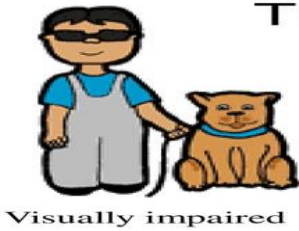




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**December is Disability Awareness Month**

There are different kinds of disabilities.



Visually impaired



Hearing impaired



Mobility impaired



Learning difficulty

### **Disability Awareness & Etiquette Tips**

Communicate directly with the person with a disability, not with their family, friends or companions, unless they direct you to do so.

### **Individuals with visual Impairments**

- Always identify yourself when interacting with someone who has a visual impairment. Alert the individual when you are speaking directly to them if more than the two of you are present.
- Ask the individual how much detailed information they would like you to provide for them.
- Even though you are assisting the person, still describe actions you are taking with them.
- The generally accepted way to assist a person with a visual impairment is to stand beside them and offer your arm (L-shaped) closest to them, and alert them to grab it. Then, walk slightly ahead of the person using their chosen pace.
- It is acceptable to give “clock cues” when giving directions, such as “the chair is at 12 o’clock (straight ahead).”
- Do not touch or push someone’s wheelchair or grab their mobility device without their permission, since it is considered part of their personal space.





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- Be willing to “deliver the service” to the individual using a mobility device if barriers exist.
- Be aware of obstacles that may exist that impede a clear path of travel.

### Individuals with Speech Impairments

- Listen attentively when talking with people who have difficulty speaking and wait for them to finish. You may need to ask them questions that require a “yes or no” response to make sure you understood correctly.
- Writing notes or pointing to objects or printed materials may be an effective way to communicate with individuals who are speech impaired.

### Individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing

- Using gestures and basic signs may be a way to enhance your communication. Writing simple notes or pointing to objects or printed material can also be effective.
- Speak directly to the person rather than through a companion or sign language interpreter who may be present.

### Individuals with Cognitive Disabilities

- Provide information to the individual in a short, concise manner. The language used should be basic and easy to understand.
- Using visual images of information can allow for effective communication.
- When giving instructions, you may need to break down tasks into basic, easy to follow steps.

Source: Excerpts from City of Chicago Training Org.

***“You shall not insult the deaf, or put a stumbling block in front of the blind, but you shall fear your God. I am the LORD”.*** Leviticus 19:14

