Property Accessibility Assessment Tool

Example Document

This is an example of a completed   
Property Accessibility Assessment Tool (PAAT)

This document serves as a guide on the completion of a PAAT. Finance has selected a sample of considerations from the PAAT to showcase options for entity consideration. The proposed observations and solutions under next steps serve as examples of possible solutions to property barriers and are not intended as an exhaustive list or definitive solutions. Every PAAT will be different due to operational and staffing requirements, base build and fit out. Implementing solutions will require careful consideration, observation and collaboration with relevant experts, employees and networks.

Property Accessibility Assessment Tool

The Property Accessibility Assessment Tool (PAAT) allows users to evaluate both neurodivergent needs and general accessibility barriers in a single assessment. The PAAT has been structured to take the user through the experience of working in a typical office occupied by the APS. It contains the following sections:

[1. Accessing the Premises](#_Toc206592369)

[2. Reception Area](#_Toc206592370)

[3. Lifts](#_Toc206592371)

[4. Steps & Stairways](#_Toc206592372)

[5. Work Areas](#_Toc206592373)

[6. Meeting Rooms](#_Toc206592374)

[7. Shared Areas](#_Toc206592375)

[8. Bathrooms](#_Toc206592376)

[9. Kitchen](#_Toc206592377)

[10. Navigating the Office (Wayfinding)](#_Toc206592378)

[11. Evacuations](#_Toc206592379)

If you have any questions or require any additional support to complete the PAAT, please contact [PropertyPolicy@finance.gov.au](mailto:PropertyPolicy@finance.gov.au).

# Accessing the Premises

Arriving at work can be one of the busiest and most stressful times of the day especially when individuals face barriers that prevent dignified entry. Barriers such as poor signage at entry points, lack of wayfinding support or overwhelming sensory stimuli can cause further stress, anxiety or disorientation. Identifying and removing these barriers ensures clear, intuitive and inclusive access to your premises supports an individual’s autonomy, reduces stress and fosters an inclusive and welcoming tone for staff and visitors.

**Table 1 – Accessing the Premises Assessment**

*Commence your walkthrough assessment on the outer boundary of the premises. Consider how most employees would navigate to, locate, and approach the premises.*

| **Consideration** Prompt questions and context to consider and guide barrier recognition. | **Observations** Record inclusive elements where they are present and most importantly where they are absent. Consider including why element needs to be addressed. | **Next** **Steps**  How could any current element be improved?  What else should be included to better support staff and improve inclusion? Make note of any immediate or long-term actions. | **Owner**  Business unit or role responsible for improvement? Timeframe for action? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **How are new employees or visitors supported to locate and navigate to the premises**?   * Directional and building maps available [online](https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/how-create-building-accessibility-guide) [[1]](#footnote-1) * Virtual tours or interactive site maps of premises * Process and procedures in place for communicating and sharing online all key journey planning information (directions to premises, proximity to public transport, parking options, check-in requirements, amenities available, etc.) | * The website provides some visual planning options including directional maps and photos that show how to locate the building entrance. * Inconsistent processes for communicating and sharing journey planning information. | * Improve online communication and provide detailed written instructions including busy times for the check in desk. * Establish working group to develop inclusive mapping, including floorplans, sensory mapping and mobility mapping. * Review procedures for sharing information. with new staff, visitors, and contractors | Facilities Management team in consultation with Communication and Online Resources teams |
| **How will staff and visitors enter the premises?**   * Accessible parking near the main entrance * Accessible drop-off and pick-up zones near the entry * Wide, level entry and/or ramp * Well contrasted entry and door * Well-lit pathways of travel with low glare * Automatic door with clear signage for use and predictability (free from turnstile doors) * Inclusive signage on the exterior of the building and entryway including directional signage to accessible entrance locations * Intuitive wayfinding on entry to the building (such as clear pathway, and inclusive signage) * Transition space on entry, allowing for pause and orientation (such as seating available near entry to pause before accessing reception) | * Accessible parking on side street adjacent to main entry; clear accessible pathway to entrance. * Side entrance with two steps; missing signage to accessible main entry. * Automatic door at main entry; [inclusive signage](https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/creating-accessible-and-inclusive-spaces/property-accessibility-assessment-tool/paat-design-features-consider#signage)[[2]](#footnote-2) in place; automatic door is lacking sufficient contrasting and impacted by glare, particularly in morning sun. * Transition space available on entry; currently there is no seating in this area. | * Add directional signage to accessible main entry on side entry. * Consult with building manager/owner regarding adding sufficient contrast on entry door (reference AS 1428 and NCC) and options to reduce glare. * Add varied seating options on entry – bench, armchair, etc. | Facilities Management/ Property team in consultation with the building owner and possibly local council. |

# Reception Area

The reception area is often the initial point of interaction and information. For neurodivergent employees, overly busy or noisy reception spaces, poor lighting, or unclear signage can be overwhelming and confusing. An accessible reception promotes calm, clear communication, and a sense of safety, supporting staff and visitors to feel valued and supported from the outset.

**Table 2 – Reception Area Assessment**

*For offices with a dedicated reception area, consider how employees will navigate to and from the space, how they will engage with reception, and how they will interpret and understand what to do next. If there is not a dedicated reception area, consider the transition spaces between entry and an employee’s workspace and any sign-in or entry requirements.*

| **Consideration**  Prompt questions and context to consider and guide barrier recognition. | **Observations**  Record inclusive elements where they are present and most importantly where they are absent. Consider including why element needs to be addressed. | **Next Steps**  How could any current element be improved?  What else should be included to better support staff and improve inclusion? Make note of any immediate or long-term actions. | **Owner**  Business unit or role responsible for improvement? Timeframe for action? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **How will employees and visitors know what to do at reception (such as check-in or sign-in requirements)?**   * [Inclusive signage](https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/creating-accessible-and-inclusive-spaces/property-accessibility-assessment-tool/paat-design-features-consider#signage)[[3]](#footnote-3) for how to check-in, including different procedures for employees and visitors * Intuitive and inclusive check-in or sign-in procedures (such as options for self-check-in and/or options to check-in from a quieter space if reception is busy or loud) * Help available and clearly signed for those requiring additional assistance signing in or using digital platforms * Reception staff trained in inclusive practices to support people (such as using hearing loops, different types of communication, etc.) | * Reception staff provide verbal instructions but there is no clear/permanent visual or written guidance for sign-in. * No digital check-in kiosks or alternative options currently available. * Reception staff are not always present to offer additional assistance. * Reception staff receive general customer service training but minimal additional training on disability or inclusion. | * Establish and install inclusive signage at reception outlining step-by-step check-in procedures for staff and visitors. * Add check-in procedure information to online communications and journey planning resources. * Consider implementing a digital self-check-in kiosk with accessible features (touchscreen, audio support, visual step-by-step instructions) or QR code links to digital check-in platforms where available. * Ensure clear signage and procedures in place for accessing assistance when the desk is unstaffed. | Facilities Management/ Property team in consultation with security team and reception staff. |
| **What are the sensory experiences like in the reception area? (such as visual, scent, auditory.)**   * [Inclusive acoustics](https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/creating-accessible-and-inclusive-spaces/property-accessibility-assessment-tool/paat-design-features-consider#acoustics)[[4]](#footnote-4) applied at reception to minimise any background noise and reduce echo or reverberation * Minimal competing noises or background sounds (such as no radio or TV sound, free from bells or buzzers, noisy office equipment stored away from reception desk or check-in area) * Where more than one person can check in at the same time, ample space and sound absorption applied between the check-in areas * Neutral smell - no strong air fresheners or cleaning products * Neutral colours with minimal or consistent patterns in design and furnishings * Free from visual clutter and motion graphic signage * [Inclusive lighting](https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/creating-accessible-and-inclusive-spaces/property-accessibility-assessment-tool/paat-design-features-consider#lighting)[[5]](#footnote-5) | * Warm lighting in reception. * Overhead pendant lighting causes glare on glossy counter surfaces. * Beeping from lifts is audible at reception desk. * Reception phone settings are inconsistent – some with loud audible ringers, others have a flashing light when receiving a call * Chair fabric is brightly coloured with a busy pattern | * Review lighting options to reduce glare at the reception counter – dimmable pendants or alternative light sources. * Consult with reception staff and IT team regarding phone calls – reduce ringer. volume or switch to visual cues? * Ensure flashing light ringtone is not visible to people checking in. * Consider replacing seating in reception or changing the upholstery to more neutral, calming colours and simple patterns to minimise visual distractions. | Facilities Management/ Property team in consultation with IT and reception staff. |

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# Lifts

Lifts are essential for mobility within multi-level buildings but can present sensory and spatial challenges. Reflective surfaces creating glare, loud or unpredictable noises, and small spaces can be overwhelming and uncomfortable for neurodivergent employees. When universally designed, they offer a safe, efficient, and dignified means of navigating between floors, promoting autonomy and contributing to a more inclusive work environment.

**Table 3 – Lifts Assessment**

*Consider how employees will access and use lifts throughout the office. Complete this section for all available lifts and with consideration from all possible locations (such as accessing lifts from entry, accessing a lift from the kitchen, etc.).*

| **Consideration**  Prompt questions and context to consider and guide barrier recognition. | **Observations**  Record inclusive elements where they are present and most importantly where they are absent. Consider including why element needs to be addressed. | **Next Steps**  How could any current element be improved?  What else should be included to better support staff and improve inclusion? Make note of any immediate or long-term actions. | **Owner**  Business unit or role responsible for improvement? Timeframe for action? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **How will employees use the lifts?**   * Flexible resting spots near lifts with seating options * All employees have individual access if swipe cards or key access is required * Buttons are clearly labelled with floor numbers and key facilities on each floor (including tactile/Braille and audible signals) * Audible and visual indications of floor level when stopping * Clearly marked emergency/help buttons with instructions on how to use | * All lifts require swipe access and employees have individual swipe cards, noted swipe reader height is above seated reach range in primary lifts. * Buttons are tactile and include Braille, but floor labels do not indicate destinations (e.g., “L2” not marked as “L2 – Meeting Rooms, Kitchen”). * Audible tone for arrival/doors opening is inconsistent in volume between lifts. * No seating nearby on Level 2 and 3. | * Relocate or duplicate swipe access reader to a lower, more accessible height. * Update button panel and signage to include clear text and symbols showing key facilities per floor. * Standardise volume levels for auditory announcements and ensure consistency with NCC standards. * Add seating near lift areas on each level where space allows | Facilities Management/ Property team. |
| **What are the sensory experiences like in the lifts? (such as visual, scent, auditory.)**   * Noise absorbing surfaces or acoustically treated surfaces in all lifts to reduce echo and reverberation * Neutral smell - no strong air fresheners or cleaning products and effective ventilation in lifts * Minimal or consistent patterns across design elements * [Inclusive lighting](https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/creating-accessible-and-inclusive-spaces/property-accessibility-assessment-tool/paat-design-features-consider#lighting)[[6]](#footnote-6) in all lifts * Free from brightly lit motion graphic signs * Minimal reflective surfaces and glare | * Lifts have been acoustically treated, well ventilated, nil patterns on flooring or walls. * Bright white, direct downlighting creates glare, particularly against stainless steel features. * Audible tone on arrival/doors opening. | * Investigate options to diffuse lighting, soften brightness and/or add additional, indirect lighting to reduce glare. * Consult with Employee Community of Practice network regarding volume, pitch and predictability of audible tone with reference to Standards and the NCC. | Facilities Management/ Property team in consultation with staff networks. |

# Steps & Stairways

Stairs are a common physical barrier, but they also create sensory and cognitive barriers for many neurodivergent users. Stairways that are poorly lit or ventilated, or lacking clear and consistent signage can be stressful and disorienting. Ensuring inclusive design principles are applied to steps and stairways, beyond minimum compliance standards, increases safety and useability.

**Table 4 – Steps and Stairways Assessment**

*Consider how employees will access and use stairs throughout the office. Complete this section for all available steps and stairways and with consideration from all possible locations (such as accessing stairs from entry, accessing steps from the kitchen, etc.).*

| **Consideration**  Prompt questions and context to consider and guide barrier recognition. | **Observations**  Record inclusive elements where they are present and most importantly where they are absent. Consider including why element needs to be addressed. | **Next Steps**  How could any current element be improved?  What else should be included to better support staff and improve inclusion? Make note of any immediate or long-term actions. | **Owner**  Business unit or role responsible for improvement? Timeframe for action? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **How will employees use the stairs?**   * Flexible resting spots with seating near stairs * All employees have individual access if swipe cards or key access is required * Stairways are consistently labelled and signed at each level with floor numbers and key facilities on each floor | * Seating near lift at reception but not on Level 2 and 3. * Floor numbers labelled in stairway but not key facilities * Open access to all stairways, no key/swipe required. | * Measure and assess the area near the lifts on level 2 and 3 to determine if there is sufficient space to add seating without impeding on the accessible path of travel. * Update signage in stairway to include key facilities and/or consider adding this information to new mapping. | Facilities Management/ Property team. |
| **What are the sensory experiences like in the stairways? (such as visual, scent, auditory)**   * Noise absorbing surfaces or acoustically treated surfaces in all stairways to reduce echo and reverberation * Neutral smell - no strong air fresheners or cleaning products and effective ventilation in stairways * Sufficient colour contrast applied in all stairways (such as between stairs and walls, on doors and any signage throughout) * [Inclusive lighting](https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/creating-accessible-and-inclusive-spaces/property-accessibility-assessment-tool/paat-design-features-consider#lighting)[[7]](#footnote-7) * Minimal reflective surfaces and glare | * Echo and reverberation present in enclosed stairwells. * White walls and stainless steel handrails reflect overhead lighting, creating glare. * Neutral scent. | * Review options for the addition of acoustic panels or sound-absorbing paint/coating to reduce reverberation. * Consider applying matte finishes to handrails or wall strips to reduce glare. | Facilities Management/ Property team. |

# Work Areas

Work areas are where all employees spend the majority of time, they are where staff can focus and return to throughout the day. Ensuring these areas accessible and inclusive helps everyone work at their best. Open office plans create additional barriers and are prone to sensory overwhelm - bright lighting, loud or competing noises, and visual distractions can reduce productivity and increase stress. Universally designed work areas, that are flexible enough to meet a range of physical, sensory, and cognitive needs, create a welcoming, productive, and inclusive environment for all.

**Table 5 – Work Areas Assessment**

*Consider all spaces where employees do work-related tasks, individually or with a team, including separate office spaces, open working areas, breakout or flexible working areas, or other group spaces, etc.*

| **Consideration**  Prompt questions and context to consider and guide barrier recognition. | **Observations**  Record inclusive elements where they are present and most importantly where they are absent. Consider including why element needs to be addressed. | **Next Steps**  How could any current element be improved?  What else should be included to better support staff and improve inclusion? Make note of any immediate or long-term actions. | **Owner**  Business unit or role responsible for improvement? Timeframe for action? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Do employees have flexibility in how and where they work?**   * Flexible seating options including different types of chairs, sit-to-stand desks, etc. * Flexibility in desk setup and orientation (such as option to face away from a large window or open thoroughfare) * Flexible working arrangements (for example work from home, working at less busy hours, etc.) * Workspaces to accommodate different types of working (such as desks, cubicles, collaborative workstations, etc.) * Access to quiet spaces and/or private working areas (such as nooks and pods) * Work areas that allow for movement (such as enough personal space to allow for stretching, or areas where someone could pace) * Sensory mapping available * Clear and consistent policies and procedures for requesting reasonable adjustments (such as options available for consistent or predictable use of a personal workspace) * Available supports are communicated clearly and with sensitivity | * All individual desks have sit-to-stand, electronic adjustment. * Modular acoustic paneling throughout office space. * Two types of office seating (rolling, adjustable desk chair and stationary option). * One bookable quiet room on each floor. * Inconsistent spacing between individual work areas. * Group/collaborative workstations have additional open space for movement and flow of travel throughout the space. * Level 2 office space includes large windows with view of downtown. * No sensory map currently in place. | * Review seating options and employee preferences; ensure seating. accommodations are included and available in reasonable adjustment policies. * Consult with staff and employee network groups regarding the implementation of additional quiet spaces. * Ensure all individual workstations near the window have flexibility in their orientation and/or options to reduce light and glare. * Establish working group to develop inclusive mapping, including floorplans, sensory mapping and mobility mapping. | Facilities Management/ Property team in consultation with staff networks. |
| **What are the sensory experiences like in the working areas? (such as visual, scent, auditory)**   * Noise absorbing finishes and features * Work areas free from competing background noises * Free from visual distractions (such as large open window facing busy street) * Ample space between desks and work zones in an open office to accommodate navigation and personal space * Noisy office equipment or machinery located in a separate space with sound proofing * Natural light incorporated with options to modify (for example curtains, blinds, frosting) and/or adjustable lighting options * [Inclusive lighting](https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/creating-accessible-and-inclusive-spaces/property-accessibility-assessment-tool/paat-design-features-consider#lighting)[[8]](#footnote-8), including lighting zoned and adjusted to different areas to support different activities * Minimal reflective surfaces and glare * Neutral smell – no strong air fresheners or cleaning products * Neutral colours with minimal or consistent patterns across design and furnishings (such as free from boldly coloured accent walls) * Free from visual clutter – organisation systems in place for shared equipment and resources * Neutral or adjustable temperature | * Office space is separate from kitchen, printing station and other, noisier areas. * Boldly coloured accent wall on one end of the office space. * Combination of LED and natural light on Level 2. * Flexible desk setup and orientation away from open window or other potential visual distractions. * Three separate lighting panels/zones but not currently adjustable in brightness. * Automatic air freshener in the main corridor adjacent to the work area. * Personal and shared storage systems and filing cabinets throughout shared work areas. | * Consult with building manager/owner to change the colour of the accent wall to be more neutral and calming. If not approved to change, identify other ways to minimise the visual distraction and overwhelm. * Investigate options to adjust lighting or to incorporate zones with different tones and brightness. * Remove all automatic air fresheners. | Facilities Management/ Property team in consultation with the building owner and staff networks. |

# Meeting Rooms

Meeting rooms can create challenges for neurodivergent employees, particularly when they present a different or unpredictable environment from other work areas (such as changes in acoustics and lighting, visual distractions, or unpredictable seating arrangements). Inclusive meeting rooms with adjustable lighting, sound absorption, and clear layouts foster participation, reduce sensory overload, and support effective communication.

**Table 6 – Meeting Rooms Assessment**

*Consider any separate meeting rooms, conference rooms, or dedicated rooms for meetings or group activities.*

| **Consideration**  Prompt questions and context to consider and guide barrier recognition. | **Observations**  Record inclusive elements where they are present and most importantly where they are absent. Consider including why element needs to be addressed. | **Next Steps**  How could any current element be improved?  What else should be included to better support staff and improve inclusion? Make note of any immediate or long-term actions. | **Owner**  Business unit or role responsible for improvement? Timeframe for action? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **How will employees locate specific meeting rooms?**   * Inclusive directional signage to meeting rooms from all access points and key facilities throughout the premises * Identification signage clearly distinguishes different meeting rooms (such as numbers or room names) * Property and/or floorplan layout mapping available | * Room numbers and names are present on doors, but not visible from a distance or from lifts. * No additional wayfinding elements or colour-coding used to locate or differentiate meeting rooms. * Staff and visitors often rely on informal verbal directions or trial-and-error to locate rooms | * Add directional signage to all meeting rooms from primary navigation paths – reception and work areas. * Consider implementing additional wayfinding elements (colour-coding or additional signage) to support navigation to meeting rooms – consult with user groups. | Facilities Management/ Property team in consultation with staff networks. |
| **How will staff and visitors access and utilise meeting rooms?**   * Consistent and predictable booking system for meeting rooms * Signage or system in place to see and know that a space is currently in use or occupied * Flexibility in setup and/or seating arrangements * Space to allow for sitting or standing * Rooms with different equipment or for different purposes clearly indicated * Easy to use ICT equipment with clear instructions for use | * Online booking system for all meeting rooms, accessible by all staff. * Four meeting rooms of different sizes and configurations. * Minimal flexibility in setup or seating. * Larger meeting room has ample space for sitting or standing but fixed table position. * ICT equipment consistent throughout all meeting rooms – written instructions for use available in each room. | * Add images/graphics of meeting room setup and configuration to booking system. * Consider modular furniture to allow for increased flexibility in setup and use. * Add visual supports to equipment instructions. | Facilities Management/ Property team. |

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# Shared Areas

Shared areas such as health and diversity rooms, parent rooms or wellness spaces are essential to inclusion and employee wellbeing in the workplace. While varied in purpose and use, it is essential that all shared areas are accessible and predictable. Inclusively designing shared areas with access to quieter zones, varied seating options, and adjustable sensory inputs supports inclusion and social connection.

**Table 7 – Shared Areas Assessment**

*Consider any other shared spaces that employees have access to, including corridors, parent rooms, prayer rooms, gyms, mail rooms, first aid rooms, etc.*

| **Consideration**  Prompt questions and context to consider and guide barrier recognition. | **Observations**  Record inclusive elements where they are present and most importantly where they are absent. Consider including why element needs to be addressed. | **Next Steps**  How could any current element be improved?  What else should be included to better support staff and improve inclusion? Make note of any immediate or long-term actions. | **Owner**  Business unit or role responsible for improvement? Timeframe for action? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **How will employees access and utilise shared areas?**   * Consistent and predictable booking system for any shared spaces that require bookings * Clear, accessible and consistently communicated policies and procedures for use of shared spaces and facilities * Signage reinforces the type of space and any shared expectations or requirements for use, including capacity limits or current occupancy * Predictable and intuitive design and layout to support understanding of purpose and use * Thoughtful consideration of furnishings and finishes that match intended purpose and use (such as handwashing facilities in parent room or soft furnishings and adjustable lighting in wellness and prayer rooms) | * No clear signage about capacity limits or shared expectations in wellness and parent rooms (this information is available in online resources). * No booking system in place for either space, which can lead to double use. | * Install signage inside and outside rooms outlining expectations, available supports, and emergency contact procedures. * Consult user groups about preferred design/layout improvements, including the need for privacy or a booking system. | Facilities Management/ Property team in consultation with staff networks. |
| **What are the sensory experiences like in the other shared areas? (such as visual, scent, auditory)**   * [Inclusive acoustics](https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/creating-accessible-and-inclusive-spaces/property-accessibility-assessment-tool/paat-design-features-consider#acoustics)[[9]](#footnote-9) applied to shared areas and adapted to the specific function and use of the space * Minimal competing sounds in shared spaces and sound proofing between adjacent spaces (such as parent room and open office) * Neutral smell - no strong air fresheners or cleaning products and effective ventilation * Neutral colours with minimal or consistent patterns across design elements and furnishings * Free from visual clutter; organisation systems in place and well signed for shared items * [Inclusive lighting](https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/creating-accessible-and-inclusive-spaces/property-accessibility-assessment-tool/paat-design-features-consider#lighting)[[10]](#footnote-10) applied to shared areas and adapted to the specific function and use of the space | * Wellness space uses soft furnishings and dimmable lights; some background noise from adjacent printer station. * Parent room smells of disinfectant in the morning; poor ventilation noted. * Visual clutter present in shared first aid area (exposed supplies, unlabeled drawers). | * Consult with building manager/owner to improve soundproofing between shared areas and adjacent noisy spaces. * Switch to low-odor cleaning agents and ensure ventilation cycles after use. * Organise and label all storage; add concealed cabinetry to reduce visual clutter. | Facilities Management/ Property team in consultation with the building owner. |

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# Bathrooms

Bathrooms with loud and unpredictable sounds, bright lighting, and poor ventilation create significant barriers for many neurodivergent employees. Bathrooms should be clearly and consistently signed, provide adequate privacy, and be inclusively designed to promote safe and dignified use for everyone.

**Table 8 – Bathrooms Assessment**

*Consider how employees will locate, navigate to, and use all available bathrooms throughout the office, making note of any discrepancies in inclusive elements (such as some bathrooms have hand dryers while others do not or some cubicles are bigger than others, etc.).*

| **Consideration**  Prompt questions and context to consider and guide barrier recognition. | **Observations**  Record inclusive elements where they are present and most importantly where they are absent. Consider including why element needs to be addressed. | **Next Steps**  How could any current element be improved?  What else should be included to better support staff and improve inclusion? Make note of any immediate or long-term actions. | **Owner**  Business unit or role responsible for improvement? Timeframe for action? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Are the bathrooms inclusive for all employees?**   * Single stall options available * Ample room to navigate throughout the bathroom facilities (such as entry to stall, staff to handwashing, etc.) * Cubicle options with ground to roof walls available * Easy to use, universal fittings and fixtures (such as lever handles rather than knobs, sliding locks rather than turning locks, etc.) | * No full privacy stalls with floor-to-ceiling walls apart from accessible toilets. * Lever taps and sliding locks present, but one bathroom has older knob hardware. * Narrow space between entry door and stalls in Level 2 bathroom. | * Upgrade older bathroom hardware to lever-style handles and universal sliding locks. * Consult with building manager/owner to review floorplans and consider options for redesigning entry areas to improve circulation space. | Facilities Management/ Property team in consultation with the building owner. |
| **What are the sensory experiences like in the bathrooms? (such as visual, scent, auditory.)**   * Free from hand dryers or if present, hand dryers no louder than 70 decibels and alternative option provided (such as paper towel) * Any automatic features (such as automatic taps, flushes, doors, etc.) are predictable and well signed with text and universal symbols * Minimal competing sounds; acoustically treated to minimise echo and reverberation * Free from strong air fresheners, soaps, or cleaning product odours with effective ventilation systems to remove and neutralise odours * Neutral colours with minimal or consistent patterns across design elements * Neutral temperature * Minimal reflective surfaces to reduce glare * [Inclusive lighting](https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/creating-accessible-and-inclusive-spaces/property-accessibility-assessment-tool/paat-design-features-consider#lighting)[[11]](#footnote-11) | * Automatic hand dryers in all bathrooms. * Automatic taps – no signage currently in place. * Automatic air freshener on entry to male and female toilets. * Effective ventilation system in place. * Neutral colours, no competing patterns. * Downlighting creates some shadow in stalls. | * Add hand towel option in all bathrooms with hand dryers. * Ensure hand dryers are <70 decibels; if not, source quotes for quieter models. * Remove all automatic air fresheners. * Investigate lighting options – ability to diffuse or redirect downlights? | Facilities Management/ Property team. |

# Kitchen

Kitchens are social and functional spaces that can be unpredictable and overwhelming for neurodivergent employees. Loud and competing noises, bright lights, strong smells and unclear instructions for usage can be distressing or distracting. Ensuring these spaces are inclusively and intuitively designed with clear organisation and adjustable sensory inputs promotes usability and social inclusion.

**Table 9 – Kitchen Assessment**

*Consider all spaces where food and drink are stored and prepared as well as any dedicated spaces where employees eat and drink.*

| **Consideration**  Prompt questions and context to consider and guide barrier recognition. | **Observations**  Record inclusive elements where they are present and most importantly where they are absent. Consider including why element needs to be addressed. | **Next Steps**  How could any current element be improved?  What else should be included to better support staff and improve inclusion? Make note of any immediate or long-term actions. | **Owner**  Business unit or role responsible for improvement? Timeframe for action? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **How will employees locate and navigate to the kitchen space?**   * Clear and consistent directional signage from all key employee work areas * Building and/or floorplans available indicating kitchen location and dedicated eating spaces * For premises with more than one kitchen or kitchens that have different facilities, this is clearly indicated and signed | * Only one small wall-mounted sign near the entrance to the kitchen. * No signage in lift lobby or main corridors indicating kitchen location. * No maps identify the kitchen area. | * Install consistent directional signage to kitchen from all main corridors and shared workspaces. * Include kitchen location on printed and digital maps. | Facilities Management/ Property team. |
| **Where will employees eat food/meals?**   * Flexible seating options (such as combination of group and single seating; chairs of different styles and/or different heights; flexibility to rearrange or modify seating) * Eating locations available away from the direct noise and smells of the kitchen * Any specific requirements or restrictions on where staff and visitors can eat are clearly indicated, signed, and communicated | * Small communal dining table in kitchen area; no separate or quiet eating space provided. * No signage on appropriate eating areas outside of the kitchen. * Some staff eat at their desks, but no guidance is provided. | * Reconfigure and add varied seating options (e.g., small tables, individual nooks, booths) away from kitchen prep area. * Consider adding designated quiet eating zones in adjacent areas. * Clearly communicate eating etiquette and space usage in staff guides or orientation materials. | Facilities Management/ Property team in consultation with business areas and their requirements. |

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# Navigating the Office (Wayfinding)

Wayfinding refers to how people orientate themselves to a space or place and how they navigate throughout that space. Wayfinding is supported by infrastructure and physical design, interior design, graphic design, maps, and signage. Poor signage, complex layouts, or inconsistent cues can cause confusion and anxiety.Clear, consistent, and multisensory wayfinding systems reduce stress and cognitive load, minimise confusion, and contribute to efficient navigation and safe use.

**Table 10 – Navigating the Office (Wayfinding) Assessment**

*Consider all spaces and facilities available to employees. It is recommended that you tour the entire office, stopping throughout to consider the following:*

* *How would someone new to the property or someone lost know where they were at any given point?*
* *How do employees know how to navigate to and from key locations throughout (such as reception to meeting room, office to exit stairs, workspace to kitchen, etc.)?*
* *Where is the nearest emergency exit?*

| **Consideration**  Prompt questions and context to consider and guide barrier recognition. | **Observations**  Record inclusive elements where they are present and most importantly where they are absent. Consider including why element needs to be addressed. | **Next Steps**  How could any current element be improved?  What else should be included to better support staff and improve inclusion? Make note of any immediate or long-term actions. | **Owner**  Business unit or role responsible for improvement? Timeframe for action? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **How are staff and visitors supported to navigate throughout the premises?**   * Pre-journey information available online (such as maps, visual stories) * Maps available on entry, at reception, and throughout premises * [Inclusive signage](https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/creating-accessible-and-inclusive-spaces/property-accessibility-assessment-tool/paat-design-features-consider#signage)[[12]](#footnote-12) throughout premises, including at every entry point, and all directional decision points throughout the premises * Confirmatory signage at all locations where a change of level happens (such as a staircase or ramp in a corridor) * Clear and consistent navigation systems applied throughout the premises (such as colour coding, numbering or naming systems, etc.) | * No floorplan, sensory or mobility maps currently available in public areas or online. * Directional signage is inconsistent—uses multiple styles and symbol sets. * Stair and lift locations not clearly marked at all entries. | * Create consistent, inclusive signage system and update all existing signs accordingly. * Establish working group to develop accessible digital and print maps showing key navigation routes as well as sensory and mobility mapping. | Facilities Management/ Property team in consultation with staff networks and ICT and web services. |
| **What are the sensory experiences like when navigating throughout the premises? (such as visual, scent, auditory)**   * [Inclusive acoustics](https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/creating-accessible-and-inclusive-spaces/property-accessibility-assessment-tool/paat-design-features-consider#acoustics)[[13]](#footnote-13) applied throughout premises with minimal competing or background sounds * Gradual transitions between different spaces to support predictability and to allow for adjusting to different sensory environments (such as curved walls, resting spaces, incorporation of transition lighting or flooring) * Free from any sudden changes in flooring (such as design, pattern or texture) * Neutral smell - no strong air fresheners or cleaning products and effective ventilation throughout the premises * Neutral colours with minimal or consistent patterns across design elements and furnishings (such as free from overwhelming or distracting designs that may negatively impact on wayfinding) * Accessways, corridors, and primary paths of travel are free from visual clutter * [Inclusive lighting](https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/creating-accessible-and-inclusive-spaces/property-accessibility-assessment-tool/paat-design-features-consider#lighting)[[14]](#footnote-14) throughout premises, including the use of transitional and directional lighting to support wayfinding | * Floor transitions are abrupt in some areas - change in colour and material between hallway and open office. * Visual clutter near communal printers and shared supply stations. * Some areas have strong lighting contrast (dark hallway opens into brightly lit room). | * Consult with building manager/owner regarding options for adding transitional lighting and materials to ease the transition between spaces. * Declutter shared spaces; install storage to conceal supplies and reduce visual overload. * Audit lighting levels and implement dimmable or indirect lighting in transition spaces. | Facilities Management/ Property team in consultation with the building owner. |

# Evacuations

Emergency evacuations require clear, consistent instructions and accessible routes. Crowds, loud noises, bright or flashing lights and unclear routes or procedures during evacuations can be particularly stressful for neurodivergent employees. Careful consideration of the sensory environment, clearly signed and accessible evacuation routes, and consistent wayfinding elements throughout the premises will minimise distress and increase safety during evacuations.

**Table 11 – Evacuations Assessment**

*Consider how staff and visitors will locate and access emergency exits and evacuation routes from all key spaces and facilities throughout the office.*

| **Consideration**  Prompt questions and context to consider and guide barrier recognition. | **Observations**  Record inclusive elements where they are present and most importantly where they are absent. Consider including why element needs to be addressed. | **Next Steps**  How could any current element be improved?  What else should be included to better support staff and improve inclusion? Make note of any immediate or long-term actions. | **Owner**  Business unit or role responsible for improvement? Timeframe for action? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Considering all possible employee and visitor locations (such as reception, meeting room, parent room) how are emergency exits and routes identified and located?**   * Consistent exit and evacuation route signage visible from all key locations and facilities throughout premises * Building/venue/floorplan maps available including emergency exit route maps available at all stairs, lifts, entry and exit points throughout premises * Continuous accessible paths of travel throughout the venue, to and from all key locations and exits | * Inconsistent signage throughout premises. * Exit routes visible from work areas and shared corridors – missing signage from kitchen and other shared spaces. * Emergency exit route maps posted at all lifts/stair locations – inconsistent in other spaces. * Accessible paths of travel to and through all key spaces and facilities. * Venue and floor plan mapping not currently displayed. | * Review of all signage to improve consistency and ensure all updates are aligned to inclusive. principles and standards * Updated emergency exit and evacuation routes posted in all key spaces and facilities. * Establish working group to develop inclusive mapping, including floorplans, sensory mapping and mobility mapping. | Facilities Management/ Property team. |
| **How will staff and visitors know what the evacuation procedures are?**   * Clear evacuation policies and procedures available to staff and visitors online, at reception, and displayed throughout the premises * Evacuation procedures included in any pre-journey information or communications * Interactive resources available for staff to review evacuation procedures and familiarise themselves with any alarm sounds or flashing lights | * Evacuation plan posters inconsistent across levels and vary in readability. * No digital or pre-visit information provided. regarding evacuation process * No accessible resources to preview alarms or procedures currently in place. | * Update all evacuation posters with inclusive, high-contrast graphics and simple language. * Develop and share pre-visit evacuation information (including videos, visual stories, sound samples) via intranet or email. * Collaborate with neurodivergent employee networks to co-design accessible resources. | Facilities Management/ Property team in consultation with staff networks. |

1. <https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/how-create-building-accessibility-guide> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/creating-accessible-and-inclusive-spaces/property-accessibility-assessment-tool/paat-design-features-consider#signage> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/creating-accessible-and-inclusive-spaces/property-accessibility-assessment-tool/paat-design-features-consider#signage> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/creating-accessible-and-inclusive-spaces/property-accessibility-assessment-tool/paat-design-features-consider#acoustics> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. <https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/creating-accessible-and-inclusive-spaces/property-accessibility-assessment-tool/paat-design-features-consider#lighting> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. <https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/creating-accessible-and-inclusive-spaces/property-accessibility-assessment-tool/paat-design-features-consider#lighting> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. <https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/creating-accessible-and-inclusive-spaces/property-accessibility-assessment-tool/paat-design-features-consider#lighting> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. <https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/creating-accessible-and-inclusive-spaces/property-accessibility-assessment-tool/paat-design-features-consider#lighting> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. <https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/creating-accessible-and-inclusive-spaces/property-accessibility-assessment-tool/paat-design-features-consider#acoustics> [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. <https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/creating-accessible-and-inclusive-spaces/property-accessibility-assessment-tool/paat-design-features-consider#lighting> [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. <https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/creating-accessible-and-inclusive-spaces/property-accessibility-assessment-tool/paat-design-features-consider#lighting> [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. <https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/creating-accessible-and-inclusive-spaces/property-accessibility-assessment-tool/paat-design-features-consider#signage> [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. <https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/creating-accessible-and-inclusive-spaces/property-accessibility-assessment-tool/paat-design-features-consider#acoustics> [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. <https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-and-construction/creating-accessible-and-inclusive-spaces/property-accessibility-assessment-tool/paat-design-features-consider#lighting> [↑](#footnote-ref-14)