

Accessibility Policy

Montezuma Valley Volunteer Community Service Organization (MVVCSO)

Effective Date: June 28, 2025

1. Introduction

Accessibility is fundamental to MVVCSO's mission of serving the entire Ranchita community. This policy ensures that all individuals, regardless of ability, language, or access to technology, can fully participate in MVVCSO's governance, programs, and services. By removing barriers and fostering an inclusive environment, MVVCSO upholds its commitment to equity and community service.

2. Purpose and Scope

This policy outlines MVVCSO's commitment to accessibility in all aspects of its operations, including physical spaces, digital platforms, communications, and programs. It ensures compliance with:

- **Article XV** of the 2025 bylaws, which mandates accessibility in materials and meetings.
- **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** for physical and digital accessibility.
- **California corporate codes** for nonprofit governance and public benefit.
- **Nonprofit Integrity Act (NIA, Government Code § 12586)** for transparency and accountability.
- **IRS 501(c)(3)** requirements, ensuring activities serve the public good without discrimination.
- **Unruh Civil Rights Act (California Civil Code § 51)**, prohibiting discrimination and ensuring equal access.

This policy applies to all MVVCSO activities, including but not limited to:

- Board and committee meetings
 - Public forums and community events
 - Volunteer programs and training
 - Grant applications and program delivery
 - Communications (e.g., newsletters, reports, surveys)
 - Digital platforms (e.g., websites, online forms)
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3. Definitions

- **Accessibility:** The practice of ensuring that all individuals, including those with disabilities, language barriers, or technological limitations, can access and participate in MVVCSO's activities.
 - **Accommodations:** Modifications or adjustments that enable individuals to participate fully (e.g., interpreters, large-print materials, transportation assistance).
 - **Covered Persons:** Directors, officers, committee members, volunteers, and program participants.
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4. Operational Commitments

4.1 Physical Accessibility

- All MVVCSO facilities and event spaces will comply with ADA standards, including:
 - Accessible entrances, restrooms, and seating.
 - Signage in Braille and large print.
 - Assistive listening devices for meetings and forums.
- Transportation assistance will be provided for events upon request, with at least 14 days' notice, to ensure access for mobility-limited or non-driving residents.

4.2 Digital Accessibility

- Online platforms (e.g., websites, forms) will meet **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 Level AA** standards, ensuring compatibility with screen readers and other assistive technologies.

- All digital documents (e.g., PDFs, reports) will be screen-reader compatible and available in alternative formats upon request.

4.3 Language Accessibility

- Interpretation services (e.g., Spanish, sign language) will be provided at public forums and key meetings upon request, with at least 14 days' notice.
- Key documents (e.g., bylaws, annual reports) will be translated into Spanish and other languages as needed, based on community demographics.

4.4 Technological Accessibility

- For non-digital or low-tech residents, MVMCSO will provide:
 - Paper copies of documents (e.g., surveys, newsletters).
 - Mail-in options for feedback or applications.
 - In-person assistance at the food bank or community centers.

4.5 Budget Allocation

- MVMCSO will allocate at least 5% of its annual budget to accessibility initiatives, including:
 - Interpretation and translation services.
 - Accessible materials (e.g., large print, Braille).
 - Transportation assistance for events.
 - Technology upgrades for digital accessibility.
- The Finance Committee will review and adjust the budget annually to meet evolving needs.

4.6 Training and Education

- All Covered Persons will complete annual training on:
 - ADA compliance and accessibility best practices.
 - Cultural competency and serving diverse populations.
 - Recognizing and addressing accessibility barriers.
- Training will be provided in accessible formats (e.g., in-person, virtual, written).

4.7 Feedback and Reporting

- A confidential mechanism will be established for community members to request accommodations or report accessibility issues.
 - Reports will be submitted to the Ethics Committee and addressed within 14 days.
 - Feedback will be reviewed annually to improve accessibility efforts.
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5. Compliance with Legal Standards

- **2025 Bylaws:** Aligns with **Article XV**, ensuring accessibility in all operations.
 - **ADA:** Meets federal standards for physical and digital accessibility.
 - **California Corporate Codes:** Supports responsible governance and public benefit.
 - **NIA:** Promotes transparency through accessible reporting.
 - **IRS 501(c)(3):** Ensures non-discriminatory access to programs.
 - **Unruh Civil Rights Act:** Guarantees equal access without discrimination.
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6. Alignment with MVVCSO Northstars

- **Community Focus:** Prioritizes the needs of all community members.
 - **Transparency:** Makes accessibility policies and accommodations publicly available.
 - **Inclusivity:** Fosters full participation for all individuals.
 - **Serving All Members:** Addresses barriers for underserved groups.
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7. Review and Amendment

- The Board will review this policy annually to ensure compliance with laws and community needs.
- Amendments require a majority vote and 30 days' notice to Voting Members (Article VIII).