# Accessibility, Accommodation, and AlternativeFormat Information

**1. Accessibility.** Minnesota law requires all products produced by the State of Minnesota to be accessible to all individuals. A document or application is considered accessible if meets certain technical criteria and can be used by people with disabilities. This includes access by people who are mobility impaired, blind, low vision, deaf, hard of hearing, or who have cognitive impairments. We believe all documents that make up this manual now meet these state standards. See your agency’s accessibility coordinator for further information or if you believe these documents require further modification for your use.

**2. Accommodation.** The Notice of Hearing and Dual Notice contain the following statement: “**Accommodation.** If you need an accommodation to make this hearing accessible, please contact the agency contact person at the address or telephone number listed above.”

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, agencies must make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, and procedures to enable access to individuals with disabilities. It is up to the individual to inform the agency what modification is necessary for the individual.

Any cost incurred for the modification is the responsibility of the agency providing the service. If your agency is producing material or holding meetings, your agency would pay. If for some reason the modification would “fundamentally alter” the goods, services, or operation or would result in an undue burden (significantly difficult or expensive), it would not be required. If this were to happen, your agency should still pursue whether or not there is another modification that could work.

You have to review and deal with each situation on a case-by-case basis. Most of the situations you will deal with will be easy to accommodate.

The first thing to do regarding this, even before you get a request for accommodation, is to make sure your hearing room is wheelchair accessible. Accommodations that may be requested include sign language interpreters or real-time court reporting services.

**3. Alternative Format.** The Request for Comments, Statement of Need and Reasonableness, Notice of Intent to Adopt Rules Without a Public Hearing, Dual Notice, and Notice of Hearing all include a statement like this: “Upon request, this information can be made available in an alternative format, such as large print, braille, or audio.”

Requests are rare, but they do occur. If you get one, here are some options:

A. Make photocopied enlargements. The simplest option might be to enlarge the document on a photocopier. You will probably have to do some creative paste-up to keep the document whole.

B. Use a larger typeface. If you have the computer file of the document, you may re-format it using a larger typeface.

C. Record the information in audio. You can record the material yourself or obtain recording services from the State Services for the Blind. They charge $12.50 per recorded hour. The service reads straight text and captions. If requested, they will describe charts, graphs, tables, diagrams, etc. that would be understandable to a listener. Contact Audio Services at (651) 539-1422 or ssb.audioservices@state.mn.us to make arrangements directly for the desired format.

D. Convert to braille. State Services for the Blind also provides braille services, as follows: braille costs $2.25 per braille page; it takes about three braille pages to equal each 8.5 x 11 sheet of conventional text. Since this can get quite bulky, braille is recommended for reference information, e.g., lists of phone numbers. You should send a memo, a hard copy of the material to be transcribed, and an electronic file (MS Word, .docx, .doc, or PDF) if possible. Allow 5-10 business days for completion. Call Yvette Hennies, Sharon Obrestad, or Christine Smeed at (651) 539-2315 or email ssb.braille@state.mn.us.

Each agency is responsible for the costs of making information available in alternative formats.