



Office for Disability

Inclusive Procedures

People with a disability can be inadvertently excluded from using a program or service simply because a form was not accessible to them or a policy unnecessarily obstructed their access. For example, a financial institution had a policy that phone enquiries could only be made directly with the account holder. Consequently a person who is Deaf and uses the national phone relay service to make telephone calls was not allowed to continue with their phone enquiry because the presence of a 'third person' did not comply with current policy.

Thankfully following a complaint, the organisation rectified the situation, revised their policy and informed call-centre staff of changes. This illustration shows that in some case a rule, procedure, tool, guideline or practice can get in the way of people with a disability accessing and participating in the community.

Making organisational procedures and policies accessible and inclusive does not need to be complex. Some basic tips include:

- thinking about the access requirements of people with a disability
- communicating with people with a disability about their requirements
- being ready to treat people fairly to provide equitable access for everyone.

Reviewing procedures and policies to check they are accessible can have a bearing on people with a disability whether they are staff, customers, members, clients or patients. There can also be a positive flow-on effect for others with specific accessibility requirements such as elderly citizens, and people with a temporary injury or health condition.

Additional considerations for making procedures inclusive include:

- make information about goods and services, programs and activities accessible by using readable standard print and providing accessible formats (see Further information)

- don't rely solely on electronic methods
- ensure forms and application processes are accessible
- provide contact details using several communication methods
- make directions and instructions clear and simple
- reconsider what the essential requirements of a procedure may be – are there more inclusive ways of achieving the same outcome?
- be flexible; adapt and modify where possible
- consider timing and timelines required to complete procedural tasks. Some people with a disability may have particular travel requirements or require breaks during tasks.
- ensure written communication uses positive and respectful language. Put the person first and avoid stereotypes or labels (refer Further information).

Further information

See also: Office for Disability fact sheets 'Accessible formats' and 'Positive Portrayal of People with a Disability' www.officefordisability.vic.gov.au.

If you would like to receive this document in an accessible format, contact the Office for Disability:

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