



**COUNTY OF ROCKLAND**  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

The Dr. Robert L. Yeager Health Center  
Building L - Sanatorium Road  
P.O. Box 307  
Pomona, New York 10970-0307  
Telephone: (845) 364-2000

C. SCOTT VANDERHOEF  
County Executive

SUSAN SHERWOOD  
Commissioner

December 13, 2007

Overnight Mail

Ryerson Mausert  
Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance  
Commissioner's Office  
Bureau of Equal Opportunity Development  
16<sup>th</sup> Floor, Sec. B  
Albany, New York 12243

Dear Mr. Mausert:

Attached please find the County of Rockland Department of Social Services' revised AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) / LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP) Self-Evaluation Form, as required per Administrative Directive 06-ADM-05 dated April 27, 2006.

We apologize for the delay in providing this information; it deals with important issues and we wanted to be certain we were covering all aspects appropriately.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

ELIZABETH MUNRO  
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

Encl.

c: Commissioner Sherwood  
Planning Coordinator Jan Jason  
Head Social Welfare Examiner, Temporary Assistance, Teresa Lamb

**AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)/LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP)**  
**Self-Evaluation Form**

District: Rockland County Form completed by: Elizabeth Munro, Deputy Commissioner Phone #: 845 - 364 - 3301

**Access — ADA**

1. Do you have an ADA contact person within DSS who is responsible for social services program access and for the taking and resolution of complaints from applicants/recipients (A/Rs)?

Yes X No    (\*)

2. If 'yes' to #1, who is your ADA contact? Elizabeth Munro, Deputy Commissioner

Please provide the ADA contact's telephone # 845 - 364 - 3301

3. a. Has your district done a self-evaluation of program access by A/Rs with disabilities?

Yes X (5/31/07 & 11/1/07) (Please attach a copy of the report) No    (\*)

Self-evaluations were conducted using OTDA evaluation form and findings were recorded in response to questions contained in the form.

b. Were deficiencies found in the self-evaluation?

Yes X (go to c.) No    (Go to #4)

c. Were corrective actions taken?

Yes X (Please attach copy of the corrective action plan) No    (\*)

4. Do you have a written procedure for handling complaints from applicants/recipients who claim to have been denied access to social services programs due to a disability?

Yes X (Please attach copy) No    (\*)

See Attachments 1, "Procedures for Civil Rights Complaints"

1a, "Agency Complaint and Investigation Form for Civil Rights Complaints"

1b, "Bureau of Equal Opportunity Development Food Stamp Program Civil Rights Violation Complaint Form" and "Food Stamp Complaint Acknowledgement"

5. Do you provide applicants/recipients (A/Rs) for social services programs with information about the ADA's prohibitions against discrimination?

Yes X (Please attach copy) No   

Applicants/Recipients are informed about the ADA's prohibition against discrimination through the Agency's Consumer Handbook (See Page 23 of Attachment 2), Publication LDSS-4148A: "What You Should Know About Your Rights and Responsibilities," and "Availability of Reasonable Accommodations at DSS for Access to Services" (Attachment 3), which is included with applications by mail or in person.

6. Reasonable accommodation means an adaptation or alteration that gives an A/R with disabilities meaningful access to social services programs. Do you have written reasonable accommodation procedures?

Yes X (Please attach copy) No    (\*)

See Attachment 3: "Availability of Reasonable Accommodations at DSS for Access to Services"

7. Do you have a procedure to insure that the AIR who is offered reasonable accommodation, but refuses, understands the consequences of that refusal?

Yes X (Please attach copy) No    (\*)

See Paragraph 6 of Attachment 3, referenced in response to question #6, above.

#### Access — General Disabilities

1a. Are your facilities accessible to, and usable by, individuals with disabilities?

Yes X No   

b. Are your parking areas and sidewalks accessible to, and usable by, individuals with disabilities?

Yes X No   

c. Is the entrance wheelchair accessible?

Yes X No   

d. Are bathrooms and drinking fountains wheelchair accessible?

Yes X No   

e. Are areas such as the photo ID/finger imaging areas wheelchair accessible?

Yes X No   

f. If No to e., are alternate accessible sites available?

Yes    No   

g. If the client area is above or below the 1st floor, are there elevators?

Yes X No    1st floor only

h. If NO to g. are services available at alternate accessible sites?

Yes\_\_ No\_\_ (\*)

2. In social services districts with more than one district office, are all district offices accessible according to #1. a-e, above?

Yes\_\_ No X (\*)

3. When one or more district office is not handicap accessible, is reasonable accommodation offered?

Yes X (attach copy of reasonable accommodation plan or specify) : Applicant/Recipient is referred to accessible DSS office.

No\_\_

4. Do you have procedures for determining when home visits will be provided for A/Rs who are physically or mentally unable to travel to the office/center?

Yes X (go to #6) No\_\_ (\*) (go to #5)

5. If No to #4, what alternate accommodations are provided? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Are the home visits or alternate accommodations procedures in writing?

Yes X (please attach a copy-go to #7) No\_\_ (\*) (go to #7)

See Paragraph 7(a), Attachment 3: "Availability of Reasonable Accommodations at DSS for Access to Services"

7. How is the district's policy regarding home visits or alternate accommodations conveyed to A/Rs? (Then go to #8)

By telephone when a request is made for assistance.

8. How is the district's policy regarding home visits or alternate accommodations conveyed to the appropriate LDSS staff?  
Appropriate DSS staff receive a copy of Attachment 3 referenced in response to #7 above. Supervisors review policies and procedures at monthly staff meetings. New employee training curriculum includes ADA and Reasonable Accommodation information. In addition, the pamphlet: "About Being Sensitive to People with Disabilities" (Attachment 4) is distributed and discussed at new employee training.

#### ACCESS-Visually/Sight Impaired

1a. Are there signs in Braille for the visually/sight impaired?

Yes <u>X</u>	No__	Men's and Women's rooms
Yes__	No <u>X</u>	Room Numbers
Yes <u>X</u>	No__	Exits
Yes__	No <u>X</u>	Permanent Rooms and Spaces
Yes <u>X</u>	No__	Elevators

Braille signs for Room Numbers and Permanent Rooms and Spaces are planned as part of a future Agency Capital Improvement Project.

b. If No to any of the above, how does the visually impaired person find a necessary location?

DSS staff assist Applicants/Recipients who are visually impaired by providing assistance and directly escorting them as necessary.

2. Do you have procedures in place for A/Rs who, due to visual impairment, are unable to read the application, information booklets, notices, etc.?

Yes X (Please provide copy) No    (\*)

See Paragraph 7(b), Attachment 3: "Availability of Reasonable Accommodations at DSS for Access to Services"

#### Access — Mental Impairment

1. Do you have procedures in place to assist a mentally impaired A/R?

Yes X (Please provide copy) No    (\*)

See Paragraph 7(a), Attachment 3: "Availability of Reasonable Accommodations at DSS for Access to Services"

#### Access — Hearing Impaired

1. Do you have procedures in place to assist hearing impaired A/Rs?

Yes X (Please provide copy) No    (\*)

See Paragraph 7 (c), Attachment 3: "Availability of Reasonable Accommodations at DSS for Access to Services." Guidelines for Talking to the Hard of Hearing, and Information on CapTel and 7-1-1 were submitted on May 31, 2007

2. Is a sign-language interpreter provided?

Yes X No    (\*)

3. Does the office/agency have TTY/TTD equipment or New York Relay Services available?

Yes X (Type of Service: Cap Tel and 711 NY Relay Service) No   

See Attachment 6, referred to above.

#### Access — Limited English Proficiency

1. Do you have procedures to assist limited or non-English speaking A/Rs?

Yes X (Please provide copy) No    (\*)

See Paragraph 7(d), Attachment 3: "Availability of Reasonable Accommodations at DSS for Access to Services" and Attachment 5: "Procedures for Language Assistance for Applicants/Recipients" DSS and County Employee Interpreters Lists submitted on May 31, 2007.

2. Are the following available in other than English language?

Signs	Yes <u>X</u>	No <u>  </u>
Posters	Yes <u>X</u>	No <u>  </u>
Pamphlets	Yes <u>X</u>	No <u>  </u>
Other client handouts:	Yes <u>  </u> (Describe: <u>  </u> )	No <u>  </u>

3. a. Is the "Interpreter Services Poster" (PUB-4842) displayed in the waiting area?

Yes X

No    (\*)

b. Is the recommended 6/04 version of the "Interpreter Services Desk Guide" (PUB-4843) and/or the optional language palm cards used?

Yes X

No   

(\*) Answers with (\*) will require a corrective action plan to be submitted within sixty days of the date that this form is due to the returned to the Division of Employment and Transitional Supports (DETS).



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C. SCOTT VANDERHOEF  
County Executive

SUSAN SHERWOOD  
Commissioner

### Procedures for Civil Rights Complaints

#### Staff Responsibilities

If an employee receives a complaint (verbal or written) from an Applicant/Recipient (A/R), h/she is responsible to complete an Agency Complaint and Investigation Form for Civil Rights Complaints and forward immediately to the Unit Supervisor for review and investigation. These procedures are not meant to include "complaints" for which there is a right to a Fair Hearing. A Civil Rights Complaint involves:

An Individual alleging discrimination including, but not limited to, program access and delivery of services based on race, color, national origin, gender, religion, political belief, age or disability. (Food Stamp Civil Rights Complaints require completion of an OTDA/EOD Complaint Form (Attachment 1b) instead of Agency Complaint and Investigation Form for Civil Rights Complaints (Attachment 1a).

All Civil Rights complaints must be recorded and immediately referred to the Unit Supervisor for investigation and follow up. If an individual alleges a *civil rights discrimination* but declines to give a written complaint, the employee receiving the complaint must record it and refer to their Unit Supervisor immediately.

#### Supervisory Responsibilities

1. Supervisors are responsible for assuring that their assigned staff is knowledgeable of and comply with Procedures for Civil Rights Complaints.
2. Every complaint received must be promptly acknowledged.
3. Pursuant to Federal and State requirements, supervisors are required to record any complaint made by an A/R of the Food Stamp Program. A Food Stamp Civil Complaint Acknowledgement Letter must be completed, the original provided to the A/R, one copy kept on file with the Head Social Welfare Examiner for Temporary Assistance, and one copy to the appropriate Principal Social Welfare Examiner. A Food Stamp Civil Complaint must be recorded on OTDA's EOD Complaint Form and forwarded to OTDA upon completion of preliminary review or investigation. (Refer to 04-LCM-07)
4. If a Food Stamp Complaint involves an allegation of discrimination, a copy of the OTDA EOD Complaint Form must also be forwarded to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture and the New York State OTDA Deputy Commissioner.
5. The basis of each complaint must be reviewed and investigated to determine the validity of the complaint.
6. Supervisory staff is responsible for reviewing its own activity and determining appropriate action.
7. When a complaint is referred to this Agency from the State, a response must be submitted back to the State within twenty (20) days.

### **Upon Receipt of a Complaint from an Applicant/Recipient**

1. Staff completes Agency Complaint and Investigation Form for Civil Rights Complaints by completing all required fields. If a Food Stamp Complaint, OTDA/EOD Complaint Form should be completed instead.
2. Nature of complaint should be clearly identified including:
  - a. Description of the circumstances which prompted allegation;
  - b. The date on which the alleged discrimination occurred and location;
  - c. Names and addresses of individuals (or witnesses) who may have been present, etc.
3. Staff must indicate if complaint is alleging civil rights/ADA discrimination and/or a Food Stamp Civil Complaint.
4. Indicate name of Unit Supervisor the complaint is referred to, including date and time.

### **Supervisor Receiving Complaint Form for Civil Rights Complaints**

1. Acknowledge receipt of Agency Complaint and Investigation Form for Civil Rights Complaints by signing name, date and time received.
2. Indicate staff person assigned to investigate (can be receiving Supervisor) and indicate resolution due date, no more than twenty (20) days from receipt of complaint.

### **Investigation of Complaint**

1. Staff person assigned to investigate complaint completes all heading information of Agency Complaint and Investigation Form for Civil Rights Complaints.
2. If Food Stamp Civil Complaint, an OTDA EOD Complaint Form must be completed instead.
3. Conduct investigation, determine validity of complaint, Include dates/times, names of individuals contacted, indicate findings.
4. Determine what appropriate action is required to resolve the issue and whether the complainant is satisfied with the explanation/action provided.
5. Upon completion of investigation, completed Agency Complaint and Investigation Form for Civil Rights Complaints (OTDA EOD Form if Food Stamp Civil Complaint), along with any other information obtained during investigation should be forwarded to the Unit Supervisor for final determination and action.
6. Unit Supervisor reviews investigation information and indicates final determination at bottom; reviews final determination with administrative staff for completion of written notification to client.
7. If Food Stamp Civil Complaint, completed OTDA EOD Complaint Form must be forwarded to OTDA as per instructions in 04-LCM-07. Retain copy for Agency records.
8. When entire process is concluded, the completed Complaint packet is given to Deputy Commissioner for Assistance Programs, who will retain packet and keep a log for administrative purposes.

Forms:            Agency Complaint and Investigation Form for Civil Rights Complaints X1437  
                     Agency Food Stamp Complaint Acknowledgement X0542  
                     Bureau of Equal Opportunity Development Food Stamp Program  
                     Civil Rights Violation Complaint Form X1331





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C. SCOTT VANDERHOEF  
 County Executive

SUSAN SHERWOOD  
 Commissioner

**AGENCY COMPLAINT AND INVESTIGATION FORM**  
**FOR CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLAINTS \***

Please print all information

Date & Time Complaint Received: \_\_\_\_\_ by Phone \_\_\_\_\_ In Person \_\_\_\_\_ Written \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Person Taking Complaint: \_\_\_\_\_ Unit: \_\_\_\_\_ Ext. \_\_\_\_\_

A/R's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Case No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of Complaint: (Use reverse side if necessary) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Received by Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date & Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Investigation Assigned to: \_\_\_\_\_ Ext. \_\_\_\_\_ Resolution Due Date \_\_\_\_\_

Investigation Details, Conclusions and Actions Taken to Resolve: (Use reverse side if necessary)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Final Determination: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Client Notified: \_\_\_\_\_ Letter (attached) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Substantiated/Resolution Reached Client Notified \_\_\_\_\_ Letter (attached) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Completed EOD Form Forwarded to OTDA (Food Stamp Civil Complaints Only; Attached) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date copy sent to: Head Social Welfare Examiner: \_\_\_\_\_ Deputy Commissioner for Assistance Progs. \_\_\_\_\_

\* For Food Stamp Civil Rights Complaints Use OTDA EOD Complaint Form, LDSS 04 LCM 07, X1331 (revised 11/07), and Food Stamp Complaint Acknowledgement, X0542 (revised 10/26/99)

X1437 (12/2007)

**BUREAU OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITY DEVELOPMENT**  
**FOOD STAMP PROGRAM CIVIL RIGHTS VIOLATION COMPLAINT FORM**

Client Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Food Stamp Case No: \_\_\_\_\_

DSS Location/address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Basis for complaint: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Complaint: \_\_\_\_\_ Acknowledged (date): \_\_\_\_\_

File opened on (date) \_\_\_\_\_

If necessary, inactive period, from (date) \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Reason: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Written complaint and all documentation received (date) \_\_\_\_\_

LSSD Investigation began (date) \_\_\_\_\_

Staff assigned: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Determination:**

Complaint Unsubstantiated/Dismissed \_\_\_\_\_ Client notified \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Complaint Substantiated/Resolution Reached \_\_\_\_\_ Client notified \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Complaint Referred to NYS DTA & EOD for Investigation:**

Client notified \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Complaint referred \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



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County Executive

SUSAN SHERWOOD  
Commissioner

**Food Stamp Complaint Acknowledgement**

To: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Case # \_\_\_\_\_

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

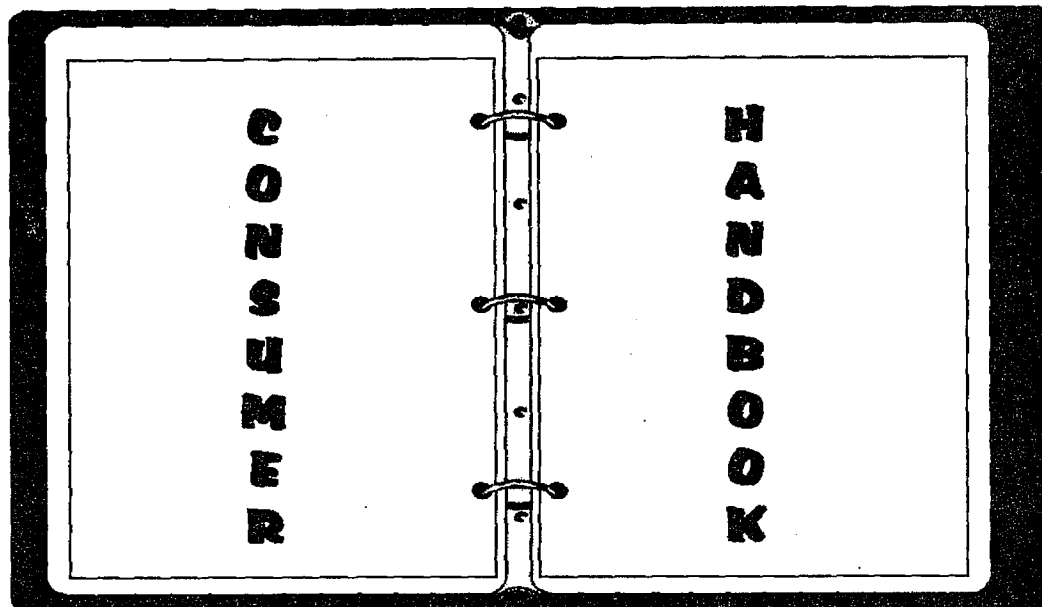
This letter is to acknowledge receipt of the complaint you filed with this office, and to assure you that it will receive our prompt attention.

You will be notified of the agency's decision on this matter within twenty days.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Food Stamp Unit/ Phone #

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES



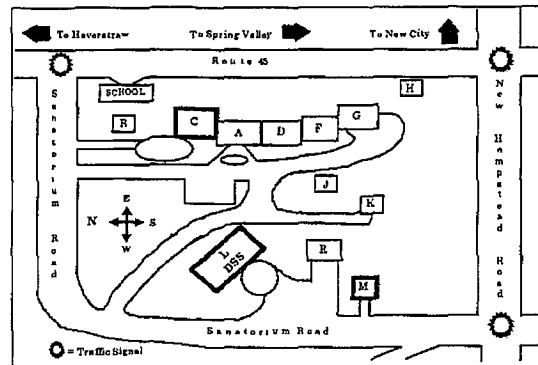
C. Scott Vanderhoef, County Executive

Susan Sherwood, Commissioner

*County of Rockland*

Effective September 2007

**Department of Social Services  
50 Sanatorium Road, Pomona, NY**



**Building L: Main Office (Accessible to the handicapped)**

Administration	Emergency Aid	Employment	Fair Hearings	Food Stamps
Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)	Housing	Medicaid	Medicaid Chronic Care	Medicaid Managed Care
Resource Recovery	Medicaid & Food Stamps Supplemental Security Income	Special Investigations	Temporary Assistance	

**Building C: (Accessible to the handicapped)**

<b>InfoRock</b> Information & Referral	Adoption Services	Adult & Long Term Care Services	Child Protective Services	Foster Care Services
Intensive Family Preventive Services	PINS Integrated Services	Pomona Family Preventive Service Team	Protective Services for Adults	Volunteer Services

**Satellite Offices: (All accessible to the handicapped except as noted\*)**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adolescent &amp; Special Services</li> <li><u>Nyack Assistance Office</u> 10 Waldron Avenue Nyack</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child Care Subsidy Program</li> <li>Medicaid &amp; Food Stamp Outreach</li> <li>Spring Valley Family Preventive Services Health &amp; Human Services 23 Robert Pitt Drive Monsey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidance Center</li> <li><u>Medicaid &amp; Food Stamp Outreach</u> 17 South Broadway Nyack</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Haverstraw Family Preventive Services</li> <li><u>Medicaid &amp; Food Stamp Outreach</u> *23 New Main Street Haverstraw</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Next Steps Program</u> Ramapo Freshman Center 465 Viola Road Spring Valley</li> </ul>	



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**C. SCOTT VANDERHOEF**  
County Executive

**SUSAN SHERWOOD**  
Commissioner

Dear Customer:

Welcome to the Department of Social Services! Because we understand that new, and even existing customers, are often overwhelmed by having to deal with all the different units in our Agency, we have prepared this booklet to help you understand how and where you can get the help you need.

Our "Consumer Handbook" is divided into several sections. The first five parts describe our units and the services they provide. In the last section, we answer some of the more frequently asked questions.

If you have any questions that are not answered in this handbook, please ask a Department of Social Services' staff member or call InfoRock at 845-364-2020. We are all here to help you!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Susan Sherwood", is written over a horizontal line.

Susan Sherwood  
Commissioner

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***Our vision is to be the finest provider of services in government;  
to have a professional atmosphere that promotes respect for all  
and earns the confidence and trust of those we serve,  
including the community at large.***



# **Information Rockland InfoRock**

**Call: 845-364-2020**

**Fax: 845-364-2026**

**E-mail: [Inforock@co.rockland.ny.us](mailto:Inforock@co.rockland.ny.us)**

Information Rockland is the first point of contact for County residents to be connected to the vast array of health and human services available to them. One call to 364-2020 puts you in touch with experienced staff who use their knowledge and broad range of contacts to provide appropriate resources to meet your needs. Equipped with the latest in call center technology, Information Rockland maintains a database of agencies, organizations and services to refer you to in your time of need. Information Rockland clearly demonstrates the County's commitment to make access to government and County services user-friendly.

Specialists are available to answer your calls from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday—Friday, and callers can remain anonymous if you choose. After hours, you can leave a voicemail message or send an e-mail to [inforock@co.rockland.ny.us](mailto:inforock@co.rockland.ny.us) and have a response by the next business day. InfoRock referrals are made at no cost; and translation services are available for non-English speaking callers.

As you know, information is constantly changing, and Information Rockland is here to keep it up to date for you. So just give them a call!!!

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## **Telephone Directory**

**Main number and for after-office hours emergencies  
(unless otherwise listed): 364-2000**

<b>INFORMATION &amp; REFERRAL (INFOROCK)</b>	<b>364-2020</b>
Adolescent & Special Services	358-2080
Adoptions	364-3535
Child Protective Services	364-3512
Children's Services	364-3546
Child Support Enforcement	1-888-208-4485
Child Care Subsidy Program	574-4600
Emergency Assistance to Adults	364-3100
Emergency Assistance to Families	364-3100
Employment	364-3143
Fair Hearings	364-3416
Family Preservation Services	364-3410
Food Stamps	364-3100
Foster Care	364-3534
Home Energy (HEAP)	364-3478
Housing Programs	364-3150
Intensive Preventive Service	364-3166
Medicaid	364-3040
Medicaid Chronic Care	364-3990
Medicaid Home Care Services	364-3568
Medicaid Managed Care	364-3188

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## **Telephone Directory, Continued**

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### **Medical Medicaid Transportation Services:**

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Ambulance & Ambulette	364-3052
Transportation (Ambulatory)	364-3049
Medical Services—Personal Care	364-3051
PINS Integrated Services	364-3161
Protective Services for Adults	364-3571
Temporary Assistance	364-3100
Resource Recovery	364-3348
Special Investigations	364-3200
Volunteer Services	364-3239

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## **I. Assistance Programs**

The Rockland County Department of Social Services administers several state and federal programs which assist individuals and families to meet their basic needs for food, clothing, shelter and medical care.

### **What is Public Assistance?**

Public Assistance, often called welfare or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) by the Federal Government, is help provided to families with children who are financially needy. There is a 60-month lifetime limit for this federally-funded assistance. In addition to providing cash grants, the Department of Social Services offers a wide range of supportive services to families and individuals.

The two major state-supervised public assistance programs administered by the Rockland County Department of Social Services (DSS) are:

### **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (also known as Family Assistance)**

Family Assistance (FA) is federally-funded financial assistance for families with minor children without sufficient means of support. This can be due to the absence of a parent or the unemployment of the principal wage earner.

### **Safety Net**

The Safety Net (SN) is state- and locally-funded financial assistance given to needy individuals and families who do not meet the requirements of the FA program and who are not eligible for Supplemental Security Income, the federal program for the aged, blind, and disabled.

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**Application, Reception, and Screening, 364-3100:** The process begins at the front desk in Building L. The staff will direct you to the proper part of the agency, schedule and appointment for eligibility, and make sure your application is complete.

**A. Temporary Assistance (364-3100)**

You will meet with a Temporary Assistance worker for your Temporary Assistance application appointment. Depending upon your individual circumstances, you may also meet with representatives from other departments of the agency. After your Temporary Assistance case is opened, one worker is responsible for your continued eligibility, recertification, and Temporary Assistance services. You will see your worker when you apply for Temporary Assistance and when you come in for personal interviews and recertification.

Everyone has the right to file an application for Temporary Assistance. Call 364-3100 for an appointment. The application packet includes a list of various forms which you should bring with you to your appointment.

Your Temporary Assistance worker will help you with your problems such as special needs, budget changes and household changes. If there is a temporary or permanent change in your circumstances, you must notify your Temporary Assistance worker of the change within 10 days of its occurrence.

**B. Emergency Assistance to Adults (364-3100)**

Emergency needs of individuals and couples who are eligible for Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and whose specific emergency need cannot be met by the SSI program, may be met by this service.

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**C. Emergency Assistance to Families (364-3100)**

This service may be provided whenever a family with children is destitute and lacks one of the basic necessities of life, such as food, clothing, shelter or heat. Emergency assistance will not be available, however, if the destitution or need for living arrangements arose because of refusal, without good cause, to accept employment or training, or because income was spent inappropriately.

**D. Food Stamp Unit (364-3100)**

This unit answers questions and processes Food Stamp applications from those who are **not** receiving Temporary Assistance (NPA customers). The Food Stamp program enables low-income households to buy more nutritious food.

**E. Home Energy Assistance Unit (364-3478)**

This office administers HEAP, which helps county residents with low incomes pay their utility or fuel bills. The unit also identifies individuals for whom a utility shut-off would be a health hazard and refers them for help.

**F. Employment Unit (364-3143)**

The Employment Unit is responsible for helping Temporary Assistance and NPA Food Stamp customers return to self-sufficiency by finding jobs. Customers undergo a full assessment of their job skills, training and education. The staff and customers then develop personalized self-sufficiency plans designed to lead them, as quickly as possible, into jobs.

In addition to job search, customers are assigned to work experience sites where they gain and sharpen job skills necessary to find and keep jobs.

Supportive services such as transportation and child care subsidies are available as needed. Your Employment worker can assist you in locating child care. Child Care Resources of Rockland, Inc. is also available to help you with your child care needs. They can be reached by calling 425-0009.

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## **II. Medical Assistance**

### **A. Medicaid Unit (364-3040)**

This unit processes Medicaid, Chronic Care, Child Health Plus, and Family Health Plus applications from residents of Rockland who are not receiving Temporary Assistance to determine eligibility. It also recertifies through mail-in applications for on-going Medicaid eligibility. Contact the Medicaid Unit for information on how and where to apply.

**Medical Transportation:** If you are Medicaid eligible, you may be entitled to transportation to and from providers of health care. Call 364-3049, 364-3050, or 364-3068 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. You must call at least one week in advance. The last doctor's appointment can be at 3 p.m. The last pickup to return home is at 4 p.m.

If you are in a Managed Care Medicaid plan and your plan does not provide transportation, contact the number above. If your plan provides transportation, contact your plan's 800 number.

### **B. Medicaid Chronic Care (364-3990)**

This unit takes Medicaid applications from those requesting long-term care in a skilled nursing home, health-related facility, and the Long-Term Home Health Care Program. The unit determines Medicaid financial eligibility initially and on an ongoing basis while the person remains in care.

### **C. Medicaid Managed Care Program (364-3188)**

Medicaid recipients must enroll in one of several managed care (health insurance) plans available to them at no cost. In addition to choosing a plan that is best for themselves and their families, participants choose a primary care doctor who manages their health care needs, and, if necessary, refers them to a specialist.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

### **A. Housing Programs (364-3150)**

The Housing staff assists Temporary Assistance customers with housing problems and locates temporary housing for homeless customers when affordable, permanent housing is not available. The unit deals with health hazards related to housing, landlords, fire victims, moving and storage of furniture resulting from evictions and pre-rental health inspections. The staff also works with landlords and clients to prevent evictions and helps customers to obtain Section 8 certificates and other housing subsidies.

### **B. Child Care Subsidy Program (574-4600)**

This program provides subsidies to help pay for the cost of child care for low-income working parents. Call your Temporary Assistance worker to see if you are eligible. Transitional child care is available to working parents when their Temporary Assistance case closes. Preventive/protective day care is available through the family service teams.

#### IV. Services

The Department of Social Services provides a wide range of supportive programs, including services to strengthen family life, prevent family disruption, promote individual functioning, and keep families together; temporary placement in family foster homes, group homes or residential facilities; family planning services; adoptions; services to help the elderly or disabled remain in their own home, services to unmarried parents; protective services; and services toward self-support.



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### **A. Protective Services for Adults (PSA) (364-3571)**

PSA is a system of services designed to assist adults, over the age of 18, residing in the community, who are mentally/physically impaired and are in need of protection from abuse, neglect (including self-neglect) or exploitation and have no one able to assist them. Services are provided without regard to financial status.

Services are aimed at assisting individuals to remain in the community for as long as possible. These services include counseling, case management, advocacy, financial management, finding alternative living arrangements, crisis intervention, and legal actions when indicated. Referrals can be made by calling 364-2020.

### **B. Medicaid Home Care Services (364-3568)**

The Adult Services/Long Term Care Unit arranges home care services to Medicaid-eligible Rockland County residents, adult and children, in need of long-term care. Its focus is to substitute community based care for nursing home placement whenever possible.

Assessment teams consisting of a caseworker and a Public Health Nurse visit Medicaid-eligible consumers in their homes and may arrange for Personal Care Service or Private Duty Nursing as well as other support services, i.e. Meals on Wheels, Long Term Home Health Care Program, Personal Emergency Response System and Shared Aides.

### **C. Child Protective Services (CPS) (364-3512)**

Caseworkers investigate all reports of child abuse or neglect in Rockland County. To make a report of child abuse or neglect, call 1-800-342-3720 (toll free). You do not have to give your name; if you do, it will be kept confidential. The agency workers will investigate the complaint and, if necessary, provide services to the family or children to change the harmful situation.

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#### **D. Child Support Enforcement Unit (CSEU) (1-888-208-4485)**

The function of CSEU is to obtain support orders for children or take enforcement actions if the absent parent is not complying with the court order. To obtain support, it will be necessary to locate the absent parent and/or establish paternity. These services are mandated for families applying for Temporary Assistance, Medicaid, or Foster Care when one or both parents are absent from the home. Eligibility may be affected for failure to cooperate in locating absent parents or establishing paternity. Custodial parents not receiving Temporary Assistance may also apply for this unit's service at no cost. A fee is charged only if field investigation or legal services are requested.

#### **E. Foster Care and Adoption**

**Foster Care, 364-3534:** Sometimes parents having problems with their children come to the department for help. If the problems cannot be resolved with the aid of a caseworker, and if it is determined to be in the best interest of the children, they may be placed temporarily in suitable foster homes or child caring institutions. Placement may be voluntary or may be the result of a court order. The department also recruits suitable families that want to provide foster care.

**Adoption Services, 364-3535:** Assistance is given to parents who are unable or unwilling to provide for their children and wish to surrender them for adoption, and to persons wishing to adopt children. Families wishing to adopt minority, handicapped, or older children are given preference. Children available for adoption in other areas of the state are also available to Rockland families through the State Adoption Exchange and books of photographs.

#### **F. PINS (Persons in Need of Supervision) Integrated Services (364-3161)**

The program is designed to assist families with children between the ages of 7 to 18 who are truant, acting out, and at risk of involvement in the Juvenile Justice System. This is a partnership with the Rockland County Probation Department, the Rockland County Youth Bureau, the Mental Health Association, and the Department of Social Services.

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The PINS Caseworker will assess the family's service needs and together with the family, develop a plan or provide direct services to prevent future probation/court involvement that could result in foster care placement.

The Mental Health Association provides family support services, including an in-home family therapist to work toward resolution of the family difficulties. Life skills, youth employment, and respite are also available, if necessary.

### **G. Family Preventive Services**

Caseworkers located in community-based family teams provide services to promote stability and avert disruption of the family unit. They also offer family planning services and services to unwed parents to help them arrive at the best plan for themselves and their children. For information, call 364-2020. Services can be provided from Building C of the Health Complex and satellite offices at the following locations:

Spring Valley/Monsey Area: 23 Robert Pitt Drive, Monsey—Phone: 574.4630

Haverstraw Area: 85 New Main Street—Phone: 429.4951

Pomona Team Area: Building C, Sanatorium Road—Phone: 364.3510

### **H. Intensive Preventive Services (364-3166)**

Providing all the same services as Family Preventive Services, staff in this unit have smaller caseloads in order to offer a greater level of services to children and families who need them. With a goal to strengthen the family so the children can live safely at home, Caseworkers see each family at least once a week and provide in-home, family-based services.

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## **I. Adolescent Services (358-2080)**

Health-related, social and other community support services to pregnant adolescents and teenage parents are available through the Teen Age Services Act (TASA) and Steps-to-Success (STS) programs. TASA caseworkers assist teenagers receiving Temporary Assistance to remain in school or attend vocational training programs. STS, for teenagers not receiving Temporary Assistance, links the department with the East Ramapo and North Rockland School Districts to provide services similar to TASA.

## **J. Volunteer Services (364-3239)**

Goods and services donated to the agency by organizations and individuals are available to needy children, families and adults who receive help from the department. The staff supervises one used clothing depot, pick up and delivery of used furniture, food, toy and gift distribution at holiday time; and summer camperships.

## **V. Program Integrity**

### **A. Resource Recovery (364-3348)**

Applicants/recipients for emergency assistance, Temporary Assistance, Medicaid, and Food Stamps are sometimes required to repay the department for benefits paid for them. This Unit is responsible for verifying information about possible sources of financial recovery from customers and for pursuing recovery of benefits paid. You are required to report to this agency any potential resources you may have, for example; pending lawsuits, potential inheritance, ownership of property, third party health insurance. For eligibility purposes, you may be required to sign documents such as a mortgage, a judgment, an assignment, etc. These secure the department's right to recover.

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## **B. Special Investigations (364-3200)**

This unit has two responsibilities: to conduct investigations involving suspected fraud in open cases and to assist in eligibility determinations in cases referred to the agency intake units before a case opens.

Investigations into suspected fraud are conducted to determine whether or not recipients of government assistance have willfully concealed information from the agency resulting in the improper receipt of benefits. If the investigation reveals that they have, the law requires that DSS refer applicants/recipients to the District Attorney's Office for criminal prosecution. Serious difficulties may be avoided by promptly reporting all changes in circumstances to your agency worker.

When the Unit is asked to assist in eligibility determination, a second in-take interview is required. In addition, home visits may be conducted by the Unit to verify information provided in the application for assistance.

If you are aware of someone who you feel may be receiving assistance to which (s)he is not entitled, or are aware of a vendor (storekeeper, doctor, etc.) who is defrauding this agency, please write to the Special Investigations Unit, Department of Social Services, Building L, Sanatorium Road, Pomona, NY 10970, or call 364-3200. All information will be kept confidential.

## **C. Fair Hearings (364-3416)**

You are entitled to a fair hearing if you believe that your case has been improperly denied, discontinued, your grant has been reduced, or if you feel that you are not receiving the proper amount of money. This Unit represents the agency in these hearings. The State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance will notify you by mail of the date and time of the fair hearing. You may also bring a lawyer, community worker, or a friend with you.

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**You can only request a fair hearing or ask to change the date or time of the hearing by calling or writing to the State office. To request a fair hearing, contact the State at 1.800.342.3334, fax them at 1.518.473.6735, or write them at the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, P.O. Box 1930, Albany, New York 12201. To request an adjournment, contact the State at 1.877.209.1134.**

## **GENERAL INFORMATION WHEN APPLYING FOR ASSISTANCE AND MEDICAL ASSISTANCE**

We strive to see clients in a timely manner, but there will be days when you may have to wait longer than 30 minutes to be seen. Please be patient. Parents are asked to monitor their children at all times.

Please be aware that people come to this Agency for a variety of reasons and to see workers who perform different Social Services functions. If people arriving later than you are seen before you, they may be here to see a different type of worker than you need to see.

In keeping with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), Rockland County Department of Social Services is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to those applicants/recipients who have a disability as defined by the Act. All applicants/recipients for assistance programs are informed about ADA's prohibition against discrimination through LDSS-4148A, available from:

- Building L, front desk
- Your worker at the time of application or recertification
- Information sheet included in all application packets

Reasonable accommodation will be made on a case-by-case basis. Applicants/recipients can make a request for accommodation through:

- Telephone, by calling 845-364-3100
- Writing to: Deputy Commissioner for Assistance Programs  
Department of Social Services  
Building L, Administration  
P.O. Box 307  
Pomona, New York 10970
- In person to a worker at the front desk in Building L

Applicants/recipients who are offered reasonable accommodation, but refuse it, will be notified in writing of the accommodation offered and that the resulting action of their refusal may jeopardize receipt of services, and/or could result in denial, a case being closed, or a sanction being imposed.



## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

### **. Information & Referral (InfoRock)**

**Q. How can I find out if there is a program or other assistance to help with a specific need?**

A. Call InfoRock at 364-2020. If you call after 8 p.m. or on weekends and leave a message, your call will be returned on the next business day.

**Q. When I call I&R, do I have to give my name and address?**

A. No, there is no requirement that you provide any identifying information. You can keep the call confidential

**Q. Are records kept of each call?**

A. In general, a record of calls is kept along with which department the caller was transferred to or recommended to contact. This helps in identifying community needs.

**Q. Is there any fee for I&R services?**

There is no charge for this service. It is provided to County residents without regard to income.

### **. Medical Problems**

**Q. What if I have a medical emergency?**

A. Dial 911.

**Q. What should I do if I've lost my Medicaid card?**

A. If you are on Temporary Assistance, call your Temporary Assistance worker. If you are only on Medicaid, call Medicaid at 364-3040.

**Q. How do I get medical transportation?**

A. If you are Medicaid eligible and are unable to arrange for transportation or take public transportation to get to a needed medical appointment, call 364-3049 or 364-3050. If you are in a Managed Care plan that provides transportation, contact your plan's 800 number.



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## **. Food**

**For general information on the Food Stamp Program,  
visit [www.fns.usda.gov](http://www.fns.usda.gov)**

**Q. Where can I get information about food stamps?**

A. Call the Food Stamps Unit, 364-3100.

## **. Housing Problems**

**Q. What do I do if my lights or gas are turned off?**

A. If you are on Temporary Assistance or Food Stamps, call your worker. If you have a heat emergency and do not receive Temporary Assistance or Food Stamps, call the Home Energy Unit, 364-3478. For all other utility emergencies, please contact the Front Desk Emergency Unit at 364-3100.

**Q. Suppose I want to move?**

A. If you require financial assistance to move, you must get department approval from your Temporary Assistance worker. The Department of Social Services cannot pay rent until your new dwelling has been inspected by the Health Department. It is your responsibility to find your own housing.

**Q. What if my landlord won't make repairs?**

A. Call InfoRock at 364-2020, or the Health Department.

**Q. What do I do if I had a fire or emergency and am forced to seek new housing?**

A. Call your Temporary Assistance worker or InfoRock. After 5 p.m. and on weekends call the Emergency Switchboard at 364-2000 and wait for an operator or call the Sheriff's Department at 638-5400.

**Q. What if I get an eviction notice?**

A. Contact the Front Desk Emergency Unit at 364-3100 or your Temporary Assistance worker.

**Q. What if I have other questions related to housing?**

A. Call InfoRock at 364-2020.

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## **. After-Hours Emergencies**

**Q. What if DSS is closed and I have an emergency that cannot wait until the morning?**

A. After 5 p.m. and on weekends call the Emergency Switchboard at 364-2000 and wait for an operator, or call the Sheriff's Department at 638-5400.

## **. Child & Family**

**Q. How do I get child care services for my children when I'm working?**

A. Call the Child Care Subsidy Program at 578-4600.

**Q. How can I get help if I hear of children who are neglected, abused or left alone?**

A. Call 1-800-342-3720 (toll free). You **do not** have to give your name.

**Q. What if I can't care for my children because of illness, or can't shop, cook, or clean because of illness?**

A. Call InfoRock at 364-2020.

## **. Clothing & Furniture**

**Q. How can I get clothing and furniture?**

A. Social Services can only buy clothing or furniture in cases of fire or other emergencies. However, items which have been donated can be obtained from the following places:

- For clothing, go to the clothing depot at 85 New Main Street, Haverstraw. Call 429-0235 for hours of operation.
- For furniture, call your caseworker. If you do not have a caseworker, call InfoRock at 364-2020.

## **. Case Review and Fair Hearings**

**Q. What can I do if the local DSS makes a decision that affects me and I am not satisfied?**

A. You may request a case review at this department. For Temporary Assistance claims, contact the head social welfare examiner at 364-3095; for Medicaid, contact the head social welfare examiner at 845-364-3373. You may also ask for a fair hearing by contacting the State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance. You can contact them by telephone at 1-800-342-3334, via fax at 1-518-473-6735 or in writing at New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, P.O. Box 1930, Albany, NY 12201. **Read all notices you receive from this department very carefully.** You must request a fair hearing within a limited time period or you will lose your right to the hearing.

**Q. What can I do if I feel that the local DSS has not provided reasonable accommodation for my disability or limited English proficiency, or if I feel I have been discriminated against?**

A. In keeping with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), Rockland County Department of Social Services is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to those applicants/recipients who have a disability as defined by the Act. If you feel you have not been provided reasonable accommodation, you may file a complaint with this Agency. Complaints can be reported verbally to a Supervisor in any Agency unit, or by completing a Complaint Form that can be obtained by calling the office of the Deputy Commissioner for Assistance Programs at 845-364-3301. Your complaint will be investigated, a final determination will be made by the Deputy Commissioner for Assistance Programs, and you will be advised of such determination.

ATTACHMENT 3



**COUNTY OF ROCKLAND  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

The Dr. Robert L. Yeager Health Center  
Building L - Sanatorium Road  
P.O. Box 307

Pomona, New York 10970-0307  
Telephone: (845) 364-2000

C. SCOTT VANDERHOEF  
County Executive

SUSAN SHERWOOD  
Commissioner

**Availability of Reasonable Accommodations at DSS  
for Access to Services**

1. In keeping with the American with Disabilities Act ("ADA"), the Rockland County Department of Social Services(DSS) is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to those Applicants/Recipients who have a disability as defined by ADA.
2. A reasonable accommodation may include: (1) making facilities accessible, (2) making reasonable modifications to the Social Services rules or eliminating non-essential procedures, policies or practices that deny equal access to persons with disabilities, (3) removal of communication or transportation barriers, or (4) provision of auxiliary aids and services. An Applicant/Recipient will be consulted about the types of accommodations h/she thinks may be helpful.
3. The ADA contact person responsible for Social Services program access is the Deputy Commissioner for Assistance Program. The contact persons responsible for taking and investigating ADA complaints are the Head Social Welfare Examiner for Temporary Assistance and the Head Social Welfare Examiner for Medical Assistance. As ADA Coordinator, the Deputy Commissioner for Assistance Programs is responsible for final determinations regarding complaints.
4. All Applicants for or Recipients of Social Services programs are informed about the ADA's prohibition against discrimination through the Agency's Consumer Handbook available in the front lobby in Building L on the pamphlet rack, or at the front desk. You may also request a copy of the Consumer Handbook from any DSS employee. This information is also contained in Publication LDSS-4148A, "What You Should Know About Your Rights and Responsibilities," which you were given at the time of application.
5. Reasonable accommodation will be made on a case-by-case basis. An Applicant/Recipient, or his/her designee, can make a request for accommodation in person to a staff member at the front desk, in person, or by telephone to his/her worker, by calling the Deputy Commissioner for Assistance Programs' secretary (364-3301), or by writing to: Deputy Commissioner for Assistance Programs; Rockland County Department of Social Services; Building L, Administration; PO Box 307; Pomona, NY 10970.
6. An Applicant/Recipient who has been consulted about accommodations, and has been offered reasonable accommodation but refuses, will be asked to sign a statement acknowledging refusal of accommodation and understanding of the potential effect on delivery of benefits. The accommodation will be offered again on future occasions, and at no time will an Applicant/Recipient be asked to sign forms waiving his/her rights.

7. Requests for reasonable accommodation will be dealt with as follows:

a. Access: General Disabilities (physical and mental)

1. Staff member receiving request will attempt to provide accommodation needed, or refer to his/her immediate supervisor. Questions or issues should be referred to the Head Social Welfare Examiner.
2. Telephone interviews (if allowed under specific program regulations) or home visits may be arranged for those Applicant/Recipients who are unable to come to the Agency due to their disability and have no authorized person willing to represent them at an eligibility interview.
3. Applicants/Recipients unable to complete required forms due to physical, mental or literacy issues will be assisted by DSS staff in completion of required forms.

b. Access: Visually/Sight Impaired

1. Requests for accommodation for visual/sight impairments will be taken under consideration for all Applicants/Recipients and procedures followed the same as under (a.) General Disabilities.
2. Applicants/Recipients unable to complete required forms will be assisted by DSS staff by reading written material to the individual and recording his/her verbal responses.

c. Access: Hearing Impaired

1. Requests for accommodation for hearing impairments will be taken under consideration for all Applicants/Recipients and procedures followed the same as under (a) General Disabilities.
2. Applicants/Recipients requesting sign language assistance will be informed that they can bring an interpreter of their choice or DSS will make arrangements for a sign language interpreter to be present during their visit to DSS.
3. DSS staff may also utilize the New York Relay Service (711) which is used to assist communications between people who use text telephones (TTY's) and people who use voice telephones. Instructions on use of 711 relay service is included in "Policy and Procedures for Language Assistance for Applicants/Recipients."
4. DSS staff will follow Agency protocols as outlined in "Policy and Procedures for Language Assistance for Applicants/Recipients."

d. Access: Language Assistance

1. Requests for accommodation for language translation assistance will be taken under consideration for all Applicants/Recipients and procedures followed the same as under (a) General Disabilities.
2. NYS OTDA Publication 4842, "If You Need An Interpreter," is displayed in the front lobby and client accessible areas of DSS.
3. NYS OTDA Publication 4843, "Interpreter Services Desk Guide," is utilized by DSS staff with Applicants/Recipients to identify what language they speak in order to assist them in getting language assistance.
4. DSS subscribes to an immediate need telephone translation service that is available 24/7.
5. DSS staff will follow Agency protocols as outlined in "Policy and Procedures for Language Assistance for Applicants/Recipients."

## HERE ARE SOME GENERAL TIPS

The main thing to remember is that people with disabilities want to be treated like everybody else.

**USE COMMON SENSE** - Treat people with disabilities with respect and dignity.

**BE UNDERSTANDING** - People with disabilities have the same obligations you have - though their obligations may be harder to meet.

**BE CONSIDERATE** - People with disabilities lead full lives. Don't limit discussions to their disability. Discuss work, sports - even the weather!

**BE PATIENT** - Don't hurry people with disabilities - try to match their pace.

**BE NATURAL** - Don't worry about using words related to the disability. For example, don't be embarrassed to say "see you later" to a person who is blind.

**BE YOURSELF** - Smile and relax. Remember, you and people with disabilities have a lot more in common than you might think.

**MAINTAIN EYE CONTACT** - Everyone deserves the courtesy of being looked in the eye.

**SPEAK DIRECTLY TO THE PERSON** - Direct conversation to the person with disability - not his or her companion.

**ADDRESS PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES APPROPRIATELY** - Call a person with a disability by his or her first name only if you are using first names with everyone present.

**DON'T ASSUME THE PERSON IS SICK** - Most people with disabilities are healthy. And remember - you can't "catch" a disability.

**HELP MAKE YOUR COMMUNITY ACCESSIBLE** - Make sure that public buildings in your community can be used by everyone.

**NEVER USE ACCESSIBLE PARKING SPACES!** - Never block or park in spaces designated for persons with disabilities, not even for a few seconds!

## LEND A HAND

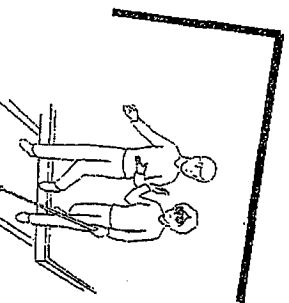
If you see someone with a disability, don't be afraid to offer your help.

**OVERCOME YOUR FEAR** of the unknown. Sometimes, people don't help people who have disabilities because they're afraid of doing or saying the wrong thing.

**OFFER YOUR ASSISTANCE** - even if your help isn't needed, your courtesy will be appreciated. (Of course, help immediately if physical danger is present.)

**DON'T INSIST** - remember, people with disabilities wouldn't be out and about unless they were prepared to meet the challenges.

**LISTEN**, if your offer is accepted. Helping someone cross the street isn't very helpful if it isn't the right street.



## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**WHAT IF MY CHILD POINTS AT A PERSON WHO HAS A DISABILITY?** Don't panic! Explain the disability in terms your child can understand. Focus on the person's abilities. Let your child know that people with disabilities are like everyone else.

**WHAT IF I HAVE TO WORK WITH A PERSON WHO HAS A DISABILITY?** Just remember that co-workers with disabilities have the same needs and emotions as anyone else.

**WHAT IF A CO-WORKER USES NEGATIVE LANGUAGE ABOUT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES?** Speak up! Here's a situation where you can make a big difference. Often, people who use negative words just don't know any better - yet!

Remember, physical and mental disabilities aren't handicaps - negative attitudes are!

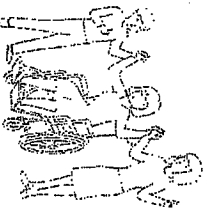
## SOOOO...

### BREAK DOWN THE BARRIERS!

**UNDERSTAND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES** - they have the same goals in life as most people have.

**VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME AND SUPPORT** - to organizations that help people with disabilities.

**SUPPORT LAWS** - that protect the rights of all citizens.



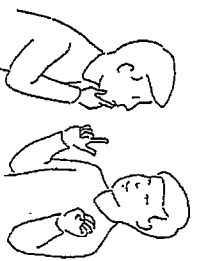
Distributed by:

Office for People with Disabilities  
2 New Hempstead Road, New City, NY 10956  
Phone: 845-708-7645; Fax: 845-708-7650

Booklet Redesigned by:

Rockland County Department of Social Services  
50 Saratoga Road, Pomona, NY 10970  
Phone: 845-364-2020 (Information Rockland)

## ATTACHMENT 4



About Being  
Sensitive to  
People With  
Disabilities



## WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "BEING SENSITIVE TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES"?



It means treating people with disabilities with the respect and dignity every person deserves.

### THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT

**DISABILITIES** - Some you can see, others you can't. Common disabilities include:  
 - Vision impairments  
 - Hearing impairments  
 - Speech disorders  
 - Loss of limbs  
 - Mobility impairments  
 - Mental impairments

### PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ARE LIKE

**EVERYONE ELSE** - They have the same needs and responsibilities as you do. For example, they need to:  
 - Love and be loved  
 - Be independent  
 - Have fun  
 - Earn a living  
 - Pay taxes  
 - Dream!  
 Because the millions of Americans who have disabilities are a vital part of our society.

## WHY SHOULD I CARE ABOUT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES?

**THERE'S A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A DISABILITY AND A HANDICAP** - A disability is a condition that limits a person's ability to walk, talk, reason, etc. A handicap is an imposed barrier that restricts a person. **SOCIETY'S IGNORANCE IS THE MAIN HANDICAP** - People with disabilities are handicapped mainly by society's mistaken beliefs about their abilities.

*It's up to you to help make sure disabilities are seen as challenges - not handicaps!*

Learn more...

## WORDS ARE POWERFUL TOOLS

Language reflects society's beliefs. That's why it's so important to avoid using language that reinforces negative stereotypes.

**PUT THE PERSON FIRST** - Put the individual ahead of the disability. For example, say "the man with mental retardation", not "the mentally retarded man".

**EMPHASIZE ABILITIES** - No one wants to be known for what he or she can't do.

### DON'T UNDERESTIMATE PEOPLE

**WITH DISABILITIES** - It's wrong to assume a person's physical disability has lessened his or her mental abilities.

**AVOID LABELS** - Never refer to people by their disabilities. For example, don't say "the handicapped", "the retarded", "the crippled", etc.

**BE AWARE** - Often, people use negative language without even realizing it. Listen to yourself, and make changes as necessary.

**WORDS TO WATCH OUT FOR** - Here are some words to avoid - and acceptable alternatives.

NEVER SAY:	SAY:
"dumb"	"a person who is without speech", or "who is unable to speak"
"handicapped"	"a person who has a disability"
"invalid"	"a person who is ill", or "whose legs are paralyzed"
"victim"	"a person who has polio, multiple sclerosis, etc."
"afflicted"	"a person who has a mental illness"
"crazy"	"a person who has uncontrolled muscle spasms"

## GETTING ALONG WITH PEOPLE WITH MOBILITY IMPAIRMENTS

**NEVER TOUCH EQUIPMENT** - People with adaptive equipment (wheelchairs, crutches, etc.) often consider the equipment an extension of their bodies. Never move equipment outside the person's reach.

**CHECK AHEAD FOR ACCESSIBILITY** - Before you go out with someone who has a mobility impairment, make sure facilities are accessible.

**DON'T TREAT ADULTS AS CHILDREN** - Never pat a person in a wheelchair on the head. This is a sign of disrespect for adults.

**BE CAREFUL WHEN HELPING** - Ask how equipment works if you're unfamiliar with it.

**STAND A FEW FEET AWAY** - Prevent strained necks by standing a few feet away when talking to someone in a wheelchair.

**END A CHAIR** - For long talks, it's best to find a place to sit down.

## GETTING ALONG WITH PEOPLE WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENTS

**SIGNAL BEFORE YOU SPEAK** - Get the person's attention with a tap on the arm or a wave.

**FIND THE BEST WAY TO COMMUNICATE** - The person may want to sign, finger spell, lip-read or write notes.

**SPEAK NORMALLY** - Don't yell or exaggerate - it distorts your face and your words "sounds".

**REPHRASE RATHER THAN REPEAT** - If the persons didn't understand you, try using different words to express your ideas.

**FACE THE PERSON** - Keep your mouth visible and your face in full light (not backlit).

**DON'T SPEAK IN SHORTHAND** - Don't eliminate information or words.

**USE BODY LANGUAGE** - It offers important "clues" about what you're saying.

**LEARN SIGN LANGUAGE** - It's easy and fun!

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**STAY CALM** - The person with a speech disorder has been in this situation before.

**DON'T SHOUT** - People with speech disorders often have perfect hearing.

**BE PATIENT** - People with speech disorders want to be understood as badly as you want to understand.

**DON'T INTERRUPT** - Don't finish sentences or supply words.

**GIVE YOUR FULL ATTENTION** - Don't try to do two things at once.

**ASK SHORT QUESTIONS** - Ask simple yes or no questions. For example, "Do you need any help?"

**DON'T PRETEND YOU UNDERSTAND** - Ask people with speech disorders to repeat themselves if you don't understand.

**AVOID NOISY SITUATIONS** - Talk in a quiet place - background noise makes communication hard for you both.

## GETTING ALONG WITH PEOPLE WITH VISION IMPAIRMENTS

**IDENTIFY YOURSELF** - Announce your presence. Never touch people with vision impairments unless they know you're there.

**OFFER YOUR ARM** - Allow the person to take your arm. Don't propel or lead a person with a vision impairment.

**YOU'LL NEED INFORMATION** - Offer to read signs, menus, etc. On the street, warn about any unusual hazards.

**DON'T STOP HELPING ABRUPTLY** - Let people with vision impairments know before you leave.

**IF YOU MEET SOMEONE WHO HAS A GUIDE DOG** - Never distract the dog. Never pet or feed the dog. Keep other pets away.

**IF YOU MEET SOMEONE USING A WHITE CANE** - Never touch the cane. If the cane touches you, say "excuse me", and step aside. Allow the person to pass.

## GETTING ALONG WITH PEOPLE WITH MENTAL DISABILITIES

**PEOPLE WITH MENTAL RETARDATION** - learn slowly and have a hard time using their knowledge.

- Be clear and concise - don't use complex sentences or difficult words

- Don't "talk down" - "baby talk" won't make you easier to understand

- Don't take advantage - never ask a person with mental retardation to do anything you wouldn't ask a friend to do

- Be understanding - people with mental retardation are often aware of their limitations, but they have the same needs and desires.

**PEOPLE WITH A MENTAL DISORDER** - have a disorder of the mind that can make daily life difficult.

- If someone is obviously upset:

- Stay calm - getting upset yourself won't help matters

- Offer to get help - offer to contact a family member, friend, or counselor.

ATTACHMENT 3



**COUNTY OF ROCKLAND**  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

The Dr. Robert L. Yeager Health Center  
Building L - Sanatorium Road  
P.O. Box 307

Pomona, New York 10970-0307  
Telephone: (845) 364-2000

C. SCOTT VANDERHOEF  
County Executive

SUSAN SHERWOOD  
Commissioner

**Availability of Reasonable Accommodations at DSS  
for Access to Services**

1. In keeping with the American with Disabilities Act ("ADA"), the Rockland County Department of Social Services(DSS) is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to those Applicants/Recipients who have a disability as defined by ADA.

2. A reasonable accommodation may include: (1) making facilities accessible, (2) making reasonable modifications to the Social Services rules or eliminating non-essential procedures, policies or practices that deny equal access to persons with disabilities, (3) removal of communication or transportation barriers, or (4) provision of auxiliary aids and services. An Applicant/Recipient will be consulted about the types of accommodations h/she thinks may be helpful.

3. The ADA contact person responsible for Social Services program access is the Deputy Commissioner for Assistance Program. The contact persons responsible for taking and investigating ADA complaints are the Head Social Welfare Examiner for Temporary Assistance and the Head Social Welfare Examiner for Medical Assistance. As ADA Coordinator, the Deputy Commissioner for Assistance Programs is responsible for final determinations regarding complaints.

4. All Applicants for or Recipients of Social Services programs are informed about the ADA's prohibition against discrimination through the Agency's Consumer Handbook available in the front lobby in Building L on the pamphlet rack, or at the front desk. You may also request a copy of the Consumer Handbook from any DSS employee. This information is also contained in Publication LDSS-4148A, "What You Should Know About Your Rights and Responsibilities," which you were given at the time of application.

5. Reasonable accommodation will be made on a case-by-case basis. An Applicant/Recipient, or his/her designee, can make a request for accommodation in person to a staff member at the front desk, in person, or by telephone to his/her worker, by calling the Deputy Commissioner for Assistance Programs' secretary (364-3301), or by writing to: Deputy Commissioner for Assistance Programs; Rockland County Department of Social Services; Building L, Administration; PO Box 307; Pomona, NY 10970.

6. An Applicant/Recipient who has been consulted about accommodations, and has been offered reasonable accommodation but refuses, will be asked to sign a statement acknowledging refusal of accommodation and understanding of the potential effect on delivery of benefits. The accommodation will be offered again on future occasions, and at no time will an Applicant/Recipient be asked to sign forms waiving his/her rights.



7. Requests for reasonable accommodation will be dealt with as follows:

a. Access: General Disabilities (physical and mental)

1. Staff member receiving request will attempt to provide accommodation needed, or refer to his/her immediate supervisor. Questions or issues should be referred to the Head Social Welfare Examiner.
2. Telephone interviews (if allowed under specific program regulations) or home visits may be arranged for those Applicant/Recipients who are unable to come to the Agency due to their disability and have no authorized person willing to represent them at an eligibility interview.
3. Applicants/Recipients unable to complete required forms due to physical, mental or literacy issues will be assisted by DSS staff in completion of required forms.

b. Access: Visually/Sight Impaired

1. Requests for accommodation for visual/sight impairments will be taken under consideration for all Applicants/Recipients and procedures followed the same as under (a.) General Disabilities.
2. Applicants/Recipients unable to complete required forms will be assisted by DSS staff by reading written material to the individual and recording his/her verbal responses.

c. Access: Hearing Impaired

1. Requests for accommodation for hearing impairments will be taken under consideration for all Applicants/Recipients and procedures followed the same as under (a) General Disabilities.
2. Applicants/Recipients requesting sign language assistance will be informed that they can bring an interpreter of their choice or DSS will make arrangements for a sign language interpreter to be present during their visit to DSS.
3. DSS staff may also utilize the New York Relay Service (711) which is used to assist communications between people who use text telephones (TTY's) and people who use voice telephones. Instructions on use of 711 relay service is included in "Policy and Procedures for Language Assistance for Applicants/Recipients."
4. DSS staff will follow Agency protocols as outlined in "Policy and Procedures for Language Assistance for Applicants/Recipients."

d. Access: Language Assistance

1. Requests for accommodation for language translation assistance will be taken under consideration for all Applicants/Recipients and procedures followed the same as under (a) General Disabilities.
2. NYS OTDA Publication 4842, "If You Need An Interpreter," is displayed in the front lobby and client accessible areas of DSS.
3. NYS OTDA Publication 4843, "Interpreter Services Desk Guide," is utilized by DSS staff with Applicants/Recipients to identify what language they speak in order to assist them in getting language assistance.
4. DSS subscribes to an immediate need telephone translation service that is available 24/7.
5. DSS staff will follow Agency protocols as outlined in "Policy and Procedures for Language Assistance for Applicants/Recipients."

## HERE ARE SOME GENERAL TIPS

The main thing to remember is that people with disabilities want to be treated like everybody else.

**USE COMMON SENSE** - Treat people with disabilities with respect and dignity.

**BE UNDERSTANDING** - People with disabilities have the same obligations you have - though their obligations may be harder to meet.

**BE CONSIDERATE** - People with disabilities lead full lives. Don't limit discussions to their disability. Discuss work, sports - even the weather!

**BE PATIENT** - Don't hurry people with disabilities - try to match their pace.

**BE NATURAL** - Don't worry about using words related to the disability. For example, don't be embarrassed to say "see you later" to a person who is blind.

**BE YOURSELF** - Smile and relax. Remember, you and people with disabilities have a lot more in common than you might think.

**MAINTAIN EYE CONTACT** - Everyone deserves the courtesy of being looked in the eye.

**SPEAK DIRECTLY TO THE PERSON** - Direct conversation to the person with disability - not his or her companion.

**ADDRESS PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES APPROPRIATELY** - Call a person with a disability by his or her first name only if you are using first names with everyone present.

**DON'T ASSUME THE PERSON IS SICK** - Most people with disabilities are healthy. And remember - you can't "catch" a disability.

**HELP MAKE YOUR COMMUNITY ACCESSIBLE** - Make sure that public buildings in your community can be used by everyone.

**NEVER USE ACCESSIBLE PARKING SPACES!** - Never block or park in spaces designated for persons with disabilities; not even for a few seconds!

## LEND A HAND

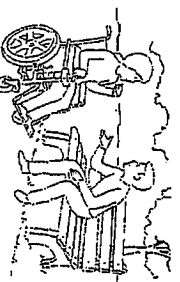
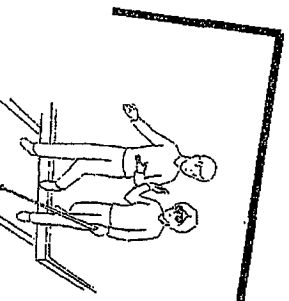
If you see someone with a disability, don't be afraid to offer your help.

**OVERCOME YOUR FEAR** of the unknown. Sometimes, people don't help people who have disabilities because they're afraid of doing or saying the wrong thing.

**OFFER YOUR ASSISTANCE** - even if your help isn't needed, your courtesy will be appreciated. (Of course, help immediately if physical danger is present.)

**DON'T INSIST** - remember, people with disabilities wouldn't be out and about unless they were prepared to meet the challenges.

**LISTEN**, if your offer is accepted. Helping someone cross the street isn't very helpful if it isn't the right street.



## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**WHAT IF MY CHILD POINTS AT A PERSON WHO HAS A DISABILITY?** Don't panic! Explain the disability in terms your child can understand. Focus on the person's abilities. Let your child know that people with disabilities are like everyone else.

**WHAT IF I HAVE TO WORK WITH A PERSON WHO HAS A DISABILITY?** Just remember that co-workers with disabilities have the same needs and emotions as anyone else.

**WHAT IF A CO-WORKER USES NEGATIVE LANGUAGE ABOUT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES?** Speak up! Here's a situation where you can make a big difference. Often, people who use negative words just don't know any better - yell!

Remember, physical and mental disabilities aren't handicaps - negative attitudes are!

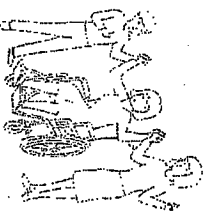
## SOOOO...

### BREAK DOWN THE BARRIERS!

**UNDERSTAND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES** - they have the same goals in life as most people have.

**VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME AND SUPPORT** - to organizations that help people with disabilities.

**SUPPORT LAWS** - that protect the rights of all citizens.



Distributed by:

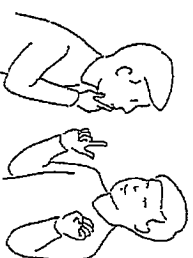
Office for People with Disabilities  
2 New Hempstead Road, New City, NY 10956  
Phone: 845-708-7645; Fax: 845-708-7650

Booklet Redesigned by:

Rockland County Department of Social Services  
50 Sanatorium Road, Pomona, NY 10970  
Phone: 845-384-2020 (Information Rockland)

1007

## ATTACHMENT 4



About Being  
Sensitive to  
People With  
Disabilities



## WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "BEING SENSITIVE TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES"?



It means treating people with disabilities with the respect and dignity every person deserves.

### THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT

**DISABILITIES** - Some you can see, others you can't. Common disabilities include:

- Vision impairments
- Hearing impairments
- Speech disorders
- Loss of limbs
- Mobility impairments
- Mental impairments

### PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ARE LIKE

**EVERYONE ELSE** - They have the same needs and responsibilities as you do. For example, they need to:

- Love and be loved
  - Be independent
  - Have fun
  - Earn a living
  - Pay taxes
  - Dream!
- Because the millions of Americans who have disabilities are a vital part of our society.

## WHY SHOULD I CARE ABOUT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES?

**THERE'S A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A DISABILITY AND A HANDICAP** - A

disability is a condition that limits a person's ability to walk, talk, reason, etc. A handicap is an imposed barrier that restricts a person.

**SOCIETY'S IGNORANCE IS THE MAIN HANDICAP** - People with disabilities are handicapped mainly by society's mistaken beliefs about their abilities.

*It's up to you to help make sure disabilities are seen as challenges - not handicaps!*

Learn more...

## WORDS ARE POWERFUL TOOLS

Language reflects society's beliefs. That's why it's so important to avoid using language that reinforces negative stereotypes.

**PUT THE PERSON FIRST** - Put the individual ahead of the disability. For example, say "the man with mental retardation", not "the mentally retarded man".

**EMPHASIZE ABILITIES** - No one wants to be known for what he or she can't do.

### DON'T UNDERESTIMATE PEOPLE

**WITH DISABILITIES** - It's wrong to assume a person's physical disability has lessened his or her mental abilities.

**AVOID LABELS** - Never refer to people by their disabilities. For example, don't say "the handicapped", "the retarded", "the crippled", etc.

**BE AWARE** - Often, people use negative language without even realizing it. Listen to yourself, and make changes as necessary.

**WORDS TO WATCH OUT FOR** - Here are some words to avoid - and acceptable alternatives.

NEVER SAY:	SAY:
"dumb"	"a person who is without speech", or "who is unable to speak"
"handicapped"	"a person who has a disability"
"invalid"	"a person who is ill", or "whose legs are paralyzed"
"victim"	"a person who has polio, multiple sclerosis, etc."
"afflicted"	"a person who has a mental illness"
"crazy"	"a person who has uncontrolled muscle spasms"
"spastic"	

## GETTING ALONG WITH PEOPLE WITH MOBILITY IMPAIRMENTS

**NEVER TOUCH EQUIPMENT** - People with adaptive equipment (wheelchairs, crutches, etc.) often consider the equipment an extension of their bodies. Never move equipment outside the person's reach.

**CHECK AHEAD FOR ACCESSIBILITY** - Before you go out with someone who has a mobility impairment, make sure facilities are accessible.

**DON'T TREAT ADULTS AS CHILDREN** - Never pat a person in a wheelchair on the head. This is a sign of disrespect for adults.

**BE CAREFUL WHEN HELPING** - Ask how equipment works if you're unfamiliar with it.

**STAND A FEW FEET AWAY** - Prevent strained necks by standing a few feet away when talking to someone in a wheelchair.

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C. SCOTT VANDERHOEF  
County Executive

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**Procedures for Language Assistance for Applicants/Recipients**

***The Department of Social Services (DSS) must assist and/or make language services available to all Applicants/Recipients who are identified as needing language in order to access services or assistance as follows:***

- Front Desk staff will contact the Supervisor for the appropriate unit. If need is identified by other staff, they should contact their Supervisor for assistance. All DSS Supervisors are responsible to assure provision of language assistance services for Applicants/Recipients and to inform their staff of policy and procedures.
- Language Interpreter Services: When necessary for Applicants/Recipients with limited English proficiency, translation services will be provided. Agency staff will attempt to obtain a DSS employee interpreter through consulting the "DSS Interpreters List," available from Supervisors and/or the Personnel Unit. There is also a list of County employees who can provide interpreter services, available on the County Intranet site under "Forms," "SURVEYS," "Interpreters Survey." Approval from the employee's Supervisor at DSS or at another County Department must first be obtained in order for the employee to leave his/her unit and provide assistance.

If a DSS or other County employee is unavailable to provide interpreter services, or if the Applicant/Recipient requires translation of a language not available through DSS or other County employees, the County subscribes to Language Services (Gene Schriver, Phone: 215-657-6571, Ext. 134, Fax: 215-659-7210, gschriver@LSAweb.com), on a fee basis, which provides immediate telephone language interpreter services and on-site interpreter services. Supervisor will arrange for this translation service when needed, and notify the DSS Office Services Supervisor.

Sign Language Interpreter Services: DSS staff will inform Applicants/Recipients requesting sign language assistance that they can bring an interpreter of their choice, or the Agency will provide a qualified sign-language interpreter for them. The County subscribes to Sign Language Resources, Inc. (Kathleen Pilus, Phone: 845-566-7951, Fax: 845-566-7471). Supervisor will arrange for this sign language interpreter service when needed, and notify the DSS Office Services Supervisor.

- TTY (Text Telephone Users) Services: DSS Staff Development has the CAP TEL System that can receive messages through TTY (Attachment 6). Agency staff may utilize the 711 New York Relay Service (9-7-1-1) which is used to assist communications between people who use text telephones (TTY's) and people who use voice telephones. Instructions on use of 711 relay service is included in Attachment 6.
- Supervisors are responsible to assure provision of language assistance services by:
  - Keeping staff informed on policy and procedures
  - Assessing need and making arrangements for language services
  - Arranging for interpreter to be present for scheduled Agency appointments
  - Coordinating scheduling of appointment with interpreter and Applicant/Recipient
  - On day of scheduled appointment, arranging for interpreter to meet with Applicant/Recipient prior to interview, if necessary
  - Notify Office Services Supervisor if outside, fee-based language or sign language interpretation services have been used.