convention, CWA appointed Vice-President Susie McAllister and Vice-President Richard Honeycutt as co-chairs of the “Ensuring Accessibility at CWA Meetings for All”. Committee members included Michele Greaves (Local 1033 Executive Vice-President), Eric Gosnell (Local 3101 President), Ron Gay (District 4 Staff Representative), Vicki Crosson (The NY Times Tech Guild Vice-Chair), and Debra Fisher (IUE-CWA Health & Safety Specialist). The Committee’s special advisor was Gloria Middleton (E-Board At-Large Member and President of Local 1180). To support the important work of the Ensuring Accessibility at CWA Meetings for All committee, CWA assigned Deputy-Director for Occupational Safety and Health,



Micki Siegel de Hernandez as committee staff, and for legal support, CWA assigned Headquarters Counsel Simon X. Cao to the committee. Before submitting the Committee report, the Ensuring Accessibility at CWA Meetings for All Committee met thirteen times.

1.1 Survey Development and Methodology

The survey questions were developed by the Accessibility Survey Sub-Committee using a brainstorming process to create an initial set of questions which would be refined. It was decided that the majority of questions would be open-ended, and in a text format to allow for a broader range of member responses and experiences with a limited number of questions. The Accessibility Survey Sub-Committee members took the survey themselves to test the questions for ease of response. The revised survey questions were pilot-tested by eight (8) CWA members and staff volunteers and the results of the pilot testing resulted in further refinement of the survey questions to make the questions more user friendly, appeal to a wider range of members and retirees including those who had never attended a CWA event, and to ensure the survey itself was in an accessible format. The CWA Communications Department put the survey questions into the final format, using the Alchemer platform.

The CWA Accessibility Survey was launched via an Action Alert letter from CWA President Claude Cummings to CWA Local Union Leaders on March 11, 2025. CWA Local Unions were asked to distribute the survey link to their members and retirees. In addition, the CWA Communications Department distributed the survey link to members/retirees and staff who were signed up to receive the CWA Newsletter, and via broadcast text message to attendees of the 2023 CWA Convention and the 2024 CWA Legislative/Political meeting and the CWA Presidents' meeting. The survey went live on March 12, 2025 for two weeks and was later extended for an additional week before closing on March 31, 2025.

2. Survey Results

2.1 Key Findings

- Physical mobility issues, communication gaps, and event scheduling were frequently mentioned barriers.
- Event access barriers included physical layout, poor transportation links, absence of interpreters or captioning, and inadequate notice for accommodations.
- A significant number of members (63) expressed a desire for hybrid/remote participation options (e.g. via Zoom).
- Many respondents (44) cited attending other types of CWA or allied events beyond standard conventions or meetings, such as rallies or training.
- Respondents emphasized the importance of early and clear communication about available support.
- 27 respondents (12%) reported never attending a CWA event, with accessibility cited as a barrier.
- Recommendations spanned the planning cycle for events, from site selection and hotel accommodations to communication practices and on-site logistics.
- Respondents shared a strong desire for proactive planning and communication about accessibility options.

3. Participant Profile

The survey included responses from a diverse range of CWA members and retirees. Based on an open-ended narrative analysis, the following participation and demographic trends were observed:

- 23 respondents identified as retired or as no longer working
- 13 mentioned attending a CWA Convention
- 4 described attending a specific CWA Conference
- 19 referred to attending a District meeting
- 10 described attendance at a Local Union meeting
- 44 described other event types (e.g., rallies, trainings, protests)
- 27 reported never having attended a CWA event

4. Response Analysis by Survey Question

Below is a summary of responses for each question.

4.1 Experiences at CWA Events (Survey Q1)

Responses varied by category, but many respondents mentioned experiences with long walking distances, inaccessible hotel-to-venue transitions, and insufficient accommodation of physical disabilities. One respondent shared, “At the convention in Pittsburgh, I had to try to walk around in pain because it was not close enough to ride the scooter.” Another reported that they could not attend a meeting due to a lack of virtual options.

4.2 Helpful Supports and Accommodations (Survey Q2)

Supports that were noted as helpful included printed materials to accompany presentations, captioning for video content, and the kindness or flexibility of local union leaders. Some respondents noted the presence of shuttles or accessible seating as key factors in allowing them to participate meaningfully.

4.3 Ineffective Supports and Barriers (Survey Q3 & Q4)

Frequent barriers included the lack of accessible shuttles, long distances between lodging and meeting spaces, and inconsistent use of microphones during large meetings. One respondent noted that they requested a speaker use a microphone due to being hard of hearing, but the speaker declined, saying their voice was loud enough.

4.4 Impact on Engagement (Survey Q5)

Many respondents (especially those who had difficulty attending in-person events) indicated that improved accessibility would lead to increased participation. Those who responded negatively often cited personal constraints rather than dissatisfaction with the events themselves.

4.5 Preferred Communication Methods (Survey Q7 & Q8)

A standard online request form was the most frequently mentioned preferred method for conveying accessibility needs. Respondents emphasized the importance of receiving a confirmation that the request was acknowledged and would be addressed. Some also expressed interest in speaking directly with a designated contact person.

4.6 Additional Feedback (Survey Q9 & Q10)

Open-ended comments revealed a high level of interest in proactive inclusion and acknowledgment of accessibility needs. Several noted that union events did not sufficiently account for members with anxiety or invisible disabilities.

4.7. Member Responses by Accessibility Category (Survey Q6)¹

Each of the following subsections is broken down by accessibility category selected by individuals taking the survey – Physical Limitation/Disability, Cognitive/Sensory, Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Blind/Low Vision, Other Health Conditions, Other – to show trends and shared experiences. Respondents were asked to choose from a drop down menu as many of the accessibility categories that applied to themselves, i.e. choices were not mutually exclusive. There were 103 respondents who chose more than one accessibility category.

- Physical: 149 respondents
- Cognitive/Sensory: 32 respondents
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing: 47 respondents
- Blind/Low Vision: 20 respondents
- Other Health Condition: 62 respondents
- Other: 131 respondents

¹ Quotes from the survey may have been edited for spelling or grammar and partial quotes may be selected for highlighting.

A. Physical Limitation or Disability

A total of 150 respondents identified with the 'Physical limitation or disability' accessibility category. Below are selected responses that illustrate the kinds of experiences, barriers, and recommendations these individuals shared.


“Most people with disabilities are affected in different ways at different times.”

“When you have a handicap it is already stressful traveling but when you have to make several calls to try to get answers as to what you will be facing once you arrive adds a lot more stress. Before I could make a decision as to whether I would be able to attend the last convention in St. Louis I had to spend a lot of time calling the hotels to find out which one was close enough to be able to get to the convention center via scooter safely and the people I spoke to were not really able to help me because they did not know where the meetings were going to be.”

“Any crowded space is extremely difficult to navigate in a wheelchair. People cannot see or hear you while standing and speaking with others, so you both cannot get through the room and also cannot mingle or discuss anything with people around you.”

“Conventions, Michigan Pittsburgh, Vegas, Missouri, Voting there were two/three lines and made an effort to accommodate those with disabilities. If voting could be arranged outside of the District Rooms it would allow more comfort for all members Lunch breaks, (Except Vegas) lack of availability to get food without significant walking or Uber/Lyft to restaurants. It would be nice to have a list of hotels with scooter rentals on site like in Vegas or a list of places that do so locally. In Milwaukee there were long walks from the entrance to the convention room. There were no alternative entrances for handicap, and the electric golf carts there were not used to transport those with disabilities.”

“Please designate people to help those of us with disabilities better understand and ask questions at the meetings.”



“When you have a handicap it is already stressful traveling but when you have to make several calls to try to get answers as to what you will be facing once you arrive adds a lot more stress.”

“Large sized seating.”

“Parking and direction assistance catered to those with disabilities.”

“I have never attended parades because I can not walk the distance needed for the parade route. However, I have participated in the September Convention. Some of the walking to get from the morning session to where lunch is being served was a small hike for me. By the time I get there and stand in line, lunch is almost over. Besides walking slowly, I'm hearing impaired. So I have a tough time hearing in large crowds and meeting halls. I try to sit up front to the speaker, but then I can not hear the participants.”

“Need room for walkers and wheelchairs both through doors, between tables and chairs and at tables.”

“I have a physical disability that requires me to use an electric scooter to get around. The problems that I have experienced are when the meetings are at another location than the hotel accommodations. I have to make sure that it is a safe distance to travel via scooter. At the convention in Pittsburgh there were shuttles that took us to the convention center but I could not take my scooter on the shuttle so I had to try to walk around in pain because it was not close enough to ride the scooter to the convention center. I had to stop and find a place to sit and take a break which sometimes made me late to the meetings.”

“Make sure that the event is held in a place with a flat floor (no big cracks) and minimal or no thresholds between doors and rooms, which are falling hazards to people with mobility issues as well as hard to get a wheelchair or knee scooter over.”


“I would say it's helpful to know if there are other options for participating, for instance in a protest or picket where you may not be able to stand or walk for long, but there will be areas that you can be in close proximity and feel like you're being helpful or included even though you cannot do the typical physical part of marches/protests etcetera.”

“When the block of rooms at a hotel are created for the attendees, there are no ADA accommodations included in the block so the attendees who need these rooms pay the non conference rate and the CWA group does not get the credit for the rooms that are booked. This causes the member to get calls from their District staff asking why they have not registered at the hotel. The conference attendee lets them know that they are attending and they are at the hotel just not in their block due to this oversight.”

“Handicapped parking.”

“I'm on disability now with non-weight bearing on my foot. I think I would have a really hard time without another person helping me. I should be better in a few months though.”

“I have bad knees and have a heck of a time doing steps. While most of the national trips I have been on have elevators, some of the hotels have had stairs to various parts of the structure that I didn't see elevators or escalators to get to. I can manage, but some people in worse shape may not be able to.”




“When the block of rooms at a hotel are created for the attendees, there are no ADA accommodations included in the block so the attendees who need these rooms pay the non conference rate and the CWA group does not get the credit for the rooms that are booked.”

“Having areas where someone with physical limitations could lean on something for support, or where there are seats when it is generally required to be standing for certain periods of time.”

“The distance to walk to the different locations within the hotels of the Convention sites are a bit too much. By the time you get to the meeting room you are already exhausted.”

“You need to have scooters available to rent if the distance from the hotel to the convention floor is too far to walk.”

“Providing a ramp (not just steps) to a stage or podium. It would also be nice if that was standard and didn't require checking or a special request. Providing accessible transportation between venues. Sometimes it's just too far to walk or the path is difficult for those with mobility or balance issues. Having sufficient space between seats to accommodate canes, walkers, other aids. Providing display screens large enough and well positioned for sight lines when presenting to a large room. I would also really appreciate it if announcements, invitations, and descriptions of events noted any barriers and invited prospective participants to contact organizers with questions/concerns/requests. Also (this may be asking too much) it would be helpful to know what (types of) meals are provided and at approximately what times. (I have diabetes and this is a concern.)”



“Clear signage and directions to accessible entrances or facilities usually help. If you don't know of an access point then there might as well not be one.”

“Hand rails up to the stage.”

“Clear signage and directions to accessible entrances or facilities usually help. If you don't know of an access point then there might as well not be one.”

“Voting at the national convention in St. Louis allowed disabled members to have extra time for access to voting area - great idea.”

“Perhaps an early entry time, maybe 15 minutes before everyone enters would help those who have mobility concerns. Something like early boarding at airports.”

B. Cognitive/Sensory

A total of 32 respondents identified with the 'Cognitive/Sensory' accessibility category. Below are selected responses that illustrate the kinds of experiences, barriers, and recommendations these individuals shared.


“I have anxiety issues with large crowds. I want to be involved because I believe strongly in the power of the union. I would attend virtually or provide support in other ways if they were made available or if I knew about them.”

“Because of the nature of rallies, sometimes I experience sensory overload.”

“Captions for videos, Quiet spaces, Clear signage, directions for workshops, and maps of the building”

“A quiet place to sit and decompress has been a lifesaver, as I'm neurodivergent and easily overwhelmed by loud/crowded spaces.”

“I wouldn't say anything I have attended so far has felt inaccessible. I am however very intimidated about the prospect of attending the national convention for a number of reasons. I worry about being able to hear effectively with background noise at a large gathering. I also have a physical issue that means if I have to stand or walk on concrete for a long time I end up in a lot of pain, I also get exhausted before others due to ADHD and my physical issues, so I worry that I won't have the energy to attend all the events that my local will want me to attend. It would be nice to someday do hybrid meetings or at least partial hybrid.”



“A quiet place to sit and decompress has been a lifesaver, as I'm neurodivergent and easily overwhelmed by loud/crowded spaces.”

C. Deaf/Hard of Hearing

A total of 47 respondents identified with the 'Deaf/Hard of Hearing' accessibility category. Below are selected responses that illustrate the kinds of experiences, barriers, and recommendations these individuals shared.

“I am deaf. I cannot attend without an interpreter or closed captioned.”

“Provide an interpreter to make me feel welcome to CWA and care about me being a member.”

“My disability has not stopped me from being involved. I think sometimes I miss things being said and I feel lost.”

“Level floor (no threshold). Auto door opener, wide doors, wide aisles, easy seating access good, close parking, signing interpreter.”

“Unable to hear at events. Leaders like to shout and not use a PA system.”

“Needs VRI or real in person interpreter.”

“A Telecoil would be the most helpful and is compatible with most hearing aids and BAHA's. Close captions would also be extremely helpful to know what speakers are saying.”



“Provide an interpreter to make me feel welcome to CWA and care about me being a member.”

“Captioning videos for the deaf. Audio description for the blind.”

“I want more time to get from point A to Point B while at the convention. I would also like to hear better. I feel there should be mics for the Speakers, as well as the participants.”

“Always be sure that entrance be stair free--either ramp or ground floor. ALWAYS check the sound system, use mikes, and teach EVERY speaker how to use them.”

D. Blind/Low Vision

A total of 20 respondents identified with the 'Blind/Low Vision' accessibility category. Below are selected responses that illustrate the kinds of experiences, barriers, and recommendations these individuals shared.

“For the most part, things in my local area have been great. At first I didn't know if they understood the best way to provide me access but they asked and learned. I have joined a rally at the capitol and I have attended training and member meetings. Also, I have not had the opportunity of attending a CWA conference. I will start off where I think the most problems for me as a blind person is for access. I feel it is when it comes to accessing the labor walks and

rallies. Like I said, I have participated in a rally and it was good and worked out because I was able to have one of the shop stewards go with me and provide guidance and help with transportation. Even as a sighted person, the shop steward had a hard time finding out where we had to go and where we were meeting. As a blind person I would not have been able to find something like that on my own. Although I have participated in rallies, I have not participated in any labor walks because I have not had anyone to go with me and help with accessing the area and walking around in an unknown area. The second biggest obstacle is access to materials. I don't read braille but can access things electronically. I know that my local has done the best they can and have even tried recreating materials electronically, but there are times that it was not provided or speakers did not provide their slide show before presentations. Also, many times, speakers present as if every one can see the screen or what they are using to present.”

“I don't read braille but can access things electronically. I know that my local has done the best they can and have even tried recreating materials electronically, but there are times that it was not provided or speakers did not provide their slide show before presentations. Also, many times, speakers present as if every one can see the screen or what they are using to present.”

“I don't do too well with public transportation because of vision.”

“Designated attendants to assist with those with disabilities. Clean and safe designated areas for those requiring assistance.”

“Make sure accommodations have true handicapped facilities, i.e. bathrooms, rooms, etc.”

“During Zoom meetings, documents should be displayed with larger fonts. After meeting, those documents, along with meeting minutes, should be emailed to members, who can then increase readability using their computers.”

“Transportation or a ride with someone from the area.”

“Maps with time and distances for those with disabilities so they can plan time management.”

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“Large print via QR codes.”

E. Other Health Conditions

A total of 62 respondents identified with the 'Other Health Condition' accessibility category. Below are selected responses that illustrate the kinds of experiences, conditions, barriers, and recommendations these individuals shared.

“Make virtual attendance possible”

“The main barrier for an in person event is if it's in a crowded indoor space with poor ventilation and filtration. Having masks available to people helps, but ventilation and filtration are the biggest barrier for me. Fluorescent lighting is another barrier.”

“Accessibility to snack for blood sugar.”

“Environmental allergens”

“Sciatica”

“Myoclonus”

“Veteran-related post-COVID symptoms including fatigue, hearing strain, and occasional cognitive slowdown after long field days.”

“TBI from cycling accident.”

“Colorblind (red-green)”

“Live with immunocompromised family member”

“Celiac Disease”



“Make virtual attendance possible”

F. Other (write-in responses)

A total of 131 respondents identified with the 'Other' accessibility category. Below are selected responses that illustrate the kinds of experiences, barriers, and recommendations these individuals shared.

“Maybe we can get a committee of people willing to assist members with the walk to the conference rooms.”

“Language barrier”

“Gender non-conforming support from security and staff at events.”


“I am a caregiver and need virtual as an option to attend meetings.”

“At a D6 meeting they had Spanish and English live captions. This was SO helpful for me!”

G. General Comments About the Accessibility Survey

“Very nice idea to ask members why or why not they don't attend.”

“Just that it's very important that people that experience accessibility needs are those that are making decisions on accommodations because until you have one of these challenges there's no way for you to understand all of the obstacles that you're faced with. At least that has been my experience.”



“I think this is great! I feel better about the idea of trying to go to Convention just knowing that people are thinking about these things!”

“Congratulations on undertaking this effort.”

“Thank you for serving. This is something that has been needed for a long time. I know your solutions will be appreciated!”

“Thanks for consideration. Keep thinking about what's helpful and necessary.”

“I think this is great! I feel better about the idea of trying to go to Convention just knowing that people are thinking about these things!”

“It is overdue to provide accessibility. This is definitely needed. I'm glad we voted for this resolution at the last convention.”

“I appreciate you making this a priority.”

“I just want to express my appreciation to CWA for forming this committee and for the work you are doing to improve accessibility.”

CWA Accessibility Survey Questions

1. We are interested in experiences you have had at CWA events, including:
 - National events, such as the CWA Convention.
 - District/Sector, State, or Local Union events.
 - Protests/pickets, canvassing, or other planned activities conducted at CWA events; and
 - Other CWA sponsored events, such as conferences.

Please describe any previous, accessibility-related experience(s), either positive or negative, that you have had at these types of events. Please include a description of the type of event, date, location, and any other relevant information in your response. All of those details are helpful but are not required.

If you have **never** attended a CWA event, please tell us about anything that you feel would make an event or large group gathering more accessible for you.

2. What types of accessibility supports have been or could be helpful for you at events or group gatherings? What barrier did the accessibility service or accommodation aim to remove? Why was it successful?
3. What kind of accessibility support service or accommodation has not been helpful for you? Why wasn't it successful?
4. If you have experienced any meetings/events that were inaccessible to you, please describe the barrier(s) making the event less accessible.
5. Do you think you would be more involved in CWA meetings/events if the event was more accessible? (Yes/No)
 - a. Please comment on why or why not.
6. From the following dropdown list of categories, please choose your areas of need for accessibility supports or for an accommodation. Choose as many as apply.
 - Physical limitation or disability

- Cognitive or Sensory
 - Deaf or hard of hearing
 - Blind or low vision
 - Other health condition
 - Other
7. Which way would you prefer to convey your accessibility needs or to request an accommodation prior to a CWA meeting, such as an online request form, speak to a contact person, or another method? Please describe your preferred method of conveying your accessibility needs or requesting accommodations before a CWA event.
8. Is there anything else you would like to share with the CWA Accessibility Committee?
9. This last question has three parts where you will first choose 'yes' or 'no' regarding further contact, then select a method of contact, and lastly enter your contact information.
- a. Would you be willing to have one of our Accessibility Committee members contact you to get some more details about the issues you have raised? Yes/No
 - b. What is your preferred method of contact?
 - c. Please provide your contact information (cell phone or home phone number or email address) for your preferred method of contact

Resolution #79A-23-08

Ensuring Accessibility at CWA Meetings for All

The Communications Workers of America has long led the way for diversity and inclusion for people of different races, national origin, religious beliefs, gender and sexual orientation.

The Communications Workers of America is likewise conscious to the needs of those who have a mental or physical disability.

Some CWA members may not be able to participate fully in all of CWA's meetings without accommodations, such as those with disabilities or people with neuro-divergence. For example, neuro-diverse people with conditions such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder or autism may need accommodations addressing issues such as light or sound input, fragrances that trigger sensory overload, or closed captions to participate fully.

Resolved: CWA will establish a committee of members and staff who will work to develop suggestions for policies and practices to enable future meetings to be as accessible as possible for all of our members.

Resolved: CWA will conduct a survey of members guided by input from that committee to identify different challenges that members face in participating fully in our meetings and potential solutions.

Resolved: The committee will produce a report making recommendations for best practices to make meetings as accessible as possible.

Resolved: CWA will strive to make future conventions and other national meetings as accessible as possible for all of our members.



March 11, 2025

CWA – Forward in Unity, Forward in Accessibility!

Dear CWA Members,

At the 2023 CWA Convention, you sent a powerful message by adopting **Resolution #79A-23-08, “Ensuring Accessibility at CWA Meetings for All.”** In response, we formed the **CWA Accessibility Committee**, made up of dedicated CWA members from the community, leadership and staff, to make this resolution a reality.

Now, we need **your** advice to help shape the future of accessibility at CWA meetings and events! The **CWA Accessibility Survey** is officially open, and your input is essential.

Who Should Take This Survey?

- ✓ **Any member or retiree** who requires accessibility support at CWA meetings and events.
- ✓ **Any member or retiree** who has attended CWA events and can share their experiences.
- ✓ **Any member or retiree** who has never attended a CWA event but would if accessibility were improved.
- ✓ **Any member or retiree** who has insights or advice on making CWA events more accessible!

Your feedback will directly influence real change! The Accessibility Committee will carefully review survey responses and use them to develop recommendations that will be presented at the **2025 CWA Convention** and shared across CWA.

Take Action Today!

 **Complete the survey by March 25, 2025**

 [Survey Link:](#)

You may receive this request from multiple sources—please fill it out **only once** and feel free to share it with fellow CWA members. The more advice we get, the stronger our impact!

Together, we can **move forward in unity and accessibility**. Thank you for being part of this important effort—**please take the CWA Accessibility Survey today!**

In Unity,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Claude Cummings Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Claude Cummings Jr.
President

cc: CWA Executive Board
CWA Staff



March 11, 2025

Dear Local Leaders,

At the 2023 CWA Convention, we made a commitment to accessibility by adopting **Resolution #79A-23-08, "Ensuring Accessibility at CWA Meetings for All."** Now, it's time to take action.

The **CWA Accessibility Survey is ready**, and we need your help to ensure it reaches as many members and retirees as possible. This survey, shaped by the CWA Accessibility Committee, is crucial in identifying barriers to full participation and developing meaningful solutions.

Your local plays a vital role in this effort. With only **two weeks - until March 25, 2025** - to gather responses, **immediate action** is required. Please:

- **Distribute my attached letter** widely through your local's communication channels.
- **Post the survey link** on your local's website and social media platforms.
- **Encourage participation** at your upcoming meetings.
- **Engage key committees and bargaining units** focused on accessibility, disabilities, ADA compliance, and accommodations.

We will be sending an email about the survey to all CWA members and retirees who have signed up for our national e-mail newsletter list and we will follow up with a text message to key groups. The email is included below for your reference.

Every response counts. Your swift action will help ensure that **all members have a voice** in making CWA meetings fully accessible.

Thank you for your dedication to this important initiative.

In Unity,



Claude Cummings Jr.
President

cc: CWA Executive Board
CWA Staff

Text of email message to members and retirees:

CWA – Forward in Unity, Forward in Accessibility!

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At the 2023 CWA Convention, you sent a powerful message by adopting **Resolution #79A-23-08, “Ensuring Accessibility at CWA Meetings for All.”** In response, we formed the **CWA Accessibility Committee**, made up of dedicated CWA members from the community, leadership and staff, to make this resolution a reality.

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Your feedback will directly influence real change! The Accessibility Committee will carefully review survey responses and use them to develop recommendations that will be presented at the **2025 CWA Convention** and shared across CWA.

Take Action Today! ⌚ **Complete the survey by March 25, 2025**

🔗 [Survey Link:](#)

You may receive this request from multiple sources—please fill it out **only once** and feel free to share it with fellow CWA members. The more advice we get, the stronger our impact!

Together, we can **move forward in unity and accessibility**. Thank you for being part of this important effort—**please take the CWA Member Accessibility Survey today!**

In Unity,



Claude Cummings Jr.
President

cc: CWA Executive Board
CWA Staff