



Serving People with Disabilities Handbook



**CHAMPAIGN COUNTY
SERVING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES HANDBOOK**

Implemented October 2015

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Americans with Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a civil rights law based on the principles of equal opportunity, full participation, independent living and economic self-sufficiency. The ADA applies to Champaign County because it is a “public entity” as defined by Title II. Under Title II, local governments are required to comply with Title I of the ADA, which is specific to employment. Additionally, because it receives federal financial assistance, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act also applies to Champaign County.

Champaign County developed the **Serving People with Disabilities Handbook** in order to inform Champaign County employees about the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and to instruct them regarding appropriate ways of serving people with disabilities.

More information about ADA, including the documents referenced in this handbook, and contact information for Champaign County’s ADA Coordinators can found on the County’s ADA webpage. <http://www.co.champaign.il.us/ADA/ADA.php>

Notification

Champaign County provides information about the existence and location of its accessible programs, services and activities on its website. Additionally, it provides notice that it will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities on the basis of disability in its services, programs or activities in the following manner:

- Posting the Notice in conspicuous locations in its public buildings
- Notifying applicants through a link displayed on its online application website
- Including the following statement on job postings: Champaign County is an EEO/AA/ADA employer
- Providing information on the county’s open meeting agendas
- Providing a copy of the Notice to any person upon request
- Publishing the Notice in a generally circulated local newspaper (July 24, 2015)
- Informing the public regarding Disaster Preparedness for people with disabilities and special needs via the County EMA website:
<http://www.champaigncountyema.org/index.php/disaster-preparedness-for-people-with-disabilities-and-special-needs>
- Informing the public about accessibility of county curb ramps and sidewalks on the County Highway website: <http://www.co.champaign.il.us/highway/ADA.php>
- Providing contact information for Champaign County’s ADA coordinators including multiple methods to provide feedback and request accessible materials on the county’s ADA webpage: <http://www.co.champaign.il.us/ADA/ADA.php>

Coordination

Champaign County has designated ADA Coordinators to assist in the county’s effort to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under the ADA, including any investigation of ADA-related complaints.

Grievance Procedure

The Grievance Procedure may be used by anyone who wishes to file a complaint alleging discrimination based on disability in the provision of services, activities, programs, or benefits by the County. Written complaints, or upon request alternative means of filing for a qualified person with a disability, should be submitted as soon as possible but no later than 60 calendar days after the alleged violation to the department's designated ADA Coordinator.

The County's Grievance Procedure is:

- Posted on its webpage
- Posted in conspicuous locations in its public buildings
- Provided to any person upon request

The Champaign County Personnel Policy governs employment-related disability discrimination.

ADA Training provided to Champaign County Employees

- 1) Frontline phones - Illinois Relay Service (.ppt)
- 2) Staff working directly with the public – Requirements of the ADA and appropriate ways of serving people with disabilities (Great Lakes ADA)
- 3) Department Heads and Supervisors - Employment , Hiring and Interviewing (Great Lakes ADA)
- 4) Specialized training related to ADA may also be provided by some departments

Equally Effective Communication

People who have vision, hearing, or speech disabilities (“communication disabilities”) may use different ways to communicate. The ADA requires local governments to communicate effectively with people who have communication disabilities.

Champaign County will generally, upon request, provide “auxiliary aids and services” when needed to communicate effectively with people who have communication disabilities.

Employees should contact their department's ADA Coordinator or their Supervisor if the ADA Coordinator is not available, if they need assistance providing auxiliary aids and services in order to meet ADA effective communication requirements.

Auxiliary Aids and Services

Examples for **people who are blind, have vision loss, or are deaf-blind**, include providing:

- information in large print (The minimum size for creating large-print documents is an 18-point, sans serif font such as Arial. If the document is not available electronically, use the enlarging features on a copier to provide large print.)
- information in Braille
- electronic information for use with a computer screen-reading program

- an audio recording of printed information
- a qualified reader - someone who is able to read effectively, accurately, and impartially, using any necessary specialized vocabulary

Examples for **people who are deaf, have hearing loss, or are deaf-blind**, include providing:

- written materials
- a qualified sign language interpreter or oral interpreter
- Assistive Listening Devices (Lyle Shields Meeting Room)
- real-time transcription services
- Video Relay Service – VRS (Sheriff’s Office)

Examples for **people who have speech disabilities** include providing:

- more time to communicate with someone who uses a communication board
- keeping paper and pencil on hand so the person can write out words that staff cannot understand
- computer terminals (Administrative Services Department)
- TTY (Teletype device)
- videophones (Sheriff’s Office)
- Video Relay Service – VRS (Sheriff’s Office)

Staff should always listen attentively and not be afraid or embarrassed to ask the person to repeat a word or phrase they do not understand.

Website, Video Relay and Telephone Communication

- Webpage, non-archival web-based content, and online services provided by Champaign County or third party contractors will comply with WCAG 2.0, Level A and AA accessibility standards published at <http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG> by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C- www.w3.org) and the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI- www.w3.org/WAI).
- TTY phones are located in:
 - Administrative Services (217-819-3521)
 - RPC Workforce Development Services (217-398-0120)
 - Sheriff’s Office (outgoing use only)
 - Satellite Jail (outgoing use only)
 - Downtown Jail (outgoing use only)
- Videophones and Video Relay Services (VRS) are located in:
 - Sheriff’s Office
 - Downtown Jail
 - Satellite Jail

Requests for Accommodations

Champaign County expects employees to serve and assist people with disabilities utilizing their training, information provided in this handbook and/or under the direction of their department's ADA Coordinator or Supervisor.

Champaign County's policy is to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities unless the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the organization. Qualified individuals with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations should contact the appropriate department's designated ADA Coordinator as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours before the scheduled event.

Administrative Services maintains a current list of sign language interpreters, volunteer readers, vendors able to put documents in Braille and real-time transcription services. Administrative Services will also assist with providing audio recordings of printed information. Champaign County IT will assist with requests for documents in accessible electronic formats, when feasible. Anyone may request accessible information through the *Feedback and Requesting Accessible Information* tab on the County's ADA webpage.

If an advanced request for an accommodation is received, you should:

1. Document the request including the name and contact information of the requestor, the accommodation requested, and the program, event, or service for which the request is being made
2. Immediately provide the information to your department's ADA Coordinator, or Supervisor if the ADA Coordinator is not available
3. Follow the instructions provided by your ADA Coordinator or Supervisor

If an advanced request for an accommodation is NOT received, you should:

1. Assist the person with a disability if you are able, such as providing directions to facilities, giving the requestor information in another format such as large print, or using a paper and pencil to communicate (also see the Auxiliary Aids and Services section)
2. Follow the steps for an advanced request for an accommodation if possible (listed above)

The Champaign County Personnel Policy governs employment-related requests for accommodations.

Interacting with Individuals with Disabilities

Use Person-first language

You should treat an individual with a disability with the same courtesy, dignity and respect given to everyone else.

People with disabilities ask that you see them as **a person first** and their disability second...or third...or last. For example, it is better to say "a person with a disability" rather than "a disabled

person.” It is also preferable to use the term “disability” rather than “handicap” to refer to a person’s disability.

<u>Appropriate terms:</u>	<u>Inappropriate terms:</u>	
Person with a disability	Disabled person	Epileptic
Person with mobility impairment	Wheelchair Bound	Handicapped
Person with a seizure disorder	Afflicted with	A victim of
Person with an intellectual disability	Mentally Retarded	Suffers from
Person who is deaf or hard of hearing	Hearing Impaired	

- Don’t make assumptions about the person or the disability
- Speak directly to the person with a disability
- If the person does not understand you, try again
- Do not assume that a person with a disability needs help
- Know your facility’s accessibility features so you can give proper directions
- Become familiar with the accommodation procedures for Champaign County
- Respond courteously to requests for accommodation – if you cannot provide or authorize an accommodation, promptly relay the request to the appropriate personnel

Disability Etiquette

When meeting and talking with a person who has a disability:

1. Avoid asking personal questions about someone's disability - don't mention the person's disability unless he or she talks about it or it is relevant to the conversation
2. Allow extra time for a person with a disability to do or say something
3. Be polite and patient when offering assistance and wait until your offer is accepted
4. A handshake is not a standard greeting for everyone - when in doubt, ASK the person whether he or she would like to shake hands with you
5. Speak directly to the person with a disability
6. Don't patronize or talk down to people with disabilities
7. Never pretend to understand what a person is saying - ask the person to repeat or rephrase, or offer him or her a pen and paper
8. It is okay to use common expressions like "see you soon" or "I'd better be running along"
9. Relax, anyone can make mistakes. Offer an apology if you forget some courtesy

When meeting a person with a disability that affects learning, intelligence, or brain function:

1. Keep your communication simple - rephrase comments or questions for better clarity
2. Stay focused on the person as he or she responds to you
3. Allow the person time to tell or show you what he or she wants

When you are with a person who uses a wheelchair:

1. Do not push, lean on, or hold onto a person's wheelchair unless the person asks you to - the wheelchair is part of his or her personal space
2. Try to put yourself at eye level when talking with someone in a wheelchair
3. Rearrange furniture or objects to accommodate a wheelchair before the person arrives

Talking with a person who is deaf or uses a hearing aid:

1. Let the person take the lead in establishing the communication mode, such as lip-reading, sign language, or writing notes
2. If the person lip-reads, face him or her directly, speak clearly and with a moderate pace
3. Consider simplifying your sentences, using facial expressions, and body language

When meeting a person with a disability that affects speech:

1. Wait for the person to complete a word or thought - do not finish it for the person
2. Ask the person to repeat what is said, if you do not understand
3. Be prepared for various devices or techniques used to enhance or augment speech

Interacting with a person who is blind or has a disability that affects sight or vision:

1. When greeting the person, identify yourself and introduce others who may be present
2. Do not leave the person without excusing yourself first
3. Give specific directions such as “15 feet down the hall on your right side”
4. Do not pet or distract a guide dog - it is responsible for its owner's safety and is working - it is not a pet

Hiring and Interviewing

The ADA prohibits employers from discriminating against qualified applicants because of a disability. However, the ADA does not interfere with an employer's right to hire the most qualified applicant.

Interviewing

Reasonable accommodation applies to the application and interviewing processes.

- Ensure interviews are conducted in accessible locations
- Arrange for Auxiliary Aids and Services when requested by a qualified individual with a disability (see the Equally Effective Communication section)

Job applicants may not be asked about the existence, nature, or severity of a disability. However, they may be asked about their ability to perform specific job functions.

- Focus on the applicant's ability to perform the job, not on a disability
- Questions that identify the presence of a disability may not be asked (For example: Are you taking any prescribed drugs? Have you ever been treated for a mental condition?)
- After describing the specific functions of the job, applicants can be asked to describe or demonstrate how they would perform job-related functions with or without a reasonable accommodation IF:
 1. Employer believes applicant needs RA because of obvious disability
 2. Employer believes applicant needs RA because of disclosed disability
 3. Applicant voluntarily disclosed he/she needs RA to perform job

Reasonable accommodation should not be discussed except in these 3 circumstances

Interview-Ok to ask:

Ability to perform essential job functions
Qualifications and skills
Education/Certification/Licenses
Ability to meet attendance requirements
Work history

Interview-NOT Ok to ask:

Disability-related questions
Hospitalization
Work comp history
Sick leave at previous jobs
Require a medical exam
Reasonable accommodation (except in the 3 circumstances listed above)

Post-Offer (Pre-employment)

After a job offer is made and prior to the start of employment, applicants can be required to take a medical examination IF everyone in that job category must also take the examination.

- Post-offer may be conditioned on the results of disability-related questions or medical exams BUT if the offer is withdrawn employer must show the reasons for exclusion are job related and necessary for conduct of business
- Must be able to demonstrate that there was no reasonable accommodation available for the individual to perform the essential job functions
- Must demonstrate “direct threat” if applicant is screened out for safety reasons
- All medical information must be kept separate and confidential

Post-Offer Ok to ask:

Work comp history
Sick leave at previous job
Physical and mental health, illnesses, diseases and impairment
If a Reasonable Accommodation is needed

Employment

An employer can ask disability-related questions and/or require medical examinations ONLY if they are job related and consistent with business necessity.

Examples of job related and consistent with business necessity:

Employee requests a RA and the disability or need is not obvious
Employee poses a “direct threat” and employer is able to provide objective evidence
Employer has objective evidence that the employee’s ability to perform an essential job function is impaired due to a medical condition

Champaign County confidentially maintains employee medical records separate from personnel files.

The Champaign County Personnel Policy governs employment-related requests for accommodations.

Resource for Questions about employment and the ADA:

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) is an excellent resources for free, expert, and confidential guidance on workplace accommodations and disability employment issues.

<https://askjan.org/>

(800) 526-7234

(304) 293-5407 Fax

Chat and Email options are available on the website

Additional Information and Resources

This Handbook was prepared by Champaign County Administrative Services. For questions and/or suggestions please contact (217)384-3776.

Great Lakes ADA Center

<http://www.adagreatlakes.org/>

ADA National Network

<https://adata.org/>

United States Department of Justice/Civil Rights/Disability Rights

<http://www.justice.gov/crt/disability-rights-section>

ADA Best Practices for State and Local Governments

<http://www.ada.gov/pcatoolkit/toolkitmain.htm>