

When Talking to a Person with a Disability that Affects Speech

1. Pay attention, be patient, and wait for the person to complete a word or thought. Do not finish it for the person.
2. If you do not understand, then ask the person to repeat what is said. Tell the person what you heard and see if it is close to what he or she is saying.
3. Be prepared for various devices or techniques used to enhance or augment speech. Do not be afraid to communicate with someone who uses an alphabet board or a computer with synthesized speech.

Interacting with a Person Who is Blind or Has a Disability that Affects 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. When asked to guide someone with a vision disability, never push or pull the person. Allow him or her to take your arm, then walk slightly ahead. Point out doors, stairs, or curbs, as you approach them.
4. As you enter a room with the person, describe the layout and location of furniture, etc.
5. Be specific when describing the location of objects. (e.g. "There is a chair three feet from you at eleven o'clock.")
6. Do not pet or distract a guide dog. The dog is responsible for its owner's safety and is working. It is not a pet.

Questions?

Contact ADA Programs Division at adaprograms@oaklandca.gov or (510) 238-5219.