



HOSPITALITY & DISABILITY

An ADA National Network Initiative

Like all guests, guests with disabilities should expect exemplary customer service, and the tips below can help you deliver it.

What is Accessibility?

Accessibility refers to the design of products and physical spaces or delivery of services so that they are usable by people with disabilities. In the hospitality context, this means everything from building features such as the width of doors and Braille signage to customer service interactions such as making reservations and ordering room service. The goal of accessibility is to effectively serve *all* guests, by design. But the needs of guests with disabilities—even those who have the same type of disability—are not always the same, so sometimes reasonable modifications to standard policies and practices may be needed. Above all, effective communication is key. If you are not sure how to best assist a guest with a disability, simply ask.

Upon Arrival...

- ✓ Always keep pathways to enter the hotel lobby clear. This includes ramps, doorways, and the route to the front desk, elevators, and other common areas.
- ✓ Be prepared to assist with luggage.
- ✓ Offer a guided tour of common areas and point out amenities that guests may enjoy during their stay. For a guest who is blind or has low vision, describe the layout of the hotel and give directions based on the individual's perspective (for example, "the elevators are to your left").

Remember: Customers with disabilities must have access to all the same options available to other customers staying at the hotel.

At Check-In...

- ✓ When checking-in a customer of short stature or who uses a wheelchair or scooter, use an accessible height service counter. If an accessible height counter is not available, have a clipboard or an accessible digital device on hand for reviewing and signing required documents.
- ✓ Speak clearly and face guests who may be deaf or hard of hearing. Have pen and paper or other notetaking devices available to exchange notes, if needed.
- ✓ Explain the steps you are taking during the check-in process for a guest who may be blind or have low vision (for example, "I am swiping your credit card to process the payment").
- ✓ Reassure guests that the hotel welcomes service dogs in all areas, at no additional cost. Point out relief areas.

During the Stay...

- ✓ If you offer concierge services, be prepared to help guests find information about accessibility, such as accessible tours or transportation options to visit local destinations during their stay.
- ✓ Offer daily check-ins to ensure the guest's needs and expectations are being met, and make changes as needed.

After Check-Out...

- ✓ As with all guests, provide a mechanism (for example, a follow-up phone call, comment card, or email) for guests with disabilities to provide feedback so that improvements can be made, whether related to accessibility or any aspect of their stay.

Questions about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)?

Mid-Atlantic ADA Center

Serving DE, DC, MD, PA, VA, WV

ADAatYourService.org

Reach regional ADA Centers nationwide: 800-949-4232

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