

# Disability Access to the City's Social Service Agencies: An ADA Primer



Joanna Fraguli  
Deputy Director, Programmatic Access  
CCSF Mayor's Office on Disability

[www.sfgov.org/mod](http://www.sfgov.org/mod)

# Disability Statistics



- Approximately 19% of SF's population has some type of disability
- 16.4% of people with disabilities are below poverty level (2X general population).
- This means that we are more likely to see clients with multiple disabilities in need of City services.
- Realistically the vast majority of your clients have one or more visible or invisible disabilities.

## A Survey of California Physicians: (Fall 2002) Providing Primary Health Care for PWDs

- A total of 501 questionnaires -response rate of 26%.
- 20% of the physicians responding were unaware of the ADA and 45% were not aware of its architectural requirements. Most common architectural problems cited were exam room accessibility and exam table accessibility.
- 61.5% of doctors found it more difficult to examine PWDs and spent more time in performing the examination.
- The majority of respondents acknowledged the need for training in med school / residency.

# The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990: A Civil Rights Law, with Standard Expectations

- **Don't Deny Participation or Service**

If the transportation provided by the agency operated without an available wheelchair accessible van, it would exclude wheelchair users from the program.

- **Don't Segregate**

If all people with psychiatric disabilities were relegated to one public health clinic for routine medical care, this would be an example of segregation based on disability.

- **Don't Retaliate or Coerce**

After she complains of access violations, a case manager writes up and refuses to work with a client with a mobility impairment based on minor rule violations that staff usually ignores.

# What is Programmatic Access?

**WHEELCHAIR ACCESS** **DISABILITY SENSITIVITY** **RTC** **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** **AMPLIFIED PHONES**

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

- City services should be *“accessible to and usable by people with disabilities”*
- It includes:
  1. Reasonable modifications to policies & procedures
  2. Communication access
  3. Architectural access

# Affirmative Obligations of the ADA

## ■ *Reasonable Modification*

We have the obligation to modify our policies, practices and procedures when needed to provide equal access.

### Examples:

1. Allowing customers with disabilities to have a seat while waiting in line at a customer service center.
2. An individual with agoraphobia is allowed to bring her emotional support animal into the exam room at her local community clinic.
3. Upon request, nursing staff assists a woman with severe arthritis to remove her clothing and put on a gown in preparation for a medical exam.

# Effective Communication

- The City must provide people with disabilities the same opportunity as others to enjoy, receive and understand information from the City.
- When the City provides an **auxiliary aid or service**, we must give primary consideration to the aid or service the individual with a disability has requested.

# Effective Communication is *Required in..*

- **Customer transactions & meetings**
- **Public events / community meetings**
- **Information dissemination**
  - Brochures, maps, schedules & other print materials
  - Websites & other online information
  - Signage , electronic boards & information kiosks

For Deaf / HOH Customers	For Blind / Low Vision Customers
Sign Language Interpreters (ASL) (ESL)	Large Print (sans serif font size 18+)
Video Remote Interpreting (VRI)	Tactile Maps
Real Time Captioning / Assistive Listening Devices (ALD), pocket talkers	Accessible electronic docs & screen reading software, magnifiers
Open & Closed Captions for videos	Audio descriptions



# For People with Cognitive / Mental Disabilities

- Focus on one topic at the time
- Demonstrate verbal instructions
- 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



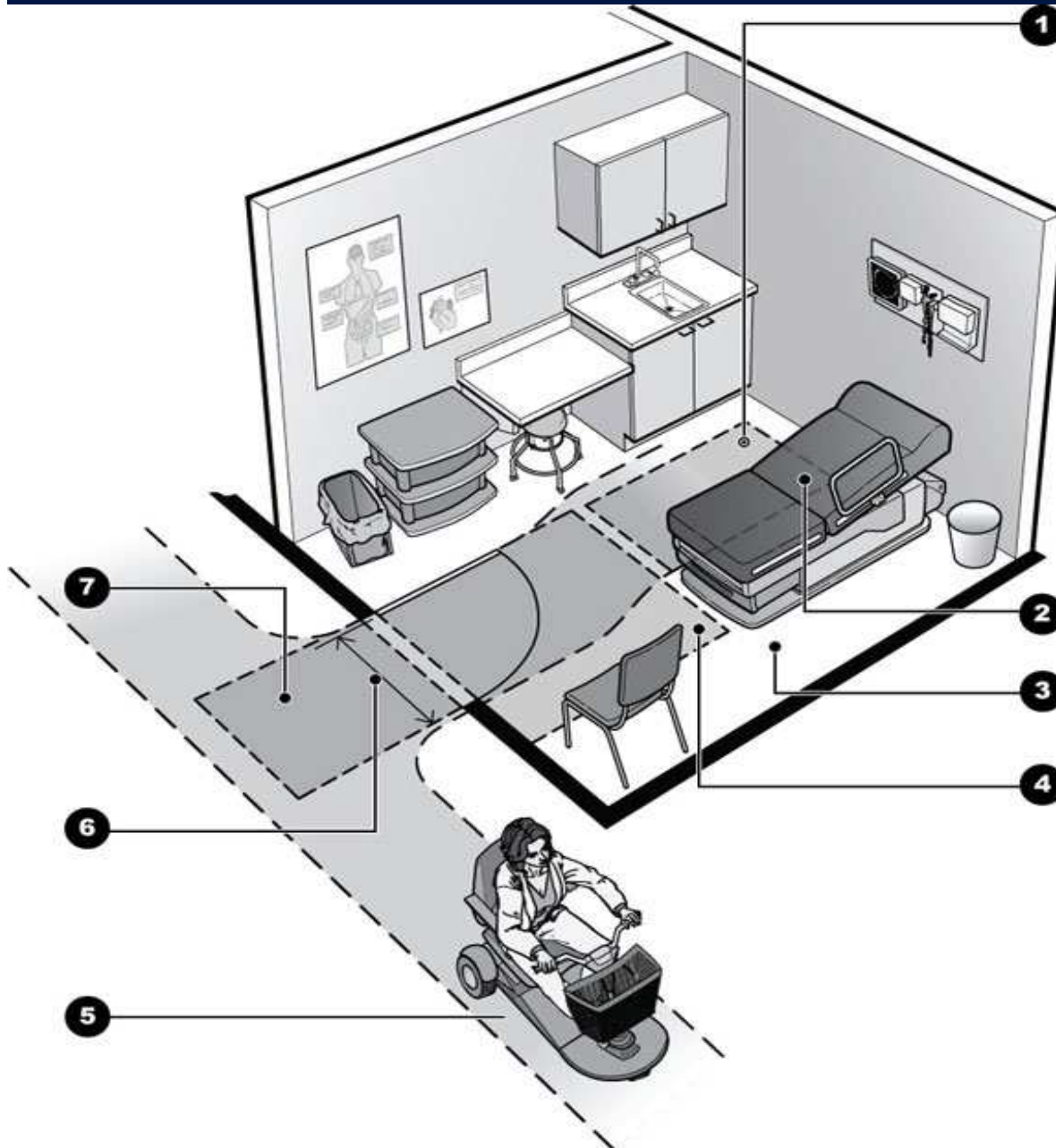
# **Architectural Access & Maintenance of Accessible Features**

- We have an obligation to deliver our programs and services in an accessible facility, even if it is already existing. Ways to provide physical accessibility, are through building alterations, redesign of equipment or delivery of programs in an alternate accessible location.
- We must maintain in working order equipment and features of facilities that are required to provide ready access , however, temporary interruptions due to maintenance and repair are allowable.

# Common Questions about Architectural Access & Medical Care Facilities

- Is it OK to examine a patient who uses a wheelchair in the wheelchair, because the patient cannot get onto the exam table independently?
- Is it OK to tell a patient who has a disability to bring along someone who can help at the exam?
- I don't want to discriminate against patients with disabilities, but I don't want my staff to injure their backs by lifting people who use wheelchairs onto exam tables. If my nurse has a bad back, then she doesn't have to help lift a patient, does she?
- If I lease my medical office space, am I responsible for making sure the examination room, waiting room, and toilet rooms are accessible?

# Features Of an Accessible Exam Room



1. A clear floor space, 30" X 48", next to the exam table and adjoining accessible route make a side transfer possible.
2. Adjustable height accessible exam table lowers for transfers.
3. Providing space between table and wall allows staff to assist with patient transfers and positioning.
4. Amount of floor space needed beside and at end of exam table will vary depending on method of patient transfer lift size.
5. Accessible route connects to other accessible public and common use spaces.
6. Accessible entry door has 32" minimum clear opening width with door open 90 degrees.
7. Maneuvering clearances are needed at the door to the room.

## *Next Steps for Full Disability Access...*

- Provide notice to your customers about disability access features & policies
- Become familiar w/ available resources Citywide & develop policies in advance to handle disability related requests
- Empower your staff w/ information, continuous training and the authority to do the “right thing”
- Always consult with your department’s ADA coordinator.

# The Mayor's Office on Disability is Here to Help !

For a number of ADA Resources please visit our website:  
[www.sfgov.org/mod](http://www.sfgov.org/mod)

- *Citywide ADA Grievance Procedure:*  
<http://www.sfgov2.org/index.aspx?page=496>
- *Accessible Public Events Checklist:*  
<http://www.sfgov2.org/index.aspx?page=416>
- *Accessible Public Meeting Locations:*  
<http://www.sfgov2.org/index.aspx?page=398>
- *Resources for Programmatic & Communication Access:*  
<http://www.sfgov2.org/index.aspx?page=501>