

Disability Access to City Funded Shelters Training for Shelter Staff

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Did You Know...



- Approximately 19% of SF's population has some type of disability?
- 37.8% have physical disability
- 26.1% have mental disability
- 17.1% have sensory disability

The Numbers Game...



- 16.4% of people with disabilities are below poverty level (2X general population).
- About 35% of homeless shelter clients have a hx of mental health disability diagnosed by DPH.
- Realistically, the majority of clients have one or more visible or invisible disabilities.

Why This Training?

- ❑ To meet the legal obligations of City-funded shelters as contractors.
- ❑ To understand the Standards of Care that pertain to people with disabilities.
- ❑ To access information and resources that will enable you to provide equal access to services.



City Contractors Must Comply with the ADA!

- A government agency does not limit or lessen its ADA responsibility by hiring a contractor to provide a program or service to the public.

We are responsible!

- A government agency must ensure that its contractors provide programs, services or activities in an accessible manner both architecturally and programmatically.

We must ensure contractors' compliance!

Pertinent Standards of Care

- Treat all shelter clients equally with respect and dignity.
- **Provide shelter services in compliance with the ADA.**
- Provide clients with access to electricity for charging cell phones and other medical equipment for clients with disabilities.
- Provide access to free local calls during non-sleeping hours including TTY access and amplified phones for clients who are deaf or hearing impaired.
- Designated ADA-accessible sleeping units.
- Provide all printed materials produced by the City and shelters in alternate formats such as large print, Braille, etc. upon request.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

A federal civil rights law that protects the rights of people with disabilities in employment, access to City / State programs and services, public accommodations and communication.

Basic Principles

- Don't Deny Participation or Service
- Don't Segregate
- Don't Retaliate or Coerce



Case Examples in the Shelter System

- Denial of Service or Participation: Operator of a City homeless shelter excludes a resident with seizure disorder who had a grand mal seizure at the shelter.
- Segregation of City Programs: A shelter that has a 2nd story cafeteria with no elevator, provides a meal tray for wheelchair users on the ground floor.
- Retaliation or Coercion: After complaining of access violations, a shelter resident with a mobility impairment is written up on minor violations, which are usually ignored in other residents.

Review

Self-assessment questions 1 and 2

The ADA is a Civil Rights Law with NEW Expectations

- Unlike other civil rights statutes, the ADA creates an affirmative obligation to create equal access so that people with disabilities have the same opportunity to benefit from a program, activity or service as others.
- We have the obligation to modify our policies, practices and procedures when needed to provide equal access – this is called

Reasonable Modification.

Reasonable Modification Examples

- ❑ Allowing a cat into the shelter that helps a client w/ a severe anxiety disorder.
- ❑ Giving a client who is in substance abuse recovery a late pass so he can attend an NA meeting.
- ❑ Reserving bottom bunks in the reservation system just for people with mobility impairments.

What We **DON'T** Need to Do

Fundamental Alteration

- A homeless single adult shelter does not have to provide a private room for a client with agoraphobia.
- Shelter staff does not have to assist disabled clients with personal care needs such as bathing, dressing, etc.

Effective Communication

- City-funded shelters must provide clients with disabilities the same opportunity as others to enjoy, receive and understand information.
- When the shelter provides an **auxiliary aid or service** to ensure effective communication, staff must give primary consideration to the aid or service the individual with a disability has requested.

Steps to Effective Communication

1. Advance preparation with well thought-out policies and procedures.
2. Staff and volunteer training.
3. Public information about available services through signage.



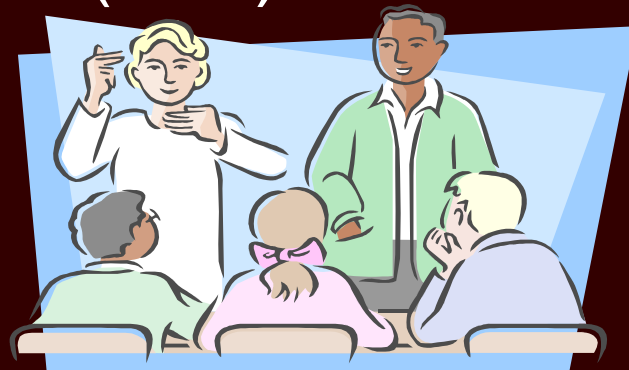
For People Who Are Blind or Have Low Vision

- Audio Description
- Braille
- Large Print
- Readers
- Tactile Materials
- Audio tape
- Computer disc / CD-ROM / electronic version text



For People with Hearing or Speech Disabilities

- Sign Language or Oral Interpreter
- Assistive Listening Device (ALD)
- Captioning or Computer-Aided Real-time Reporting (CART)
- TTY / TDD phone
- Telephone Relay System (711)



For People with Cognitive / Mental Disabilities



- Focus on one topic at the time.
- Show or demonstrate verbal instructions.
- Rephrase and simplify concepts into smaller components.
- Make associations with already familiar ideas.
- Use pictures and other visual aids.
- Inform people before transitions take place.
- Respond to clients' level of interest.

What We **DON'T** Need to Do

Undue Administrative Burden

- Providing the Standards of Care legislation on audiotape if the document is available online and the Library provides access to a computer that can read it aloud.

Review

Self-assessment questions 3, 4 and 5

Physical Access - Existing Facilities

- The ADA does not require that an entity make every facility accessible. It does require that all City programs be accessible.
- In theory, this concept of program access allows the City to have multiple programs in various sites, with only a portion of them accessible.
- In practice, ensuring equality of service using this approach is extremely difficult.

Maintenance of Accessible Features

- Public entities must maintain in working order equipment and features of facilities that are required to provide ready access to individuals with disabilities.
- Isolated or temporary interruptions in access due to maintenance and repair of accessible features are not prohibited.

Review

Self-assessment questions 6, 7 and 8

Steps to Access ---Notice

WHEELCHAIR ACCESS

DISABILITY SENSITIVITY

RTC
REAL TIME CAPTIONING

TTY MACHINES

ASSISTIVE LISTENING DEVICES

**Would you like help with access to our services?
Please let us know!**

SIGN LANGUAGE

BRAILLE

INFORMATION AND HELP

Large Print

LARGE PRINT

AMPLIFIED PHONES

Questions? Need more help?
Contact the Mayor's Office on Disability: PH: 554-6789; TTY 554-6799

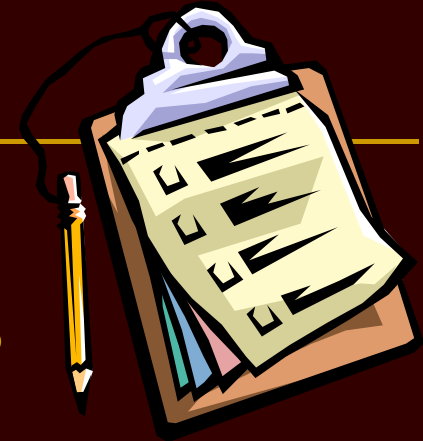
- Use the MOD version, or your own.
- It should have clear, simple language.
- List the ADA liaisons' names & contact info.

Steps to Access --- Reasonable Modification Policy

TRAIN ALL STAFF

Where are the forms located?

- If it is obvious, or easy, “Just Do It”
- If it doesn’t make sense, is outrageous or it seems a bit more complex, give to a supervisor or call MOD.
- Respond promptly with a timeline for action.



Steps to Access --- Auxiliary Aids and Services & Alternative Formats

1. MOD has lists with City approved vendors on the website. Schedule in advance if possible.
2. Contact Magaly Fernandez at Human Services Agency (tel. 415.557.5950) for authorization and assistance.
3. Review and apply for MOD's Reasonable Accommodation funding if applicable.

Steps to Access --- Grievance Procedure

An administrative option instead of a lawsuit. A new grievance procedure is at the Board of Supervisors, with 20 business day response time.

Ensure that your staff understands the process and can inform customers of their options.



Mayor's Office on Disability

- **Programmatic & Communication Access**

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