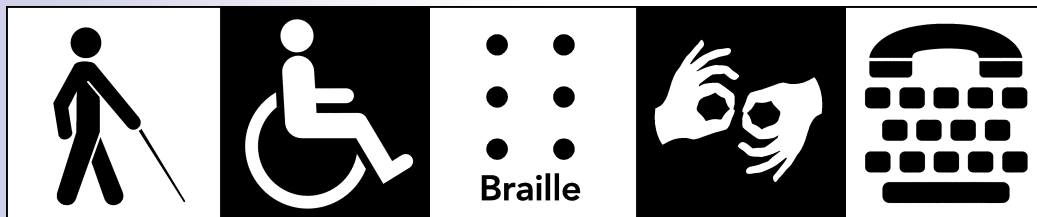


# Disability Awareness Training

Prepared by the Community and Cultural Services Department

2010





# Introduction

- The purpose of this training is to provide City staff basic knowledge of:
  - The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
  - How to interact comfortably with a diverse population of people with disabilities, particularly in the work setting
  - Disability awareness in general

# Americans with Disabilities ADA

**Pres. George H.W. Bush on signing the ADA  
July 26, 1990**

“Together, we must remove the physical barriers we have created and the social barriers that we have accepted. For ours will never be a truly prosperous nation until all within it prosper.”



# Background and Scope of the ADA

## ■ The ADA:

- Is based on the same principles as earlier civil rights legislation, including the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in employment, access to public and private programs, services, facilities and transportation



# Background and Scope of the ADA

## ■ The ADA:

- Requires access for people with disabilities to most private facilities and programs
- Requires access for people with disabilities to government programs and services



# Background and Scope of the ADA

- Requires access to telecommunications, including:
  - teletypewriters (machines using telephone lines to send messages recorded on paper),
  - relay calls (calls made with a teletypewriter on one end and a telephone on the other with an operator, who has both, in the middle), and
  - telephone-based emergency services



# Background and Scope of the ADA

## ■ Telecommunications (cont'd)

### □ Teletypewriters (TTYs) are located at:

- Santa Monica Airport (310) 572-4492
- City Hall Information Desk (310) 917-6626
- Civic Auditorium Business Office (310) 587-9277
- Ken Edwards Center (310) 5476-4754
- Main Library Reference Desk (310) 395-8499
- Big Blue Bus (310) 395-6024
- Police Department non-emergency (310) 394-1773
- Human Services Division City Hall (310) 458-8696



- ### □ Although the City maintains a TTY stock for the rare communication, text messaging and emails have almost completely replaced TTYs as the preferred form of written communication in the deaf and speech-impaired communities in the U.S.

# Acceptable Terms

## ■ Disability

- General term used for a permanent or long-term condition that interferes with a person's ability to do something independently like walk, talk, see, hear, take care of oneself, learn, etc.





# Acceptable Terms



## (Disability cont'd)

- May refer to a physical condition such as paraplegia or arthritis, a mental health condition such as depression or bipolar disorder, a cognitive or intellectual condition such as a developmental disability or a sensory condition such as blindness or deafness



# Acceptable Terms



## ■ Blindness

- A condition resulting in total loss of eyesight
- It is not appropriate to refer to people as “blind” when they have partial vision- use “partially sighted”



# Acceptable Terms

## ■ Congenital Disability

- Describes a disabling condition that has been present since birth- the term “birth defect” is not appropriate
- Examples include partial or missing limb or organ, some kinds of deafness and blindness and Down Syndrome

# Acceptable Terms

- **Developmental Disability**
  - Describes cognitive or intellectual disabilities incurred before the age of 22 that may continue indefinitely
  - Includes conditions resulting in cognitive or intellectual disabilities such as Down Syndrome, autism, and some learning disabilities like dyslexia

# Unacceptable Terms



## ■ Handicapped

- Often used unacceptably as a synonym for disability- except when citing laws or regulations (such as parking signs), it should not be used to describe a disability
- Do not use “handicap” as an adjective to describe a person (e.g. do not say, “the handicapped child”)

# Portrayal of People With Disabilities

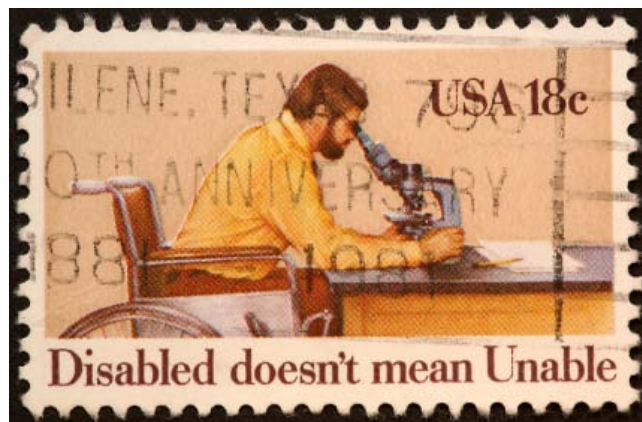
## ■ Emphasize abilities and actions

- Example: “she is emotionally stable enough to live in a group home” rather than “she is too impaired to live by herself”
- Example: “he raced in the wheelchair category of the 2010 L.A. Marathon” rather than “he can’t run marathons anymore”
- Example: “she was accepted into the church choir” rather than “she got the part despite her severe stuttering”



# Portrayal of People With Disabilities

- Do not sensationalize a disability by using phrases like “afflicted with,” “suffers from” or “victim of”
- Instead, say “a person who has multiple sclerosis” or “a person who had polio”



# Portrayal of People With Disabilities

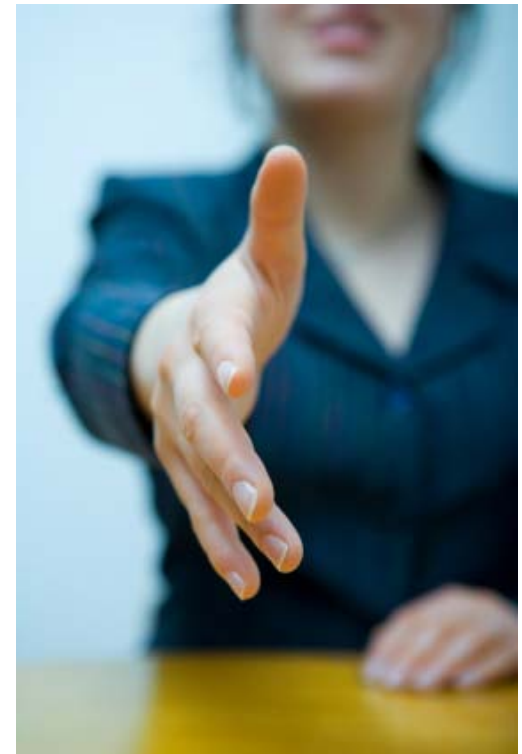
- Don't imply having a disability is a disease; some diseases like AIDS or cancer may cause disability, but the disability itself is not a disease
- People with disabilities should never be referred to as patients unless specifically referring to a doctor-patient relationship





# Greeting Etiquette

- People with disabilities ask to be looked at as individuals and treated with respect and dignity, as others are treated
- Greetings: The standard courtesies for greeting people should be extended to individuals with disabilities in the same manner as those without disabilities



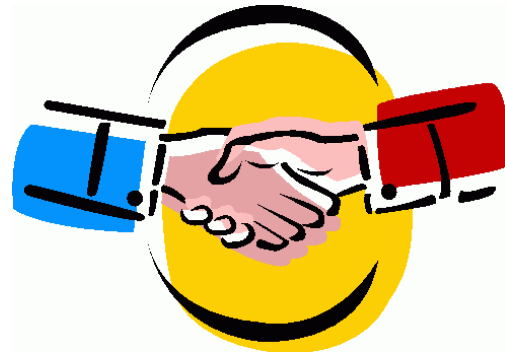
# Greeting Etiquette

- Voice Pitch and Volume
  - Use a normal voice when extending a verbal welcome - do not raise your voice unless requested
  - The mistake of using a too-loud voice most commonly happens when speaking to people who are deaf or hard of hearing or who are blind or who have low vision



# Greeting Etiquette

- When introduced to a person with a disability, it is usually appropriate to offer to shake hands
- People who use an artificial limb or who have limited hand or arm function can often shake hands



# Greeting Etiquette

- Shaking hands with the person's left hand is appropriate - let the person with the disability guide you
  - If the person with a disability indicates that he or she does not want to or cannot shake hands, nod a greeting and/or smile as appropriate
  - If you are not sure, wait for the person with a disability to make the first move



# Conversation Etiquette

- Treat adults in a manner befitting adults
  - Often, people make the mistake of treating or speaking to a person with a visible disability as a child
    - be sensitive to the language you use and the tone of your voice
- Call a person by his or her first name only when using the first name of all others present
  - For example, don't make the mistake of calling the elderly resident who is deaf by his first name and his adult daughter Miss Smith

# Conversation Etiquette

- Avoid being overly formal in addressing someone with a disability
  - Example: Don't say "ma'am" to the person with the disability when you are not addressing everyone else the same way
  - Do say "please" and "thank you" and "you're welcome"

# Conversation Etiquette

- Don't worry about using phrases like "let's take a walk" to someone who uses a wheelchair or "see you later" to someone who is blind



- If you substitute words like "roll" or "wheel" for "walk" or "run", you make the disability into more of an issue than it really is

# Conversation Etiquette

- Eye Contact and Eye Level
  - Give the same amount of eye contact to a person with a disability, regardless of the nature of the disability, as you would a person with no disability





# Conversation Etiquette

## (Eye Contact and Eye Level cont'd)

- Eye level is also important- a common courtesy is to place yourself at approximately the same level as the individual with a disability whenever possible, especially for extended conversations



- For example, when conversing with someone in a wheelchair, it is polite to sit or kneel if possible to maintain eye contact by being on the same level

# Conversation Etiquette

## ■ Hearing Loss

- Speak directly to the person who is deaf or who has a hearing loss, not to a Sign Language interpreter or companion



# Conversation Etiquette

## ■ Hearing loss

- To get the attention of a person with a hearing impairment who is not looking at you, tap the person on the shoulder
- Look directly at the person, speak clearly and don't put your hand or any other object in front of your mouth
- Shouting won't help – If necessary, write down what you want to say so it can be read



# Conversation Etiquette



## ■ Speech Impairments

- Listen attentively to a person who has a speech impairment such as stuttering or a physical condition that makes speech difficult
- Keep your manner encouraging rather than trying to correct the person to show you are patient and want to hear what they have to say

# Conversation Etiquette

(Speech Impairments cont'd)

□ Exercise patience when listening



□ Don't pretend to understand if you are having difficulty doing so - repeat what you understand and let the other person's reactions guide you, such as when they nod or shake their head "no"



# Conversation Etiquette

## ■ Vision Loss

- When greeting a person with vision loss, always identify yourself and others who may be with you and where they are situated
  - For example: It's Jane and on my right is John Smith



# Conversation Etiquette

(Vision Loss cont'd)

- When conversing in a group, give a vocal cue by announcing the name of the person to whom you are speaking
  - For example: John, do you know...

# Assistance Etiquette

- Offering assistance

**The rule is: *stop, ask, listen***

- It's acceptable to offer assistance at any time, but don't attempt to provide assistance without first asking the person if he or she would like it





# Assistance Etiquette

(Offering Assistance cont'd)

- If the person accepts the offer, ask how you can help
- Do not assume you know what kind of assistance the person desires - ask the person to tell you what assistance they want



# Service Animals

- More than 12,000 people with a disability in the United States use a service animal
  - Most familiar are guide dogs for those who are blind or who have very low vision, but service animals assist people with other disabilities as well



# Service Animals

- A service animal is not required to have any special certification or wear an identifying vest
- Many disabilities are not visible, so every person accompanied by a service animal may not “look” disabled



# Service Animals

## ■ Service Animal Etiquette

- A service animal is not a pet- do not touch the animal without permission from its owner
- Do not make noises at or feed the service animal- it may distract the animal from doing its job



# Service Animal Etiquette

- Never ask what tasks a service animal is trained to perform- those tasks usually indicate what the person's disability is
- The only question you should ask is if it is a service animal or a pet



# Quiz

## Question #1

- Q: What is the ADA based on and in which areas does the ADA prohibit discrimination?



# Quiz

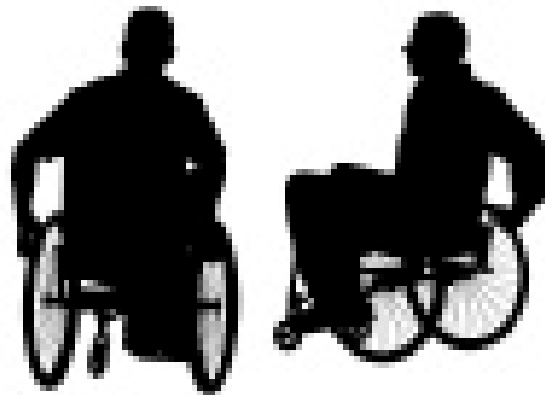
## Question #1

- A: The ADA is based on previous civil rights legislation and prohibits discrimination in
  - Employment
  - Access to public services, programs and facilities
  - Access to most private facilities and programs
  - Access to telecommunications

# Quiz

## Question #2

- Q: Which is a better way of referring to a person: the person is confined to a wheelchair or the person uses a wheelchair?





# Quiz

## Question #2

- A: Because it is better to focus on abilities and actions, the preferred way is to say the person uses a wheelchair





# Quiz

## Question #3

- Q: When you see someone with a disability who appears to be having difficulty with a task, how should you help?

# Quiz

## Question #3

- A: Ask the person if they need help before attempting to assist them
  - If they say they want help, ask how you can help- don't just assume you know what they want



# Quiz

## Question #4

- Q: Which is better: “a victim of cancer” or “a person with cancer”?

# Quiz

## Question #4

- A: “A person with cancer”. Always put the person first and don’t sensationalize the disability



# Quiz

## Question #5

- Q: When someone with a speech impairment is telling you what she needs and you can't understand her, what should you do?

# Quiz

## Question #5

- A: Listen carefully and watch for cues such as pointing. Repeat phrases you think you understand to her and watch and listen to see if you understood them correctly. If appropriate, offer pen and paper for written communications.



# Disability Awareness Training

- Thank you for participating – you have completed the training!
- The City has many online resources for disability and accessibility issues; they can be found at: [www.smgov.net/accessible](http://www.smgov.net/accessible)
- For any questions about this PowerPoint , please call Janet Hand, Sr. Administrative Analyst, at (310) 458-8701 or email [janet.hand@smgov.net](mailto:janet.hand@smgov.net)



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