



Committed to INCLUSION

Ways to Become More Inclusive

If you own or operate a business, chances are you have tried many different ways to attract more customers to increase your sales. Have you ever wondered if your business has physical barriers that prevent customers from accessing your shop, restaurant or office?

Making your business accessible for people of all abilities not only increases your customer base and makes good economic sense, but benefits everyone and helps to create a more inclusive society.

Here are some tips to promote accessibility in your place of business

Outside

- Keep walkways and accessible parking clear and free from clutter or snow, and make sure premises are well lit.
- Post clear signage for accessible entrance.
- Automatic doors to enter and exit.
- Available ramps in place of stairs.

Inside

- Accessible restrooms are available.
 - An accessible restroom has a door that is at least 34 inches wide, a grab bar at the side and back of the toilet, 32 inches of space besides the toilet, and a turning radius of 47 inches. You can provide even more space if the door on the bathroom stall swings out, instead of in.
 - In public restrooms mirrors, soap dispensers and paper towels should be easy to reach.
- Aisle ways should have 6 feet to accommodate wheelchairs and mobility devices.
- Ensure meeting tables have an open area for wheelchair access
- Portable debit machines or an extendable cord give customers a more convenient way of paying, especially for individuals using a wheelchair or for those who are not tall enough to reach a fixed debit machine.
- If you have a TV available for customers, be sure closed captioning is on

Restaurants

- Adjust the lighting to meet and support the needs of your customers/employees. While mood lighting creates a casual/romantic setting, it may not be bright enough for customers to read menus or communicate when using sign language.
- Use easy to read menus with pictures.
- Remove a chair, if needed, to accommodate a wheelchair at a table.

Safety

- Consider how persons with disabilities will be evacuated from your facility in an emergency, and include that procedure in your emergency evacuation plan. Make sure your employees know the procedure.
- Consider flashing lights for emergency notifications.

Other Considerations

- Welcome service animals into your establishment.
- Use "people first" language. Refer to a person as an individual with a disability rather than a "disabled person," or a "handicapped person."
- When speaking with a person with a disability who has a companion, direct your comments to the person with a disability, not the companion.
- Always ask first if a person with a disability needs assistance, never assume.
- Feedback is a great opportunity to learn about customers and their thoughts on how accessible your business actually is. Be open to receiving feedback.
- Signs using a 72-point, sans-serif font (e.g., Arial, Verdana) are easier to read, make navigation more straight-forward.
- Ensure employees are prepared to interact with all customers. Providing staff with training will ensure that everyone is informed on how to accommodate and include all people.



If you have questions or want more information on how to make your business more accessible, call us at 330-725-7751; option 3.