

## **Bernard's (Dis)ability Access Rider**

Thank you for inviting me to contribute to your event! I am (dis)abled, so for me to be able to participate, I need support from my hosts. I also require the events I'm part of to be accessible to the (dis)abled community.

This means that we're going to embark on access intimacy together (if you don't know what that is, please [click here to read this article by Mia Mingus](#)). Before I can commit to that process with you, please take a moment to read the below, and let me know how you can support each item. If you need more specifics about any component, ask me. I'm happy to clarify and assist where I can. If you can't provide something on this list, let's have a conversation about it. I am more interested in accessibility as something for which we work together, rather than a punitive standard I measure you against. As such, this is a live document and part of an on-going process for me and any other creative team members (e.g., producer, support worker, job aide, personal assistant, access assistant).

Below my requirements is a list of references that give more insight to where I'm coming from.

### 0. Money—

Access should not be funded solely by me, the disabled individual (e.g., taken out of my fee or production/materials/travel budget), but shared with the institution, and/or city, state, and/or federal funding. The fact that it is often funded by me, in more ways than just financial, signals how inaccessible the world is. Please join me in carrying this weight.

### 1. For scheduling—

I require all of the below to be confirmed and agreed upon by contract at least three weeks before the event takes place. The more time there is to work out all the logistics, the better. Accessibility takes a really long time to figure out.

(For the commission of new work, or an event that requires a more long-term relationship, we'll need to have a conversation about time.)

I require at least 48 hours after arriving to acclimate before I can participate in any public events. I'll need to fly home the day after the event.

### 2. For the entirety of the trip—

If needed, I require a care person to assist me. Sometimes, I cannot travel alone, and I prefer to bring a care person with me, because we will already have a relationship and they will know what is needed. Their travel, lodging, food, and transportation must be paid for by the host, as mine are.

### 3. For air travel—

The flight cannot depart before 13:00. The airport cannot be more than one hour away from my house. Nonstop is preferred. If a layover must happen, it cannot be longer than two hours. I need to be picked up from, and taken to, the airport. I must have an aisle seat on the flight. This must be booked in advance. On transatlantic flights, I require an economy seat with extra leg room, premium economy, or business class. Depending on my health, sometimes I require wheelchair assistance at the airport. Please check with me about this before booking flights.

### 4. For local travel—

I require private local travel or taxis/ubers. I cannot take any local public transportation such as buses, trains, etc.

#### 5. For lodging—

I require my own room, bed, microwave, fridge, and private bathroom in a non-smoking room that has a window, electricity, air conditioning, and wifi. I prefer hotels to air bnbs. The lodging must be a reasonable distance from where the event will take place. I require an elevator if there are more than one flight of stairs. I require meals to be paid for by my host. My food allergies/intolerances are sesame oil, seeds, etc.

#### 6. For the event itself—

I cannot participate in anything before 13:00 or after 18:00. I, and my audience, cannot sit for longer than 90 minutes without a 15-minute break. I require a dressing room/backstage area, and would not be bothered if fresh flowers appeared there. On the stage, I require a cushioned chair with a back for the entire event; I cannot stand.

For residencies, I can work three days a week for five hours at a time with regular breaks. A full lunch hour is needed. I require non-alcoholic beverages and snacks during the residency. I require help carrying heavy things (e.g., technical rehearsals and get ins). I require little to no florescent lighting and a non-smoking, scent-free workspace.

#### 7. For the accessibility of the event—

I require that the event take place in a wheelchair accessible space, no exceptions. I require every effort be made to provide both CART and sign language interpretation for the event; at least one of these must happen. I require all-gender restrooms at the space. I require spaces to be as scent-free as possible (see reference below for more info). If someone makes an access request, I require that the hosts make every effort to provide it.

If you can't provide what's been requested, tell me with enough time before the event so that we can find a solution.

#### 8. For the publicity of the event—

I require that the accessibility information of the event be posted with all materials that include my name. This includes information about parking, elevators, wheelchair and all-gender accessible restrooms, CART, and ASL interpretation during the event. Best practice is to be transparent and as detailed as possible about how the space is, and is not, accessible.

For example, if there is one step, anywhere in the space, say so and where it is, and if there are any additional routes. For example, if only CART is being provided and not ASL, say so. For example, if the parking is a five-minute walk, or a fifteen-minute walk, from the space, say so. For example, if the space must be kept at a noticeably cold temperature, as it is in most archives, say so (in this case, I've seen an institution provide blankets: a good idea!).

A contact email and/or phone number must be posted with all materials that include my name, for people to request specific access items.

#### 9. For the documentation of the event—

I require open/closed captioning of all video documentation. I require textual image descriptions (alt text) for all photos posted online. I reserve the right to approve all final language published that includes my name. NOTE: I use she/her/hers pronouns.

#### 10. In case—

Because I have chronic illnesses, I may have to cancel the trip at the last moment if I have a flare. This doesn't happen often, but it has happened. If there's a way that I am able to participate remotely, I will.

11. For the future—

It would be so cool, and you'd make me and my friends and many others very happy, and you'd increase the attendance of your events by a lot, and you'd become a working part of building the kind of world that needs to be built, if you would follow this document not just for me, but for all your work in the future.

References—

[Accessibility in the Arts: A Promise and a Practice](#), by Carolyn Lazard

[Access Intimacy](#), and [Crip Solidarity](#), by Mia Mingus

[Access Docs for Artists website](#), by Leah Clements, Alice Hattrick, and Lizzy Rose (the resources listed there are for the UK)

[Fragrance Free Femme of Colour Genius](#), by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha

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