

Schedule “A”

STANDARD PRACTICES Barriers and Solutions

HEARING DISABILITY

Definitions:

Deaf – severe to profound hearing loss.

Hard of Hearing – a person who uses their residual hearing and speech to communicate.

Deafened –to hear poorly or not at all.

Tips for Service:

- Attract customer’s attention before speaking – gently touch on the shoulder or wave your hand, if necessary
- Look directly at the person
- You may have to use a pen and paper
- Speak clearly, keep your hands away from your face
- Reduce background noise
- Ensure appropriate lighting

DEAFBLIND DISABILITY

Definition: Cannot see or hear to some degree. Many will be accompanied by a support person.

Tips for Service:

- Speak directly to the customer, not the support person.
- Identify yourself to both parties.

INTELLECTUAL OR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY

Definition: Intellectual development and capacity that is below average. Can mildly or profoundly limit ability to learn, communicate, do everyday activities and live independently. May be an invisible disability. May understand you more than you know.

Tips for Service:

- Don’t assume what the customer can or cannot do.
- Use plain language.
- Take your time, be patient.

- Ask: “Do you understand this?”
- Provide one piece of information at a time – step by step instruction.
- Offer information in simpler concepts.

LEARNING DISABILITY

Definition: Affects how a person acquires, interprets, retains or takes in information. In many cases individual has average or above average intelligence. May affect: language base learning, mathematics, writing, fine motor skills.

Tips for Service:

- Take some time, be patient.
- Demonstrate a willingness to assist.
- Speak normally, clearly and directly to your customer.
- Provide information in a way that works for your customer (ie: pen and paper).
- Be prepared to explain any materials you provide.

MENTAL HEALTH DISABILITY

Definition: The absence of psychological well-being and satisfactory adjustment to society. Some common features of mental health disabilities are: phobias and panic attacks, hallucinations, mood swings, bipolar disorders (depression and manic phases).

Tips for Service:

- Treat customer with the same level of respect and consideration.
- Be confident and reassuring.
- Do not be confrontational.
- If the customer is in crisis, ask how best to help.
- Take customer seriously.
- Don't take things personally.

SPEECH OR LANGUAGE DISABILITY

Definition: May have problems communicating. May be difficult to pronounce words, slurring or stuttering. May use communicative boards or other assistive devices.

Tips for Service:

- Don't make assumptions.
- Give whatever time they need to get their point across.
- Ask questions that can be answered “Yes” or “No”, if possible.
- Don't interrupt or finish your customer's sentences.
- May have to use pen and paper.
- Say: “I don't understand, can you repeat that?”, if needed.

PHYSICAL OR MOBILITY DISABILITY

Definition:

May restrict a person in the following ways:

- control or speed of movements
- ability to grasp some objects
- ability to walk long distances
- ability to sit or stand for prolonged periods
- Can be present at birth, result from disease or injury or may be temporary

Tips for Service:

- Speak directly to the customer.
- Ask before you help.
- Respect personal space.
- Don't move any items they may have.
- Describe what you are going to do beforehand.
- Don't leave your customer in an awkward, dangerous or undignified position.

VISION DISABILITY

Definition: Most individuals who are legally blind have some remaining vision, very few are totally blind. Low or no vision can restrict ability to read signs, locate landmarks or see hazards. May use guide dog or white cane. May need to view written documents in large print, or with help of magnifier.

Tips for Service:

- Don't assume customer can't see you.
- Speak directly to customer.
- Offer your elbow to guide.
- If they accept, walk slowly, wait for permission.
- Identify landmarks.
- Be precise and descriptive with information.
- Don't leave customer.

Most Importantly – recognize your nervousness and relax! People with disabilities are generally aware they may need some accommodations and will work with you. Just remember to ask how you can help.