

DISABILITY ETIQUETTE

A STARTING GUIDE

GENERAL DO'S AND DON'TS

- ✓ Get to know your colleagues as **people** and **professionals**!
- ✓ Don't assume other people's needs/wants.
- ✓ Use '**Disability Pride**' language:
"**Wheelchair user**" instead of "confined to a wheelchair."

INDIVIDUALS WITH MOBILITY DISABILITIES

- Do not touch a person's mobility equipment.
- Be considerate of possible pain, balance, or post-traumatic stress concerns during physical contact.
- When engaging in a conversation, select a location where you can engage comfortably and that reduces distance between you.



INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE BLIND OR HAVE LOW VISION

- Identify yourself when entering a conversation and announce when you leave.
- When serving as a sighted guide, offer your arm or shoulder rather than grabbing or pushing the individual.
- Describe the setting, environment, written material, and obstacles when serving as a human guide.
- Resist the temptation to pet or talk to a guide or service animal.



INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

- Gain the person's attention before starting a conversation.
- If the individual uses a sign language interpreter, speak directly to the person, not the interpreter; keep your eyes on the individual and not on the interpreter.
- Face the person and speak in normal tones.



INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE SPEECH DISABILITIES

- If you do not understand what the person is saying, ask the person to repeat what they said and then repeat it back to ensure you understood.
- Do not speak for the person or attempt to finish their sentences.



INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE NON-APPARENT DISABILITIES

- Seek to understand their lived experience.
- Recognize that disclosing their disability comes with a risk and honor requested confidentiality.
- Engage in a dialogue to determine individual needs.
- Support accommodations.



What are some other tips?