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ABSTRACT

This manual provides guidelines to offices of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for effective interaction and communication with people who have disabilities. Each chapter provides suggestions for interacting with people with a specific disability. In addition to general suggestions for fostering courteous interactions, chapters include specific suggestions regarding such aspects as sources of braillers, how to use the federal information relay service, finding interpreters, and how specific diseases are and are not transmitted. The following populations are addressed: (1) people who use wheelchairs; (2) people who are mobility impaired; (3) people who are blind or visually impaired; (4) people who are deaf or hard of hearing; (5) people who are deaf-blind or blind-deaf; (6) people who have speech impairments; (7) people who have epilepsy; (8) people who have mental retardation; (9) people with psychiatric disabilities; (10) people who have cerebral palsy and other conditions which have muscular or neurological limitations; (11) people with learning disabilities; (12) people with Tourette syndrome; and (13) people who have HIV (human immunodeficiency virus)/AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome), hepatitis B, or other bloodborne diseases. A list of organizations concerned with each of the disabilities is attached. (DB)

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COMMUNICATING AND INTERACTING

WITH PEOPLE WHO HAVE DISABILITIES

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COMMUNICATING AND INTERACTING

WITH PEOPLE WHO HAVE DISABILITIES

July 1994

EEOC-BK-12

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

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Introduction

This desktop reference manual provides tips for good interaction and communication with people with specific disabilities. It also includes guidelines for accommodating and making the charge process accessible to people with disabilities. Field and district offices may find it useful also to refer to Business and Social Etiquette with Disabled People, by Chalda Maloff and Susan Macduff Wood. Each field and district office has been provided with a copy of this publication which provides additional tips on interacting with people with disabilities. The ADA Title I Technical Assistance Manual Resource Directory also provides lists of organizations that investigators can call to obtain information about various disabilities.

Each chapter of this manual is meant to stand alone. Some tips may appear repetitious, however, chapters are self-contained. For example, if an investigator has questions about interacting with people with speech impairments, s/he has to look only at that particular chapter to get needed information. However, if an individual has more than one disability, such as an individual who is deaf and uses a wheelchair, the investigator may wish to read both the chapter on people who use wheelchairs and the chapter on people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

This manual does not attempt to provide complete and detailed information about each disability. It's purpose is to provide guidance specific to the charge process. Many of the suggestions can be applied to others who may participate in the process such as witnesses or employers who happen to have disabilities.

Investigators can obtain additional information by contacting organizations of and for people with disabilities that are listed in the resource directory of the Technical Assistance Manual. For example, investigators can obtain information on HIV infection from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Information about epilepsy can be obtained from the Epilepsy Foundation of America.

When in doubt about the appropriate way to interact and communicate, ask the person with a disability what s/he would prefer. More likely than not, the individual will appreciate being asked about his/her preferences.

WHEN IN DOUBT, ASK THE PERSON WITH A DISABILITY

The biggest barriers that people with disabilities face, and the hardest barriers to remove, are other people's negative attitudes and erroneous images of them. The way we address and talk about people reflects our attitudes. Therefore, it is important to use positive, nonpatronizing language. Rather than speaking

as if all people with a certain disability, or all people with a disability share the same characteristics, have the same needs, or think and act the same, we place the focus on the individual first and the disability last. Instead of saying, "the disabled" or "disabled people," we say, "people with disabilities" or a "person with a disability." Individual examples will be provided throughout the manual.

Communicating and interacting with people with disabilities is in many ways the same as communicating and interacting with people who do not have disabilities. Just extend the same courtesy and consideration to people with disabilities that you would to anyone.

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I. People who use Wheelchairs

General interaction tips

- Use appropriate terminology like "person who uses a wheelchair" or "person with a disability." Avoid descriptors such as "wheelchair bound" or "confined to a wheelchair."

- Don't be sensitive about using words like "running" or "walking."

- Don't automatically hold onto the person's wheelchair. It is part of his or her body space.

- People who use wheelchairs generally will, like others, ask for help, if needed. There is no need to be over-protective of people who use wheelchairs.

- If you do offer assistance, don't insist that the person accept it. If the person accepts the offer of assistance, he or she will explain exactly what will be helpful.

- Avoid using patronizing language such as, "You really get around in that wheelchair."

Making the charge process accessible to people who use wheelchairs

- Make sure intake interviews and other meetings are conducted at a location that is physically accessible to people who use wheelchairs. This means that the person who uses a wheelchair is able to easily get in and around the meeting room and immediate area.

- If an interview meeting is to be held at the respondent's facility, check with the respondent or charging party to make sure the site is accessible to any attendees (e.g., charging party, respondent, witnesses) who use wheelchairs. Refer to the ADA Accessibility Guidelines in the ADA Handbook for guidance on barrier removal and accessibility.

- If a person who uses a wheelchair wants to file a charge or meet with an EEO investigator, but the intake area is not physically accessible (e.g., on a second floor with no elevator), other arrangements should be made. This may mean that the investigator will need to meet at an office on the ground level of a building with no elevator or that another accessible meeting location may need to be found. In this case, assure that the new location affords the same level of privacy to the individuals

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involved in this part of the process as any other interview area would afford to a person without a disability.

- Be aware of accessible routes from one place to another. When giving instructions on how to reach a destination, such as an interview location, provide clear directions using the shortest and most accessible route. Giving instructions for getting from one building to another means thinking about curb cuts, steps, and construction areas. Giving instructions for getting from one room to another inside a building means thinking not only of interior steps and construction areas, but also other obstacles not readily apparent. These include tall plants and trash cans blocking access to elevator buttons making it impossible for someone using a wheelchair to reach the "up" and "down" buttons, torn rugs make wheelchair maneuverability difficult, and heavy doors.

- Be aware of obstacles within a room, including floor or ground surfaces, that would inhibit the movements of people who use wheelchairs such as torn rugs, too many chairs, and trash cans.

- Be aware of accessible restrooms. If giving instructions on how to reach the restroom, make sure it is towards the one that is accessible.

- If it appears that a person needs assistance with filling out forms because of lack of manual dexterity (e.g., person with quadriplegia), offer assistance but do not insist. Do not rush to take over. Most people also will request assistance, if needed.

Interacting with a personal assistant

- Some people who have a severe mobility impairment may use a personal assistant. If a personal assistant is present, speak directly to the person with a disability and not through the personal assistant.

- Allow the personal assistant to write for the person with a disability, if necessary.

- Allow the personal assistant to act as an "interpreter," if the charging party with a disability requests it because of a severe speech impairment.

- Do not start discussions with a personal assistant about the individual with a disability. Also do not ignore the charging party with a disability and address small talk only to the personal assistant.

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II. People who are Mobility Impaired

General interaction tips

- Use appropriate terminology like "person who uses crutches" or "person with a disability."

- Do not use patronizing language such as, "You really get around fast with those crutches."

- When introduced to a person with an artificial hand or arm, it is appropriate to offer to shake hands. Consider the prosthetic device as you would a hand or arm. Some people who have nonfunctioning or missing right hands, prefer to shake hands with their left hand.

- When walking with a person who walks slower than you, walk with the person, not in front of him/her.

- If a person falls or is off balance, simply offer assistance. A natural tendency is to overreact, but you need not be overprotective of a person with a mobility impairment.

Making the charge process accessible to people who have mobility impairments

- Give individuals with mobility impairments clear directions to interview or other meeting sites using the shortest and easiest route.

- If an interview meeting is to be held at the respondent's facility, check with the respondent or charging party to make sure it is accessible to any attendees (e.g., charging party, respondent, witnesses) who have mobility impairments. Refer to the ADA Accessibility Guidelines in the ADA Handbook for guidance on barrier removal and accessibility.

- Be aware of accessible routes from one place to another. When giving instructions on how to reach a destination, such as an interview location, provide clear directions using the shortest and most accessible route. If giving instructions for getting from one building to another, this means thinking about curb cuts, steps, and construction areas. If giving instructions for getting from one room to another inside a building, this means thinking not only of interior steps and construction areas, but also other obstacles not readily apparent. These include tall plants and trash cans blocking

access to elevator buttons making it impossible for someone with a mobility impairment to reach the "up" and "down" buttons, torn rugs make wheelchair maneuverability difficult, and heavy doors.

- Be aware of obstacles within a room, including floor or ground surfaces, that would inhibit the movements of people who have mobility impairments such as torn rugs, too many chairs, and trash cans.

- If it appears that a person needs assistance with filling out forms because of lack of manual dexterity (e.g., person with multiple sclerosis), offer assistance but do not insist. Do not rush to take over. Most people also will request assistance, if needed.

OFFER ASSISTANCE,
BUT DO NOT INSIST

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III. People who are Blind or Visually Impaired

General interaction tips

- Use appropriate terminology when referring to an individual who is blind or visually impaired such as "person who is blind," "person with a visual impairment," or "person with a disability."

- Don't be afraid to use the words "look" and "see." There are no reasonable substitutes.

- Blindness is not all or nothing. It includes a wide range of vision and visual acuity. The amount of visual acuity a person has is not related to his or her choice or use of an alternative technique such as braille or large print.

- Introduce other people in the room or have them introduce themselves. This will assist the individual in orienting himself or herself to the room and its occupants.

- Speak directly to the individual who is blind or visually impaired. Do not shout. When you leave the room, say so.

- When giving directions, do not use references a person cannot see -- "over there" is not a good way of describing a location. Indicate North, South, East, West, left, or right when giving directions.

- Do not pet a dog guide while it is "on duty."

- Not all people who are visually impaired or blind use particular alternative formats such as braille or large print. For example, it is estimated that less than 10% of people who are blind read braille. It is important to determine the most appropriate format for the charging party. Ask the individual.

- Use positive language rather than patronizing language such as, "You really get around well."

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Making the charge process accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired

- Some people who are blind or visually impaired may request certain materials in braille, on tape, in large print, or on computer diskette. If these materials are made available to charging parties, they should be made available in alternate formats, upon request.

- If print material is going to be used during a meeting, find out which format is preferred by the individual for meetings (e.g., audiotape, large print, braille). Be prepared to read the material or have it prepared, in advance, in the medium preferred by the individual. Make sure all equipment is in working order prior to the meeting.

- Do not assume a person needs assistance. Most people will ask for assistance, but if you do offer your services as a reader or guide, for example, don't insist.

- If your assistance is requested by a person who is blind to get from one location to another, ask how you can best assist. Never grab a person's arm. He or she can take your arm and follow the motion of your body. Guide his or her hand or arm to the back of the chair.

- It is a common misconception that you have to slow your pace for a person who is blind. You can usually walk at a normal pace when guiding a person who is blind.

- When entering a new surrounding, describe special features or physical characteristics of the room. Describe where furniture is, where the door is, and where the person is in relation to these objects. Be careful, though, as it is easy to overdo this.

- When guiding a person into a room, ask where s/he prefers to sit. Don't assume you know where the person wants to go.

- For people with visual impairments, provide a well lit area for the interview and avoid sharp contrasts of light and dark areas.

- Offer assistance in filling out forms such as the intake questionnaire and be prepared to read aloud information that is written, if requested, or ask the person if he or she would like a reader. Many people with visual impairments can fill out forms and sign their names if the appropriate spaces are indicated to them.

- People who are blind or visually impaired should be permitted to submit their affidavits in braille, on tape, or on computer diskette. Once these documents have been received, the field or district office can type the information on the appropriate form and have it sent to the charging party for signature or the charging party can

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come in and sign it. However, do not insist on a personal appearance if it is not necessary and would not be required for a charging party who is sighted. Usually, a person who is blind or visually impaired can find someone to help read documents.

Brailling and taping materials

- EEOC headquarters has brailling and taping equipment. Some material can be sent to headquarters to be brailled and/or taped. (Contact local management who can obtain assistance or further information from the Performance Management Branch, Human Resources Management Services, at EEOC headquarters.) If a large amount of material needs to be brailled and/or taped, the office should have an outside organization do it. Depending on cost, organizations may need to offer bids for the job. When using outside organizations to braille or tape material relating to a charge of discrimination, extreme caution should be taken to protect the privacy and confidentiality of all individuals involved.

- A charging party's affidavit and related correspondence can be taped if all persons being taped have given their consent. Any tape recordings done by the Commission must be done in person, not telephonically, and all participants must be given notice in advance. (See Protection of Privacy, EEOC Order No. 150.005)

- If material is to be prepared in an accessible format (e.g, audio tape, computer disk, braille, large print), it should first be prepared in written format. Having written documents will facilitate response to Freedom of Information Act and Privacy Act requests because tapes can then be considered duplicate copies of official records that contain no additional information. Tape recordings are agency records but it would be difficult to edit the tapes to delete exempt information. Putting information in written form first will also avoid concerns related to the Protection of Privacy Order since only the voices of EEOC personnel reading affidavits or correspondence will be taped.

Locating readers

- Generally, the investigator (or other staff member) can read documents to the charging party who is blind or visually impaired.

Preparing materials in large print

- Most materials developed by the district or field office can easily be prepared in large print using the fonts available on the office computers.

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- The Department of Justice developed the Technical Assistance Guide which follows on making print materials accessible to people with visual impairments. It provides instructions on appropriate type size, spacing, contrast and color for materials development.

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U.S. Department of Justice
Civil Rights Division
Coordination and Review Section

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GUIDE

ACCESS TO PRINTED INFORMATION BY VISUALLY-IMPAIRED PERSONS

TAG-85-3,R11-88

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1. Title

Access to Printed Information by Visually-Impaired Persons

2. Purpose

This Technical Assistance Guide (TAG) provides information on steps that will enable visually-impaired persons to have access to printed materials.

3. Background

Access to printed information for millions of visually-impaired Americans is significantly restricted because the printed information is not readable. In general, the readability of printed material may be defined in terms of those characteristics that determine the speed, accuracy and ease with which it may be read. Often the limitations of visually-impaired persons are not considered by editors when they select type size, paper color, and other factors that determine readability.

4. Printing Factors that Affect Readability[1]

A. *Type Size*

The size of type affects readability. The unit of type size is called a point. The American point is about 1/72 inch in height, making a 12 point letter about 1/6 inch high. The use of small point type (six to eight points or smaller), commonly found in newspapers and foot-notes, significantly affects the readability of the document. The following recommendations should assist in producing printed material that is more easily read by visually-impaired persons.

- Twelve point type is needed by persons with marginal difficulty in reading (a substantial percentage of the population 50 years of age and older has difficulty reading).
- A minimum of 14 point is needed for those persons with seriously impaired vision.

1 This discussion is based on an article by Jack B. Ralph, M.A., entitled "A Geriatric Visual Concern: The Need for Publishing Guidelines", Journal of the American Optometric Association, Vol. 53, Number 1, January 1982.

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B. Type Selection

There are many type faces or styles. Some type faces are more readable than others. The following recommendations should help editors select the type that is more easily readable by visually-impaired persons.

- Type faces that use the largest amount of available space for the character (letter) should be selected.
- Boldface and italic type should be used sparingly, and should not be used in long passages.
- All capital letters should not be used for text.
- Serif face type should be used for general text up to 13 point size. Sans serif should be used in 14 point and larger and for captions, headings, and reversals.

C. Line Leading

Line leading (pronounced "ledding") is the space between lines of type. With print smaller than 11 point a decrease in line leading will decrease readability.

In order to maximize readability, no more than two lines of leading should be used. With 11 or 12 point type one or two lines of leading can be used and with print smaller than 11 point, two lines of leading should always be used.

D. Proportional Spacing and Hyphenation

A readability problem is created with typewriter type when a uniform width is used for all letters. Letters in our alphabet are not the same width. The letter "i", for example, is less wide than the letter "w". American Typewriters type, the standard type face used on many typewriters, allows the same amount of width for the letter "i" as for the letter "w". The use of extra white space on each side of the letter "i" and other narrow letters, and the elimination of all white space on each side of the letter "w", decreases readability. Proportional spacing allows for adjustments between letters to eliminate unnecessary white spaces and to allow extra space for wider letters. IBM Modern Type is a type style with proportional spacing. Because proportional spacing increases readability, its use is recommended.

Hyphens break up words and require the reader to remember the last syllable on the previous line and refocus on the remaining word part on the next line. Hyphenation increases the problems that persons with limited vision have reading and understanding printed material. Therefore, hyphenation of right margins should be avoided.

E. Line Width

The width of a line from left to right is measured in picas. There are six picas to an inch. Generally there is greater risk of loss of readability when wider lines are used. Line width of 11 or 12 point type should not exceed 36 picas (six inches) for single column text.

F. Columns

If multiple columns are used, columns should not be more than 18 picas wide (three inches) and separations between are better with 1/2 pica on each side of a vertical rule or line.

G. Paragraphing

Paragraphs should start with either an indent for the first line of the paragraph or an extra space between paragraphs if block style is used. Indenting is more effective. Inner margins in a text book or in pamphlets of more than 20 pages should be larger than the outer margins.

"Wrap" and "run around" irregular width lines as a margin should be avoided. In some advertisements, and even in the layout of some magazine articles, a figure or a photo is printed in the center of the page with reading material running along side, above, and below the figure or photo. The typesetting technique for the reading material is to follow closely the irregular edges of the figure or photo producing different line widths and irregular right and left margins. This technique decreases readability.

H. Contrast and Color

In combining print and background colors, care must be taken to produce the maximum brightness contrast between print and background. The printer should concentrate on brightness contrast.

Relying on the following recommendations will improve the readability of the printed material by maximizing the brightness contrast between print and background. Other combinations of color values may be used but as one moves away from the parameters established below, brightness contrast is reduced and readability may be affected.

- Black ink on white or pastel paper is preferred. If colored print and paper are used, two shades of the same color should be avoided and a light color should be used for the background.

- Black ink should not exceed a Munsell Value[2] of 2.18/, which is equivalent to a Government Printing Office (GPO) luminance of 3.6%. Paper used with black ink, should have a minimum Munsell Value of 8.6/ which is equivalent to a GPO luminance of 70.37%.

- Colored ink should not exceed a Munsell value of 2.5/, which is equivalent to a GPO luminance of 4.61%. Paper, used with colored ink, should have a minimum Munsell Value of 8.9/ which is equivalent to a GPO luminance of 76.53%.

I. Finish

Paper with a matte finish is preferable to "shiny" or coated paper. If coated paper must be used, paper that is off-white is preferable to other colors.

J. Color Screens and Reversals

Readability problems can occur when screened inks are used to place reverse reading material against a colored background. Frequently there is not enough contrast between the reversal and the background of screened colored ink. Relying on the following recommendations will improve the readability of reversals by maximizing the brightness contrast between print and background. Other combinations of values may be used but as one moves away from the parameters established below, brightness contrast is reduced and readability may be affected.

- The minimum size type in the reversal letters should be 11 point of medium or bold sans serif.

[2] Munsell Color, 2441 North Calvert Street, Baltimore, MD 21218 (301) 243-2171. The Munsell system of color notation identifies color in terms of three attributes: hue, value and chroma. The Munsell notation for color value is 8.9/, 2.5/, etc

- With black or colored ink lettering on a screened color background the minimum Munsell value of the screened color background should be 8.9/, which is equivalent to a GPO luminance of 76.53%

- With white reversal lettering on a screened color background the maximum Munsell value of the ink should be no more than 2.5/, which is equivalent to a GPO luminance of 4.61%

- With reversals against a screened background, the reversal lettering should have a minimum Munsell value of 8.9/, which is equivalent to a GPO luminance of 76.53%

- The colored ink used in the reversal for the background can bleed into the letters, thus reducing contrast. Bleeding should be kept to a minimum.

5. Availability in Alternate Formats

This document is available, on request, from the Public Access Section (see address below) in the following formats.

- Audiotape
- Large Print
- Braille
- Computer Disk

6. Resources

A list of resources has been compiled and can be obtained by contacting:

U.S. Department of Justice
Civil Rights Division
Public Access Section
P.O. Box 66738
Washington, D.C. 20035-6738
(202) 307-0663 (Voice/TDD)

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IV. People who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

General interaction tips

- Use appropriate terminology like "person who is deaf" or "person who is hard of hearing."

- To get the attention of a person who is deaf or hard of hearing, vocalize a greeting, and if necessary, discreetly wave your hand or gently tap the person's shoulder.

- Do not shout when speaking to the person with the hearing impairment. Use a normal tone of voice and do not restrict yourself to monosyllabic words.

- Remove gum or other objects from your mouth. Keep your hands from covering your mouth when talking.

- Not all people who are deaf or hard of hearing can lipread, but many do and some people do lipread quite well. Even good lipreaders, though, may miss words. When speaking to people who are deaf or hard of hearing, use meaningful facial expressions and gestures to emphasize your intent and attitude. Use your voice when talking to the person; your lip movements will be more natural and the person can use his or her residual hearing for better understanding. This is important even in the presence of a sign language or oral interpreter. Be sure not to use exaggerated mouth movements or wild gestures. Do not change the subject without warning.

- When speaking with someone who is deaf or hard of hearing, make sure you have established eye contact. Do not position yourself so that you are directly in front of a harsh light or window. Your face will be difficult to see if it is silhouetted in bright light. (This is primarily a factor for longer conversations.) Bright lighting in the face of the person who is deaf or a background of loud colors or patterns causes eye strain.

ESTABLISH EYE CONTACT

  - Although you want to avoid gross or exaggerated arm waving, pantomime is helpful.

- Sometimes it is necessary to be versatile to find the best method to communicate with people who are deaf or hard of hearing. The objective is to communicate effectively. One individual may prefer to communicate by lipreading, another may prefer to use sign language. For many people who use sign language, American Sign Language (ASL) is the first language used in the home. ASL is a recognized language with a

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unique syntax, grammar, and structure. It is not a form of English. Other people who use sign language use one of the manual codes for English that use the "vocabulary" of ASL signs with the grammar and syntax of English

- Knowledge of English grammar, syntax, and spelling varies from individual to individual. A person who uses ASL as his or her primary language of communication may or may not be proficient in using standard English. The person who is not proficient in English is not unintelligent or illiterate; he or she just uses a different language to communicate.

- Be aware that if you point to an object or area during a conversation with a person who is deaf or hard of hearing, that person will most likely turn to look at where you are pointing.

- It is important to notify the person who is deaf of any interruption. If your conversation is interrupted by a knock at the door or a phone call, inform the deaf person because neither interruption is immediately visible.

- Avoid using language such as, "You speak very well." It can come across as being patronizing.

Making the charge process accessible to people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

- If a person who is deaf or hard of hearing comes into the intake area without an appointment, you should first respond to the person as you would any other individual. if you find that the individual is unable to understand you, ask how s/he prefers to communicate. If necessary, communicate using paper and pencil or a computer or typewriter. If the person who is deaf or hard of hearing prefers using an interpreter, it may be necessary to reschedule the meeting until a qualified interpreter can be located.

- If there is concern that an interpreter will not be located in sufficient time to meet the timelines for filing a charge of discrimination, some flexibility may be required in the process. If necessary, complete the intake form and the charge of discrimination. The individual who is deaf can be asked to come back to complete the affidavit.

- While it may not be acceptable to conduct an entire interview using paper and pencil, they may come in handy in helping people who are deaf or hard of hearing catch a word here or there. Also, if you cannot understand the person who is deaf or hard of hearing, do not be afraid to ask him or her to repeat. When this does not work, ask the person if he or she would like to try paper and pencil.

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Locating a qualified interpreter

- All Field Offices have been provided with the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf directory. Follow the procedures for obtaining interpreters outlined in the July 24, 1992, memorandum from James H. Troy, Director, Office of Program Operations.

- For additional information about hiring qualified interpreters, contact your administrative officer or district director concerning office policies and procedures.

Using an interpreter

- A qualified interpreter is one who is able to effectively bridge the communication needs of all participants.

- Not all people who are deaf or hard of hearing know or use sign language. The need for an interpreter depends on the situation and the people involved. Do not assume a charging party who is deaf needs an interpreter.

- Ask a charging party who is deaf or hard of hearing if an interpreter is needed. If so, ask what kind of interpreting is preferred. For example, a person who prefers to communicate orally may want an oral interpreter. Someone who uses sign language may prefer an interpreter proficient in American Sign Language, another may prefer someone proficient in using one of the Manual Codes for English. Yet another individual may want an interpreter who is skilled in using Cued Speech which is a system of communication using eight hand shapes in one of four possible positions to supplement the information visible on the lips.

- When using a sign language or oral interpreter, speak directly to the person who is deaf or hard of hearing, not the interpreter. The interpreter is not a participant in an interview or meeting. He or she is there to facilitate communication between the investigator and the charging party. Do not try to involve the interpreter in any part of the formal interview. This can be demeaning to the individual who is deaf or hard of hearing, and detract attention from the focal point of the interview or meeting. It is a violation of the interpreter's code of ethics to become involved in the process at any time during the process--before, during, or after an interview or meeting.

- When a person who is deaf chooses to have an interpreter voice for him or her, remember to respond directly to that person and not the interpreter.

WHEN USING AN INTERPRETER, SPEAK DIRECTLY TO THE PERSON WHO IS DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

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- A meeting that will last longer than one hour should have two interpreters present or arrangements should be made for a short break(s). An interpreter becomes both physically and mentally fatigued after an hour of continuous interpreting and will cease to function at his/her best. Changing interpreters or having a break also helps to reduce eye strain for the person who is deaf.

- Interpreters should sit near the main speaker so that persons who are deaf or hard of hearing can watch the interpreter and the speaker with minimal break in eye contact.

- Do not say anything in the presence of any person who is deaf or hard of hearing that you would not want to be "heard." In doing so, you would be taking advantage of the individual's deafness and would not be polite. An interpreter will interpret any conversation, private or not, that is audible to her/him. When you need to have a private word with another person, show the charging party who is deaf the same courtesy as you would a person who can hear.

- Keep in mind that every interpreter maintains a "lag time" behind the speaker. This is the slight delay in the time a message is relayed by a speaker or signer and the time the interpreter signs or reverses the message. This "lag time" varies with each interpreter and the mode of communication that the interpreter is using. Be considerate of the need for a charging party who is deaf to have equal access to any discussion.

- Investigators may wish to familiarize themselves with the code of ethics established by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (R.I.D.), a national organization that certifies interpreters, which follows this section. Certified and noncertified members and non-members are required to follow this code of ethics. Other organizations have adopted this code of ethics as the industry standard when defining appropriate behavior of qualified interpreters.

- Contact the Performance Management Branch, Human Resources Management Services, at EEOC headquarters if there are further questions about interpreting for people who are deaf or hard of hearing at (202) 663-4399 (voice or TDD).

Using a TDD (or TT)

Investigators may need to use a TDD to communicate with a charging party who is deaf or hard of hearing. They should take the time to learn how to use one before the first call comes in. Each office has been provided with a videotape explaining how to use a TDD. A TDD is a text telephone that makes telephone communication accessible to people who are speech impaired and/or deaf or hard of hearing. Telephone conversation is transmitted in a visible, printed format. Generally, a TDD is used like a computer keyboard or typewriter. (Note: The Federal Communications Commission used "TT," rather than "TDD," for "Text

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Telephone" in its implementing regulations for Title IV of the ADA, "Telecommunications Relay Services.") Instructions on using a TDD follow this section.

Using a Telecommunications Relay Service

An investigator may need to use a telecommunic. ions relay service if there is a need to contact a charging party who is deaf or hard of hearing from a location where there is no TDD or if the office TDD is not working. Telecommunications relay services are currently available in most states.

Title IV of the ADA requires common carriers that provide telephone voice transmission services to provide telecommunications relay services by July 26, 1993. Relay services make telephone communication possible between people who do not have TDDs and people who use TDDs. When using a telecommunications relay service, a trained relay operator, or communications assistant, transmits conversation between a person using a TDD and a person using a voice telephone.

For example: If an investigator wished to call a person who is deaf or hard of hearing to set up an interview, s/he can call the relay service by voice and give the operator the charging party's telephone number. The operator will then call the charging party by TDD. When the charging party answers the telephone using a TDD, the operator will voice the charging party's message to the investigator. The investigator can speak directly to the charging party, with the relay operator transmitting the investigator's voiced words by TDD.

Telephone numbers for state relay services are listed on page 24. Because the availability of telecommunications relay services is rapidly growing and changing, some of the telephone numbers may change and new numbers may be added for these and other states.

Using the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS)

The Federal Information Relay Service works in much the same way as the Telecommunications Relay Service. It was established to make telephone communication on Federal Government business possible between people who use TDDs and people who do not have TDDs. Any member of the public, in any of the contiguous 48 states, needing to contact an agency of the Executive, Legislative, or Judicial branches of the Federal Government can initiate a call to the TDD relay service. It can also be used by Federal employees needing to contact a member of the public through a TDD. The phone number for the Federal Information Relay Service is:

1-800-877-8339

If you are calling by voice, you will first hear TDD tones. Wait a bit. The relay operator will come on the line.

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Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf

Interpreters' Code of Ethics

- Interpreter/transliterator shall keep all assignment-related information strictly confidential.
- Interpreter/transliterators shall render the message faithfully, always conveying the content and spirit of the speaker, using language most readily understood by the person(s) whom they serve.
- Interpreter/transliterators shall not counsel, advise, or interject personal opinions.
- Interpreter/transliterators shall accept assignments using discretion with regard to skill, setting, and the consumers involved.
- Interpreter/transliterators shall request compensation for services in a professional and judicious manner.
- Interpreter/transliterators shall function in a manner appropriate to the situation.
- Interpreter/transliterators shall strive to further knowledge and skills through participation in workshops, professional meetings, interaction with professional colleagues and reading of current literature in the field.
- Interpreter/transliterators, by virtue of membership in or certification by the R.I.D., Inc. shall strive to maintain high professional standards in compliance with the code of ethics.

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How to Use a TDD

- During a conversation, only one TDD at a time can send signals over a telephone line. You need to know how to begin a conversation, when it is your turn to type, how to ask a question, and how to end your conversation. People who use TDDs use abbreviations to expedite the phone call such as GA (go ahead), Q (question), SK (stop keying), PLS (please), and HD (hold).

- "GA" is used when you finish a message. This tells the other person it is his or her turn to type. When you read "GA," it is your turn to type. For example, You may answer a telephone call: "Hello. This is Joe Investigator at the Miami District Office. How may I help you? GA" The other person may respond: "This is Jane Doe. I want to speak to an EEO investigator pls GA." It is not really necessary to use punctuation. Many people who are deaf do not use punctuation, probably because it slows down the communication.

- "SK" is used when you are ready to finish the conversation and hang up. When you read "SK," type "SKSK" in response and hang up the telephone. When both you and the person you are talking to have typed "SK," your conversation is finished and you can hang up the phone. For example: Charging party: "Thank you for your assistance today bye bye SK" Investigator: "You are welcome bye SKSK."

- "Q" is the same as "?" It is easier to use a "Q" than switching to figures to find the "?" When you want to ask a question, you can type "Q" instead of "?" For example: "How are you today Q GA"

- Some people use "GA or SK" or "GA to SK" as a short way to say, "Do you have anything else to say? I am done." When you read "GA or SK," you can type an additional message or sign off with an "SK." For example: Charging party: "I will contact you again concerning the information you requested. Thank you for your help GA or SK." Investigator: "OK You are welcome bye bye SKSK."

  (NOTE: The quotation marks are used for clarification. it is not necessary to use quotation marks on the TDD.)

- Always identify yourself immediately when you make or receive a TDD call. Since the person on the other end cannot hear you in a telephone call, it is important and polite to do this.

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- After you receive a call, be sure to turn your TDD off unless you are using a TDD that has an answering machine mechanism (see below). Be sure you hang up the phone receiver because if someone else tries to call you, s/he will get a busy signal.

- **If you have a Superprint 400 Auto Answer TDD**, there are certain steps with which to become familiar:

  If you have not put a message in the TDD

  - Hold the shift/select key and push the #9 key.
    Prompt: Read message?
    Type: N (no) if you have not put a message into the TDD
    Prompt: Type New Message?
    Type: Y (yes)
    Screen will go blank...now type, for example:

    > Hello. This is the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission _____ ____ District Office. Please leave your name, number, and a brief message and we will contact you as soon as possible. Thank you. GA

    After typing message, hold the shift/select and push the #9 key.
    Prompt: Rings (2-9)?
    Type: 2
    Screen should read: Auto Answer On.

    If you have put a message in the TDD

    The TDD should always read "Auto Answer On." If it is turned off for the weekend or accidentally touched and the screen reads "Auto Answer Off," the above procedures should be used with one change. There is no need to type a message each time.

    Prompt: Read message?
    Type: N (no) if you have not put a message into the TDD
    Prompt: Type New Message?
    Type: N (yes)
    Prompt: Rings (2-9)?
    Type: 2
    Screen should read: Auto Answer On.

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How to dial with the Superprint 400 Auto Answer TDD

Hit the space bar and the screen should say "Auto Answer Off." Then hold the shift/select key and push #0.

Prompt: Type Phone Number
Type: For example, **82026634061** or **96634061**, then hit the return key.

Watch the signal light and you will know if the line is busy or there is no answer.

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Telephone Relay Services

Alabama

(800) 548-2546 (TDD)
(800) 548-2547 (Voice)

Alaska

(800) 770-8973 (TDD)
(800) 770-8255 (Voice)

Arizona

(800) 367-8939 (TDD)
(800) 842-4681 (Voice)

Arkansas

(800) 285-1131 (TDD)
(800) 285-1121 (Voice)

California

(800) 735-2929 (TDD)
(800) 735-2922 (Voice)

Colorado

(800) 659-2656 (TDD)
(800) 659-3656 (Voice)

Connecticut

(800) 842-9710 (TDD)
(800) 833-8134 (Voice)

Delaware

(800) 232-5460 (TDD)
(800) 232-5470 (Voice)

District of Columbia

(202) 855-1234 (TDD)
(202) 855-1000 (Voice)

Florida

(800) 955-8771 (TDD)
(800) 955-8770 (Voice)

Georgia

(800) 255-0056 (TDD)
(800) 255-0135 (Voice)

Hawaii

1-711 (TDD)
1-511 (Voice)
(808) 546-2565 (Voice)

Idaho

(800) 377-3529 (TDD)
(800) 377-1363 (Voice)

Illinois

(800) 526-0844 (TDD)
(800) 526-0857 (Voice)

Indiana

(800) 743-3333 (TDD/Voice)

Iowa

(800) 735-2942 (TDD)
(800) 735-2943 (Voice)

Kansas

(800) 766-3777 (TDD/Voice)

Kentucky

(800) 648-6056 (TDD)
(800) 648-6057 (Voice)

Louisiana

(800) 846-5277 (TDD)
(800) 947-5277 (Voice)

Maine

(800) 437-1220 (TDD)
(800) 457-1220 (Voice)

Maryland

(800) 735-2258 (TDD/Voice)

Massachusetts

(800) 439-2370 (TDD/Voice)

Michigan

(800) 649-3777 (TDD/Voice)

Minnesota

(800) 627-3529 (TDD/Voice)
(612) 297-5353 (TDD/Voice)

Mississippi

(800) 582-2233 (TDD/Voice)

Missouri

(800) 735-2966 (TDD)
(800) 735-2466 (Voice)

Montana

(800) 253-4091 (TDD)
(800) 253-4093 (Voice)

Nebraska

(800) 833-7352 (TDD)
(800) 833-0920 (Voice)

Nevada

(800) 326-6868 (TDD)
(800) 326-6888 (Voice)

New Hampshire

(800) 735-2964 (TDD/Voice)

New Jersey

(800) 852-7899 (TDD)
(800) 852-7897 (Voice)

New Mexico

(800) 659-8331 (TDD)
(800) 659-1779 (Voice)

New York

(800) 662-1220 (TDD)
(800) 421-1220 (Voice)

North Carolina

(800) 735-2962 (TDD)
(800) 735-8262 (Voice)

North Dakota

(800) 366-6888 (TDD)
(800) 366-6889 (Voice)

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Ohio

(800) 750-0750 (TDD/Voice)
(216) 476-6001 (TDD/Voice)

Oklahoma

(800) 522-8506 (TDD)
(800) 722-0353 (Voice)

Oregon

(800) 735-2900 (TDD/Voice)

Pennsylvania

(800) 654-5984 (TDD)
(800) 654-5988 (Voice)

Rhode Island

(800) 745-5555 (TDD/Voice)

South Carolina

(800) 735-2905 (TDD/Voice)

South Dakota

(800) 877-1113 (TDD/Voice)

Tennessee

(800) 848-0298 (TDD)
(800) 848-0299 (Voice)

Texas

(800) 735-2989 (TDD)
(800) 735-2988 (Voice)

Utah

(800) 346-4128 (TDD/Voice)
(801) 298-9484 (TDD/Voice)

Vermont

(800) 253-0191 (TDD)
(800) 253-0195 (Voice)

Virginia

(800) 828-1120 (TDD)
(800) 828-1140 (Voice)

Washington

(800) 833-6388 (TDD)
(800) 833-6384 (Voice)

West Virginia

(800) 982-8771 (TDD)
(800) 982-8772 (Voice)

Wisconsin

(800) 947-3529 (TDD/Voice)
(800) 283-9877 (TDD)

Wyoming

(800) 877-9965 (TDD)
(800) 877-9975 (Voice)

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V. People who are Deaf-Blind or Blind-Deaf *

General interaction tips

- Avoid using patronizing language such as, "You speak very well" or "You get around very well."

- People who are both deaf and blind may respond differently depending on if s/he was first blind then became deaf, was first deaf and then became blind, became deaf and blind at the same time, or was born deaf and blind. For example, individuals who become deaf-blind as children or adults benefit from previous experience with language and independent living, whereas individuals who are born deaf-blind lack this previous exposure and, therefore, have different needs.

- Communication modes, cultural differences and interaction techniques may vary due to these factors in addition to the variances present in all people.

- Most individuals who are deaf-blind will not show up to file a charge of discrimination alone. In the event that an individual does appear at the district or area office, it is likely that they will bring a family member or friend who can facilitate communication.

- When you approach a deaf-blind person, gently touch the person and wait to be acknowledged. Try to avoid startling him or her.

- Identify yourself when using an interpreter. Avoid guessing games and don't assume that the person knows who you are. If no interpreter is available, try communicating with the individual who is deaf-blind, try using the "palm printing" method. Using fingertips, print on the individual's palm using capital letters in straight strokes, not rounded strokes. Print one letter at a time, using as few strokes as possible. For example, when printing the letter "L," use one movement from the top of the letter to the end, rather than printing one line, then another to form the "L" shape. Also, print one letter at a time in the center of the palm. Wipe the palm between words. This means after printing, "T," "H," "E," for the word, "the," make one "wiping" movement on the palm to indicate that the word is completed. This way, the person who is deaf-blind does not think the individual is printing one long word, rather than

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* Most of the information provided in this chapter was adapted with permission from "Deaf Blind People and You," a section of Gallaudet University's Deaf-Blindness: A Fact Sheet, copyrighted 1988, Gallaudet University.

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a series of words. Pause after each word for acknowledgement that the word was understood.

- Some individuals who are deaf-blind may wish to have words printed on their back or wrist instead of their palm. Starting with the palm printing method, ask the individual what is preferred.

- Some people who are deaf-blind may bring a card with raised letters with them. The investigator would then communicate by pointing to the raised letters.

- When walking with a person who is deaf-blind, offer your elbow or shoulder as a guide. Be sure the elbow is in the vertical position The arm is often too flexible to be a secure area of contact. Precede the person slightly, particularly on stairs and through doorways. Pause slightly to indicate that you have reached a staircase or to change direction.

- Let the person who is deaf-blind know where you are putting objects--papers, a glass of water, a chair, his or her belongings--to avoid accidents and confusion.

- Using the interpreter or other communication method, always inform the charging party who is deaf-blind of your whereabouts and when you are leaving the room. If there are other people present, let the person know their locations and of opportunities to speak to avoid interrupting others in a conversation.

Making the charge process accessible to people who are deaf-blind or blind-deaf

- Allow charging parties who are deaf-blind to be accompanied by a support person if they wish to act as an interpreter. However, be sure to give the individual who is deaf-blind the option of having a professional interpreter available for other meetings.

- As with a professional interpreter, if a family member or friend is used to interpret, focus the meeting on the person who is deaf-blind. Do not start discussions with the support person about the individual who is deaf-blind. Also do not ignore the person with deaf-blindness and address small talk only to the family member or friend.

BE COURTEOUS AND FLEXIBLE, AND USE COMMON SENSE

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- Using the palm printing method, ask a charging party who is deaf-blind what kind of interpreting is preferred. For example, one person who is deaf-blind but has some vision may prefer an American Sign Language interpreter who interprets up close. Another may want a tactile interpreter.

- Obtain interpreters who are able to use the means of communication the charging party who is deaf-blind prefers.

- Whether or not you are using an interpreter, make sure that your message is understood. One misunderstood word can change the meaning of a short conversation. Summarizing the important points at the end of a conversation may be helpful.

- Some people who are deaf-blind may request certain materials in braille, in large print, or on computer diskette. If these materials are made available to charging parties, they should be made available in alternate formats, upon request.

- If print material is going to be used during a meeting, find out which format is preferred by the individual for meetings (e.g., large print, braille). Be prepared to read the material or have it prepared, in advance, in the medium preferred by the individual. Make sure all equipment is in working order prior to the meeting.

- For people who are deaf-blind, provide a well lit area for the interview and avoid sharp contrasts of light and dark areas.

- Offer assistance in filling out forms such as the intake questionnaire. Many people who are deaf-blind can fill out forms and sign their names if the appropriate spaces are indicated to them. If an interpreter is available, the interpreter will tell the person who is deaf-blind what is being written.

- People who are deaf-blind should be permitted to submit their affidavits in braille or on computer diskette. Once these documents have been received, the field or district office can type the information on the appropriate form and have it sent to the charging party for signature or the charging party can come in and sign it. However, do not insist on a personal appearance if it is not necessary and would not be required for a charging party who is not deaf-blind. Usually, a person who is deaf-blind can find someone to help read documents.

Brailling materials

- EEOC headquarters has brailling equipment. Some material can be sent to headquarters to be brailled. (Contact local management who can obtain assistance or further information from the Performance Management Branch, Human Resources Management Services, at EEOC headquarters.) If a large amount of material needs to

be brailled, the office should have an outside organization do it. Depending on cost, brailling organizations may need to offer bids for the job. When using outside organizations to braille or tape material relating to a charge of discrimination, extreme caution should be taken to protect the privacy and confidentiality of all individuals involved.

Preparing materials in large print

- Most materials developed by the district or field office can easily be prepared in large print using the fonts available on the office computers.

- The Department of Justice developed the Technical Assistance Guide on pages 9-14 on making print materials accessible to people with visual impairments. It provides instructions on appropriate type size, spacing, contrast and color for materials development.

Obtaining a qualified interpreter

- All Field Offices have been provided with the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf directory. Follow the procedures for obtaining interpreters outlined in the July 24, 1992, memorandum from James H. Troy, Director, Office of Program Operations.

- For additional information about hiring qualified interpreters, contact your administrative officer or district director concerning office policies and procedures.

- The suggestions made concerning the use of interpreters for people who are deaf apply to people who are deaf-blind also.

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VI. People who have Speech Impairments

General interaction tips

- Use appropriate terminology like "person who has a speech impairment," "person who has a cleft palate," or "person who stutters."

- If the charging party's speech is difficult to understand, the interviewer should not be afraid to ask him or her to repeat what was said. Some people who have severe speech impairments find it more effective to communicate by writing, typing, or using communication boards or electronic devices.

- Sometimes after a few minutes a listener can get used to a person's speech or voice and find it easier to understand.

- Repeat aloud what you heard if you need clarification.

- Some people with speech impairments may be unable to monitor their tone of voice or facial expression. For example, a person with cerebral palsy may appear angry when s/he is not or a person who slurs his/her words may appear drunk when s/he is not. Don't make assumptions about how a person with a speech impairment feels based on their tone of voice or facial expression.

DON'T SECOND GUESS WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING

- Don't second guess what people are saying by finishing their sentences. Allow a person with a speech impairment time to organize his/her thoughts.

- If someone is using a communication board or electronic device, be patient and allow the individual to get his/her meaning across.

- If there appears to be a need because of drooling while speaking, do not be embarrassed to offer the person a tissue.

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Making the charge process accessible to people with speech impairments

- Try to find a quiet area to meet that is away from noisy machines and conversation. This may make it easier to understand the person with a speech impairment.

- It may be helpful to keep a pad and pencil or typewriter/computer in the meeting room so that they are available if the charging party with a speech impairment wishes to use them for communication purposes.

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VII. People who have Epilepsy**

General interaction tips

- Terminology that is appropriate includes "a person who has epilepsy" or "a person who has seizures." Do not refer to seizures as "fits."

- There are different kinds of seizures. Among the most common is the tonic-clonic (formerly grand mal) seizure which results in a loss of consciousness, jerking movements, and other behavior. Other seizures may involve involuntary actions such as a blank stare lasting a few seconds, random activity, mumbling, lack of awareness of the person's surroundings, and/or jerking of a limb. A person does not always become unconscious during a seizure.

- If the person brings the condition to your attention, you may ask if there are any necessary accommodations. Most people with epilepsy are able to control their seizures with medication. Seizures are usually mild, brief, and infrequent.

- According to the Epilepsy Foundation of America, an ambulance should be called:

  - If there is no medical I.D., and no way of knowing whether the seizure is caused by epilepsy.

  - If the person is pregnant, injured, or diabetic.

  - If the seizure continues for more than five minutes.

  - If a second seizure starts shortly after the first has ended.

  - If consciousness does not start to return after the shaking has stopped.

  If the ambulance arrives after consciousness has returned, the person should be asked whether the seizure was associated with epilepsy and whether emergency room care is warranted.

DURING A SEIZURE, STAY CALM

** Most of the information provided in this chapter was derived from material developed by the Epilepsy Foundation of America.

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- An uncomplicated convulsive seizure in someone who has epilepsy is not a medical emergency, even though it looks like one. It stops naturally after a few minutes without ill effects. The average person is able to continue about his business after a rest period, and may need only limited assistance, or no assistance at all, in getting home. Please note, however, there are several medical conditions other than epilepsy that can cause seizures. These require immediate medical attention and include:

- diabetes
- brain infections
- heat exhaustion
- pregnancy
- poisoning
- hypoglycemia
- high fever
- head injury

- If a person is having a seizure (and while waiting for an ambulance or medical assistance):
  - Stay calm.
  - Help ease the person to the floor.
  - Do not move the person unless the area is clearly dangerous. Remove any hazardous objects.
  - Loosen tight clothing and remove glasses.
  - Do not put your hand or any object in the mouth, do not try to hold the tongue. Contrary to popular belief, the tongue cannot be swallowed.
  - Protect the airway by gently turning the person on his or her side so that any fluid in the mouth can drain away.
  - After the seizure, let the person rest or sleep. Remain calm and reassuring because the person may feel embarrassed or disoriented after the episode.

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VIII. People who have Mental Retardation

General interaction tips

- Appropriate terminology includes "person with mental retardation" or "person with a disability."
- Do not use patronizing language such as, "You are so smart."
- For the most part, talk to a person with mental retardation as you would anyone else, but be more specific.

Making the charge process accessible to people with mental retardation

- Try to find a quiet area to meet that is away from noisy machines and conversation.
- Allow charging parties with mental retardation to be accompanied by a support person if they wish. This person can help "interpret" information for the person with mental retardation if necessary so that the entire charge process is accessible to the individual.

ALLOW THE USE OF A SUPPORT PERSON

- If a support person is used, focus the meeting on the person with mental retardation. Do not start discussions with the support person about the individual with mental retardation. Also do not ignore the person with mental retardation and address small talk only to the support person.
- Be patient with the charging party with mental retardation. Hurrying may create more problems and mistakes.
- Use simple language when explaining the charge process. Avoid complex terminology.
- It may be necessary to repeat some explanations and to segment them. For example, if describing the charge process, divide the description into short sections and pause between the sections. It the individual has difficulty understanding something, it may be appropriate to repeat the instructions using a different vocabulary.

- Occasionally ask the charging party follow-up questions to be sure that he or she understands what is being said.

- Avoid overwhelming the charging party with mental retardation with stimuli. Some people with mental retardation may feel overwhelmed by a large volume of paperwork.

- Some people with mental retardation may have difficulty completing forms. It may be necessary to fill out the form for the person or allow the support person to help complete the form. It may be necessary to check forms to make sure all the necessary information is where it should be. If there appears to be an error, ask the charging party with mental retardation if the information is correct. Read the information back to the person.

- Provide the names of anyone who might contact the individual for follow-up.

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IX. People with Psychiatric Disabilities

General interaction tips

- Appropriate terminology includes "person with a psychiatric disability" or "person with a disability." It is not appropriate to use descriptors such as "disturbed" or "nervous breakdown."
- Talk to the individual as you would to anyone else. Address the individual by name.
- Through your demeanor, establish an atmosphere of trust and understanding.
- Keep questions specific and to the point. Be patient about getting answers.

BE SPECIFIC

- If the individual becomes hostile, do not respond with anger. If the individual becomes paranoid, respond gently and with reassurance.

Making the charge process accessible to people with psychiatric disabilities

- Allow charging parties with psychiatric disabilities to be accompanied by a support person if they wish. This person can provide ongoing support and stability to the individual.
- Seat the individual with a psychiatric disability so that s/he can see everyone in the room and see the door.
- Be specific about what will happen after the meeting in terms of processing the charge.
- If a support person is used, focus the meeting on the person with a psychiatric disability. Do not start discussions with the support person about the individual with a psychiatric disability. Also do not ignore the person with a psychiatric disability and address small talk only to the support person.
- Avoid presenting a stressful environment. Exhibit a calm demeanor.
- Consider the length of meetings for charging parties with psychiatric disabilities. Sometimes a long meeting becomes fatiguing and stressful.

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- Limit the amount of stimuli in the environment. Avoid overwhelming an individual with psychiatric disabilities with paperwork.
- Do not pick up the phone during the interview. If possible, turn off the phone.
- Provide the names of anyone who might contact the individual for follow-up.

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X. People who have Cerebral Palsy

(and other conditions which have muscular or neurological limitations)

General interaction tips

- Appropriate terminology like "person with cerebral palsy" or "person with a disability" should be used.

- If the charging party's speech is difficult to understand, the interviewer should not be afraid to ask him or her to repeat what was said. Some people who have severe cerebral palsy find it more effective to communicate by writing, typing, or using communication boards or electronic devices.

- Don't be surprised if a person with cerebral palsy jumps or responds jerkily to noise.

Making the charge process accessible to people with cerebral palsy

- Allow an individual with cerebral palsy to bring in a third party to act as an "interpreter/support person" if desired.

- If a third party is used, focus the meeting on, and speak directly to, the person with cerebral palsy. Do not start discussions with the third party about the individual with cerebral palsy. Also do not ignore the person with cerebral palsy and address small talk only to the third party.

- If it appears that a person with cerebral palsy needs assistance with filling out forms because of lack of manual dexterity, offer assistance but do not insist. Do not rush to take over. Some people with cerebral palsy choose to write for themselves. Most people will also request assistance, if needed.

- If there appears to be a need because of drooling, do not be embarrassed to offer the person a tissue.

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XI. People with Learning Disabilities

General interaction tips

- Use appropriate terminology like "person with a learning disability" or "person with a disability."

- Avoid using patronizing language such as, "You are so smart."

- The term "learning disability" is used to describe a variety of neurological disorders in acquiring, storing, or retrieving information. A learning disability is a disorder in one or more of the basic processes used in understanding or using spoken or written language. Manifestations include problems related to listening, thinking, speaking, reading, writing, spelling, or doing mathematical calculations. A person with a learning disability usually has average or above average intelligence.

- Create an interview environment that is supportive of the person with a learning disability and reduce distractions and unnecessary visual and auditory stimuli.

- Be thorough, direct, and specific in communication.

Making the charge process accessible to people with learning disabilities

- Find out how the charging party wants to receive information. If the charging party wants information orally, it may be necessary to provide the material on an audiotape. EEOC headquarters has taping equipment. Some material can be sent to headquarters to be taped. (Contact local management who can obtain assistance or further information from the Performance Management Branch, Human Resources Management Services, at EEOC headquarters.) If a large amount of material needs to be taped, the office should have an outside organization do it. Depending on cost, organizations may need to offer bids for the job. When using outside organizations to tape material relating to a charge of discrimination, extreme caution should be taken to protect the privacy and confidentiality of all individuals involved.

- A charging party's affidavit and related correspondence can be taped if all persons being taped have given their consent. Any tape recordings done by the Commission must be done in person, not telephonically, and all participants must be given notice in advance. (See Protection of Privacy, EEOC Order No. 150.005)

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- If material is to be prepared in an accessible format (e.g, audio tape, computer diskette), it should first be prepared in written format. Having written documents will facilitate response to Freedom of Information Act and Privacy Act requests because tapes can then be considered duplicate copies of official records that contain no additional information. Tape recordings are agency records but it would be difficult to edit the tapes to delete exempt information. Putting information in written form first will also avoid concerns related to the Protection of Privacy Order since only the voices of EEOC personnel reading affidavits or correspondence will be taped.

- If the charging party has an auditory perceptual impairment, try to find a quiet area to meet that is away from noisy machines and conversation. Speak clearly in a normal tone of voice. It may be necessary to repeat some explanations and to segment them. For example, if describing the charge process, divide the description into short sections and pause between the sections. It the individual has difficulty understanding something, it may be appropriate to repeat the instructions using a different vocabulary. Writing is sometimes an alternative for communicating with those who have auditory disabilities.

DO NOT RUSH

- Be patient with the charging party with a learning disability. Hurrying may create problems and mistakes.

- People with learning disabilities may request that information be clarified or repeated. Written instructions or directions may be helpful. Using short sentences with clear enun 'ation, or demonstrations, or both, may be useful.

- If asked to fill out forms, some people with learning disabilities may reverse numbers or place words or numbers in the wrong spaces on a form. It may be necessary to check any forms used to make sure all the necessary information is where it should be. If there appears to be an error on the form, ask the charging party with a lear 'ng disability if the information is correct. Read the information back to the person. If this is not effective, show the error to the individual. The best way to provide information depends on the type of learning disability.

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XII. People with Tourette Syndrome

General interaction tips

- Tourette Syndrome affects a person's ability to control behavior. Don't be surprised by some of the sounds or language that are manifested by the disability. This syndrome produces a variety of symptoms:
    - motor tics such as eye blinking, shoulder shrugging, facial grimaces, and arm waving;
    - production of noises such as throat clearing, tongue clicking, and barking sounds; and
    - vocalization of socially unacceptable words such as cursing and insulting comments.
- Appropriate terminology should be used when referring to a person with Tourette Syndrome such as "person with Tourette Syndrome" or "person with a disability."
- Tourette Syndrome is exacerbated by both positive and negative stress, anxiety or worry. The symptoms can be reduced if the person removes himself or herself from a stressful situation; or when a deadline is approaching, if the person takes a rest. An interview may be a stressful situation for a person with Tourette Syndrome. If the interview is particularly long, it might be helpful to provide a rest break.

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XIII. People who have HIV Infection/AIDS, Hepatitis B, or other Bloodborne Diseases

HIV (Human immunodeficiency Virus) and hepatitis B are two types of viruses that are transmitted through blood, and thus are often referred to as "bloodborne" viruses. **These viruses cannot be transmitted through casual interpersonal contact.**

HIV infection is a disease in which the body's immune system breaks down leaving the individual vulnerable to a wide range of infections and cancers. HIV infection has different stages of illness as the virus spreads throughout the body. In the initial stage, a person is asymptomatic and has no physical or mental symptoms. There is a middle stage where various physical and mental symptoms appear. The final stage of HIV infection is known as AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome).

Hepatitis is an "inflammation of the liver." The most common causes of hepatitis are viruses. There are four types of viral hepatitis. One is hepatitis B which is transmitted in much the same way as HIV infection.

How HIV and hepatitis B are transmitted:***

Studies show that HIV and hepatitis B are found in blood, semen, and vaginal secretions.

Thus, **a person can get HIV or hepatitis B:**

- from having sexual intercourse - vaginal, anal or perhaps oral - with an infected person;
- from sharing a needle or syringe that has been used by an infected person; and
- from transfusions of blood or blood products contaminated with HIV or hepatitis B.

*** See Center for Disease Control and Prevention, HIV/AIDS: Are You At Risk?

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Babies born to women with HIV infection or hepatitis B may acquire the virus congenitally or perinatally. Neither HIV infection nor hepatitis B is transmitted through the air like a cold or flu, so no one can "catch" HIV infection or hepatitis B because someone sneezes or coughs.

How HIV and hepatitis B are not transmitted:

You cannot get HIV or hepatitis B;

- from shaking hands or hugging a person with HIV infection or hepatitis B;
- from sharing a pen used by a person with HIV infection or hepatitis B;
- from touching paper used by a person with HIV infection or hepatitis B;
- by sitting in a chair used by a person with HIV infection or hepatitis B;
- from being in a crowded elevator or car with a person with HIV infection or hepatitis B;
- from clothes, telephones, or toilet seats used by a person with HIV infection or hepatitis B; or
- by sharing water fountains or eating areas or utensils used by a person with HIV infection or hepatitis B.

General interaction tips

- Use appropriate language when referring to a person who has HIV infection or AIDS such as "person with HIV infection," "person who has AIDS," or "person with a disability."

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- Avoid using patronizing language such as, "You don't look sick." Don't ask the individual how s/he got HIV infection.

- Be supportive and relaxed because you cannot get HIV infection or hepatitis B from everyday casual contact with someone with one of these diseases. Offer the assistance you would offer any charging party.

- Since HIV infection or hepatitis B cannot be transmitted in an office setting, there is no need to take any special precautions to prevent transmission. There is no need to wear gloves or masks, or keep someone with HIV infection or hepatitis B at a distance.

Making the charge process accessible to people with HIV infection/AIDS or hepatitis B

- Many individuals with HIV infection or hepatitis B, especially those who are asymptomatic, require no accommodations as the result of HIV infection or hepatitis B.

- As the HIV infection or hepatitis B progresses, an individual may develop impairments that require accommodations. Discussions of such accommodations may be found in other sections of this reference manual. For example, if someone who has HIV infection becomes mobility im ired, the considerations listed in the chapters on people who use wheelchairs or are mobility impaired apply.

- If your office wishes more information on HIV infection or hepatitis B, contact the state or local public health department. Many of these departments provide related education, or they can refer you to agencies providing this type of education.

- Each district and area office has been provided with extensive information about HIV Infection/AIDS developed by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Check your office library for these materials if there are additional questions about HIV infection and AIDS.

References

Information used to develop this publication was obtained from the following organizations.

People who use Wheelchairs/People with Mobility Impairments

American Amputee Foundation
P.O. Box 250218
Little Rock, Arkansas 72225
(501) 666-2523

National Amputation Foundation, Inc.
73 Church Street
Malverne, New York 11565
(516) 887-3600

National Multiple Sclerosis Society
733 Third Avenue
New York, New York 10017
(212) 986-3240

National Spinal Cord Injury Association
600 West Cummings Park, Suite 2000
Woburn, Massachusetts 01801
(617) 935-2722
1-800- 962-9629

Paralyzed Veterans of America
801 18th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 872-1300 (Voice)
(202) 416-7622 (TDD)

People who are Blind or Visually Impaired

American Council of the Blind
1155 15th Street, N.W., Suite 720
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 467-5081
1-800-424-8666 (3:00-5:30 PM EST)

American Foundation for the Blind
15 West 16th Street
New York, New York 10011
(212) 620-2000

Job Opportunities for the Blind
1800 Johnson Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21230
1-800-638-7518
(410) 659-9314

People who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf
3417 Volta Place, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20007
(202) 337-5220 (Voice/TDD)

Gallaudet University
National Information Center on Deafness
Kendall Green
800 Florida Avenue, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
(202) 651-5051 (Voice)
(202) 651-5052 (TDD)

National Association of the Deaf
814 Thayer Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910
(301) 587-1788 (Voice)
(301) 587-1789 (TDD)

National Captioning Institute
5203 Leesburg Pike
Falls Church, Virginia 22041
(703) 998-2400 (Voice/TDD)

Center on Employment
National Technical Institute for the Deaf
Rochester Institute of Technology
52 Lomb Memorial Drive
P.O. Box 9887
Rochester, New York 14623-5604
(716) 475-6834 (Voice)
(716) 475-6205 (TDD)

Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf
8719 Colesville Road, Suite 310
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3919
(301) 608-0050 (Voice)
(301) 608-0562 (TDD)

Self-Help for Hard of Hearing People, Inc.
7910 Woodmont Avenue, Suite 1200
Bethesda, Maryland 20814
(301) 657-2249 (Voice/TDD)

People who are Deaf-Blind or Blind-Deaf

Gallaudet University
National Information Center on Deafness
Kendall Green
800 Florida Avenue, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
(202) 651-5051 (Voice)
(202) 651-5052 (TDD)

Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults
111 Middle Neck Road
Sands Point, New York 11050
(516) 944-8900 (Voice)
(516) 944-8637 (TDD)

People with Speech Impairments

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
10801 Rockville Pike
Rockville, Maryland 20852
(301) 897-5700 (Voice)
Helpline: 1-800-638-8255 (Voice)
(301) 897-0157 (TDD)

People with Epilepsy

Epilepsy Foundation of America
4351 Garden City Drive
Landover, Maryland 20785
(301) 459-3700 (Voice)
1-800-332-2070 (TDD)

People with Mental Retardation

The ARC
500 East Border Street, Suite 300
Arlington, Texas 76010
(817) 261-6003 (Voice)
(817) 277-0553 (TDD)

National Down Syndrome Congress
1605 Chantilly Drive, Suite 250
Atlanta, Georgia 30324
1-800-232-6372

People with Learning Disabilities

Learning Disability Association of America
4156 Library Road
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15234
(412) 341-1515

National Center for Learning Disabilities
381 Park Avenue South, Suite 1420
New York, New York 10016
(212) 545-7510

People with Psychiatric Disabilities

The Judge David L. Bazelon Center
for Mental Health Law
1101 15th Street, N.W., Suite 1212
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 467-5730 (Voice)
(202) 467-4232 (TDD)

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill
2101 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 302
Arlington, Virginia 22201
(703) 524-7600
1-800-950-NAMI

National Mental Health Association
1021 Prince Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-2971
(703) 684-7722

People who have Cerebral Palsy (and other conditions which have muscular or neurological limitations)

United Cerebral Palsy Associations, Inc.
1522 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 842-1266 (Voice/TDD)
1-800-872-5827 (Voice/TDD)

People with Tourette Syndrome

Tourette Syndrome Association
42-40 Bell Boulevard
Bayside, New York 11361
(718) 224-2999

People who have HIV Infection/AIDS, Hepatitis B, or other Bloodborne Diseases

AIDS Action Council
1875 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20009
(202) 986-1300

CDC National AIDS Information Clearinghouse
1-800-458-5231 (Voice)
1-800-243-7012 (TDD)

National Leadership Coalition on AIDS
1730 M Street, N.W., Suite 905
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 429-0930