



# The Roadmap

A “Roadmap” that proactive employees can follow to assure that they are taking all the actions necessary to address the recruitment, hiring, retention, and advancement of individuals with disabilities in their organizations.



National Business  
& Disability Council



# Glossary of Disability-Related Terms

## **ADA**

The Americans with Disabilities Act

## **ADAAG**

The Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines

## **Area of Rescue**

an area, which has direct access to an exit, where people who are unable to use stairs may remain temporarily in safety to await further instructions or assistance during emergency evacuation.

## **Assistance Animals**

Enhances the lives of people with disabilities by providing highly trained assistance dogs or simian monkeys to enhance their independence or quality of life.

## **Assistive Device**

Any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.

## **Audible Alarms**

Alarms that produce a sound that exceeds the prevailing equivalent sound level in the room or space by at least 15 dbA or exceeds any maximum sound level with a duration of 60 seconds by 5 dbA, whichever is louder.

## **Assistive Technology**

Any item, piece of equipment, or product system that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities:

## **Barriers (Architectural)**

Some common building standards under both the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) and the Americans with Disabilities Act Architectural Guidelines (ADAAG) that eliminate common physical and architectural barriers. Examples of some architectural barriers may include:

- Walkways - 4 feet minimum width
- Doorways - 32 inches minimum clear opening
- Telephones - highest operable part not more than 48 inches from the floor
- Bathroom stalls - not less than 60 inches clear floor space to accommodate a wheelchair turning radius

- Slopes and inclines - for every one-inch drop between level surfaces, a one foot ramped incline

### **Buddy System**

The system of assigning the appropriate individual(s) to assist in the evacuation of persons with disabilities.

### **Curb Cut**

Also called a curb ramp, it is a depression built into the curb of a sidewalk to permit passage by a wheelchair. The incline should not exceed a gradient of 1:12 and the flat surface width should be no less than 4 feet wide.

### **Detectable Warnings**

A standardized surface feature built in or applied to walking surfaces or other elements to warn visually impaired people of hazards on a circulation path. Detectable warnings consist of raised truncated domes and contrast visually with adjoining surfaces, either light-on-dark, or dark-on-light.

### **Egress**

A continuous and unobstructed way of exit travel from any point in a building or facility to a public way. A means of egress comprises vertical and horizontal travel and may include intervening room spaces, doorways, hallways, corridors, passageways, balconies, ramps, stairs, enclosures, lobbies, horizontal exits, courts and yards. An accessible means of egress is one that complies with the ADA Accessibility Guidelines and does not include stairs, steps, or escalators. Areas of rescue assistance or evacuation elevators may be included as part of accessible means of egress.

### **EVAC+CHAIR™**

An emergency evacuation device that can assist a person with mobility impairment to descend stairs to evacuate a building. (Weighs up to 15 lbs. with a 300 lb. capacity).

### **EVACU-TRAC™**

Developed in Switzerland, this device is used to assist a person with mobility impairment to descend stairs in the evacuation of a building. This chair was designed so a passenger's weight propels it down the stairs.

### **Finger Spelling**

When no sign exists for a thought or concept, the word can be spelled out using the American manual alphabet. It is also used for titles, proper names, and convenience.

### **Fire Warden**

A volunteer employee who is responsible for implementing a safe evacuation plan for his unit and/or other employees on his building floor.

**Head Pointer**

A head pointer is a stick or rod which is attached to a person's head by means of a head band so that by moving the head an individual can perform tasks that would ordinarily be performed by hand or finger movement.

**International Symbol of Accessibility**

The most recognizable Symbol of Accessibility, which we call the International Symbol of Accessibility, or ISA, is often known as the wheelchair symbol.

**Mobility Impairment**

Is a reduced function of legs and feet, which may lead to using a wheelchair or artificial aids to assist in walking. In addition to people who are born with a disability, this group includes a large number of people whose condition is caused by age or accidents.

**Monitors**

This term is given to those assigned and identified as lead participants in an emergency evacuation plan. The duties of a monitor can include assisting with the coordination of the evacuation for their floor or unit, identifying people with disabilities who require special assistance, and coordinating assignment of "buddies" while the emergency evacuation process is taking place.

**Mouth Wand**

A mouth wand is a rod with a tooth grip that is held in the mouth and used to perform tasks that would ordinarily be performed by hand. Various attachments may allow the individual to type, draw, paint, etc.

**Ramp**

A ramp should be at least 4 feet in width and have a gradient no greater than 1:12. (The incline should be no greater than one inch to every 12 inches of length).

**Reasonable Accommodations**

Reasonable accommodations are defined as modifications to a job or the work environment that enable a qualified applicant or employee with a disability to perform essential job functions of the position. Reasonable accommodations are required by Federal law to ensure that a qualified individual with a disability has equal rights and privileges in employment to those of non-disabled employees. A specific accommodation is "reasonable" as a matter of case law decided by the Courts, and not subject to individual interpretation.

**Sighted Guide**

A sighted guide is a person who physically assists an individual who is blind, only when that person has agreed to accept assistance. When serving as a sighted guide for an individual who is blind, let the person take your arm (right or left depending on the person's preference). Walk about one-half step ahead. S/he will follow the motion of your

body. When showing a person who is blind to a chair, place his/her hand on the back of the chair. At times, it may also be helpful to provide a physical description of the physical environment surrounding them and the route being taken.

### **Strobe Lighting**

A spot of higher than normal intensity in the sweep of a light indicator, as on a radar screen.

### **Symbols of Accessibility**

Four pictograms required by the ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG). They are:

- The International Symbol of Accessibility (ISA)
- The International TTY Symbol (Text Telephone)
- Volume Control Telephone
- International Symbol of Access for Hearing Loss (Assistive Listening System)

### **Undue Hardship**

The term “undue hardship” means significant difficulty or expense in, or resulting from, the provision of an accommodation.

### **Visual Alarms**

A flashing light device that is placed into a building or facility alarm system. If single station audible alarms are provided then single station visual alarm signals should also be provided.

### **Wardens**

Persons assigned as coordinators of emergency actions by occupants of a single floor or part of a floor of a building.

## **Glossary of Terms Relating to Individuals who are Blind or Visually Impaired**

### **Braille Computer Terminals**

A Braille computer terminal is one that can be interfaced with existing on-site or remote information processing systems. When connected to computers or data banks, it can deliver brailled pages of information at a rate of up to 100 words per minute. Users can request information on a standard keyboard and obtain a brailled response in a matter of seconds.

### **Brailled Books**

Brailled books are books with brailled text, rather than printed text. Most of the legally blind population does not read Braille. About 7-1/2 percent of this population use Braille as their primary reading mode. Braille is extremely bulky and requires a great deal of storage space.

### **Brailer**

The Perkins Braille is an all-purpose braillewriter enclosed in a baked gray enamel aluminum case. Six keys operate it. There are spacing, line advancing, and backspacing keys. Extension keys are available which allow the user to emboss the full Braille cell by one stroke of either hand leaving the other hand free to read brailled material, which is being copied.

### **Dog Guide**

The dog guide ("seeing eye" and "guide dog" are brand names) undergoes extensive specialized training to assist and alert persons who are blind, deaf and hard of hearing. It must learn basic obedience, to lead rather than "heel," to avoid obstacles (including overhead objects), and to "work" in stores and elevators, on various forms of public transportation, and when crossing streets, etc. Dog guides are legally permitted to accompany their owners into buildings, including all Federal and State buildings, hotels, motels, restaurants, grocery stores, airplanes, trains and buses. To refuse to allow a dog guide entry into any of these places is a violation of the law.

### **Reader**

A reader is a person who reads printed material aloud to a blind person or one with low vision or on to audiotape for later playback.

### **Reading Machines**

These devices convert printed materials as found in books, magazines, periodicals, typewritten letters and reports, as well as online computer programs and the World Wide Web, in different type-styles and sizes of type, into spoken synthetic English speech.

### **Recorded Books**

Recordings for the Blind (RFB), a national non-profit voluntary organization which is supported primarily by contributions from the public, provides taped educational books, free on loan, to print-impaired elementary, high school, college and graduate students, as well as to non-students who require specialized reading material in their professions or vocations.

### **Paperless Braille Machines**

These devices record and store Braille characters on magnetic tape cassettes from a Braille keyboard. Playback is through a paperless display panel or reading board. A 60-minute cassette can store up to 400 pages of Braille.

### **Sighted Guide**

When serving as a sighted guide for an individual who is blind, and only when that person has agreed to accept assistance, let the person take your arm (right or left depending on the person's preference.) Walk about one-half step ahead. She/he will follow the motion of your body. When showing a person who is blind to a chair, place his/her hand on the back of the chair.

### **Slate and Stylus**

The traditional method for writing Braille is by hand. Slates are made of metal or plastic frames or guides. A pointed steel punch with a handle called a stylus is used to punch the Braille dots. Each guide or frame consists of two parts connected at the left end by a hinge. The face of the bottom of the frame is pitted with four lines of a series of six small, round depressions corresponding to the shape and spacing of the dots of the Braille cell. To write on a slate, paper is inserted between the top and bottom of the frame and is held in place by small pins. The Braille dots are punched downward into the paper. This makes it necessary to write from right to left in order that, when the paper is turned over in position for reading, the Braille characters can be read from left to right.

### **Tactile Signage**

Signs or labels with Braille, raised letters or textured patterns that can be read tactilely by persons with visual impairments.

### **Talking Calculators**

Various models of hand-held or desk-type calculators that "speak" are available and come with an assortment of basic functions from independent memory to accumulating memory. The Library of Congress distributes a "Reference Circular" that provides information on available models and manufacturers. Calculators with Braille output are also available, although not in common use.

## **Glossary of Terms Relating to Individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing**

### **Amplifying Telephone Receivers**

Telephone receivers with a volume control built into the handgrip. They allow a person who is hearing impaired to amplify the incoming conversation.

### **Captioned Films**

Public Law 85-905 established the Captioned Films Program to provide for the distribution of captioned films through appropriate agencies to bring to persons who are deaf or blind an understanding and appreciation of those films that play a part in the general and cultural advancement of society. Captioning is available in print subtitles for persons who are deaf, and descriptive voice-overs for persons who are blind or visually impaired.

### **Closed Circuit TV Magnifier - CCTV**

A CCTV consists of a television camera which views the printed page or other materials and a television monitor which displays the image in enlarged form. Light and dark contrast can be adjusted. Most models allow reversing the image from black on white to white on black depending on individual needs.

**Hard of Hearing**

Refers to individuals who have some hearing, are able to use it for communication purposes, and who feel reasonably comfortable doing so. A hard of hearing person, in audiological terms, may have a mild to moderate hearing loss.

**Hearing Aid**

A hearing aid consists of a receiver and amplifier of sound. All sounds in the environment are amplified with the same intensity. A hearing aid does not sort, process, or discriminate among sounds. Because someone is wearing a hearing aid it does not mean that the person can hear normally. Aids do not correct hearing, but they improve hearing in some people.

**Interpreter**

An interpreter is a professional who assists persons who are deaf or hard of hearing in communicating with people who cannot sign.

**Open-Captioned**

White letters in black boxes in the bottom portion of television or film screen.

**Residual Hearing**

Residual hearing is the amount of hearing remaining after hearing loss. Few people hear no sound at all, although for purposes of communication, they are considered to be deaf.

**Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf**

The Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) Inc., a national organization with over 50 chapters, was organized in 1964 for the purpose of providing interpreting services to the deaf of America and its trust territories. In addition, the RID has members from other nations. The RID provides certification of interpreters and a grievance process for clients to file a complaint about a certified interpreter who does not comply with the RID Code of Ethics.

**Sign Language**

American Sign Language (ASL) is one form of manual communication used by Americans who are deaf. Sign language is not universal. Persons who are deaf from different countries use different sign languages. The gestures or symbols in sign language are organized in a linguistic way. Each individual gesture is called a sign. Each sign has three distinct parts: the hand shape, the position of the hand, and the movement of the hands. The ways in which the signs of ASL are combined are unique to it. They are not based on English or any other spoken language. Two sign systems, which are based on English, are Signed Exact English and Signed English. The three systems have elements in common, but the majority of Americans who are deaf and who use sign language uses American Sign Language.

**Telecaptioned Television**

Telecaptioned television is a broadcast television carrying a hidden or encoded English language caption of the audio signal. Decoders place white letters in black boxes in the bottom portion of the screen.

**Text Telephone**

Equipment that includes TTYs and employs interactive graphic communications through transmission of coded signals across the standard telephone network.