



# Disability Friendly Firms Checklist

- ▶ Wheelchair/mobility access
- ▶ Vision impairment and blind
- ▶ Hard of hearing and deaf
- ▶ Neurodivergent
- ▶ Neurological disorders



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THE LAW SOCIETY  
OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

# BETTER ACCESS FOR CLIENTS WITH DISABILITY

The Law Society has developed a checklist to provide guidance to law practices that want to be more accessible to clients with disability.

## **What will the checklist be used for?**

The checklist is designed to be a helpful guide for firms who want to be more disability friendly.

The checklist is not meant to be exhaustive or prescriptive, but a helpful reference for firms so that clients with disability can more easily access the legal support they need.

The checklist will also help people with disability find law firms that they feel comfortable with.

## **How will clients be able to find disability friendly firms?**

The Society is in the process of upgrading its legal referral service, to help clients with disability find law firms that are able to accommodate their needs.

Any firms that satisfy any items on the disability access checklist can include that information on the legal referral service. This means that any client who is searching for a firm with particular disability access features can easily find a firm that will suit their needs.

Some examples of disability access features that clients may be looking for may include:

- Cerebral palsy client requiring lawyer with skills or training in communicating with people with neurological conditions
- Hard of hearing client requiring law firm to have augmented hearing systems
- Client with mobility issues requiring lawyer who can meet at convenient external location, or remotely

### **Is the checklist only designed for specific types of firms?**

No, the checklist is designed for all types of law practices.

We want to ensure that clients with disability feel comfortable receiving legal advice for any legal issue they have.

We recognise that not all firms have the scale and resources to be fully accessible, but we hope the checklist can help firms consider some simple changes they could make to better serve clients with disability.

# WHEELCHAIR/ MOBILITY ACCESS



## **Awareness training**

Staff should complete awareness training with regards to communicating with and maximizing access to users of wheelchairs and other mobility aids.

## **Lift/ramp and path access**

- Continuous path of travel from property entrance (or onsite car park if there is one) to amenities and relevant spaces (eg meeting rooms).
- Equitable access path to include lift access where applicable.
- Ramps with appropriate gradients that don't intrude into the path of travel.
- Tactile indicators at both ends of ramp
- Handrails along landings and other appropriate surfaces
- Non-slip floor surfaces

## **Steps**

- Colour contrast nosing on all stair treads
- Non-slip edge strip
- Tactile indicators at top and bottom of stairs
- Handrails along steps

## **Accessible toilets on premises**

- Accessible pathway to toilets
- Accessible unisex toilets
- Ambulant toilets
- Lever action taps
- Tactile/braille signs

## **Lifts**

- Lifts with adequate circulation space
- Accessible controls with raised tactile buttons
- Grab rails 850–900mm above floor level
- Accessible call button with clear signage

## **Doors**

- Accessible doors, entry/exit points
- Wide, self-opening doors (preferable); or easy-to-open manual doors
- Clear circulation space around doors
- Door frames in contrasting colour to surrounds and door

## **Reception area**

- Counter with appropriate set down height and pull in space below the counter for wheelchair users
- Management procedures for no receptionist (eg accessible buzzer/intercom/phone)
- Clear circulation area for wheelchair

**For measurement guidelines, please refer to page 10**

## **Meeting options**

- Options to meet at accessible external location (eg hired meeting rooms)
- Home visit options
- Remote meeting options

Further resources: Disability (Access to Premises — Buildings) Standards 2010



# VISION IMPAIRMENT AND BLIND



## **Awareness training**

Staff should complete awareness training with regards to communicating with people who are visually impaired or blind

## **Signage**

- Signage should have strong visual contrast
- Signage should have appropriate print size
- Font should be simple sans serif (eg Arial or Helvetica)
- Signage should be clearly visible to standing and seated persons, and appropriately located along paths of travel
- Clear directional signage along continuous path of travel
- Braille and tactile signage should be on toilets, emergency exits, spaces with hearing augmentation

See “Font size for signage” table on page 13

## **Lighting**

- Consistent and even lighting along continuous path of travel
- Lighting without glare or reflection

## **Symbols**

- Use of universally recognisable symbols or icons

## **Colour contrasts**

- Effective contrasts between vertical and horizontal surfaces around doors, door frames, equipment, benches, counters or other installations

## Documents

Documents to be provided in clear, legible, uncluttered writing. Documents should be considerate of

- Font
- Spacing
- Formatting
- Colour

Where possible, documents should be presented in easy to understand, plain English.

Capacity to provide documents in alternative formats, e.g. Braille, audio format, large print, easy read

## Guide dogs

- Premises should be guide dog friendly

## Meeting options

- Options to meet at accessible external location (eg hired meeting rooms)
- Home visit options
- Remote meeting options

## Further resources

<https://www.accessibility.sa.gov.au/policy/south-australian-government/easy-read-online-accessibility-policy>

<https://www.accessibility.sa.gov.au/introduction/easy-read>



# HARD OF HEARING AND DEAF



## **Awareness training**

Staff should complete awareness training with regards to communicating with people who are hard of hearing or deaf

## **Appropriate spaces**

- Spaces with low background noise
- Spaces that are well-lit and prevent glare

## **Hearing augmentation**

- Spaces should have a hearing augmentation system, e.g.
- Hearing loops
- Infrared system

## **Translation & dictation**

- Firms should have the capacity to access external services such as the National Relay Service, or live captioning services.
- Firms should have access to Auslan interpreters

## **Meeting options**

- Options to meet at accessible external location (eg hired meeting rooms)
- Home visit options
- Remote meeting options



## Further resources

Auslan Signbank – a language resources site for Australian Sign Language.

[auslan.org.au](http://auslan.org.au)

Deaf Australia – peak organisation for Auslan-using deaf community

[deafaustralia.org.au](http://deafaustralia.org.au)

Deaf Can:Do – SA-based support for hard of hearing/deaf community

[deafcando.com.au](http://deafcando.com.au)

National Relay Service

<https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/media-communications-arts/phone/services-people-disability/accesshub/national-relay-service>



# NEURODIVERGENT



*The term “neurodivergent” refers to brain developments and structures that may be considered different to “typical” brains. Examples of neurodivergent classifications include autism, Asperger’s, and ADHD.*

## **Awareness training**

Staff should complete awareness training with regards to communicating and accommodating people who are neurodivergent

## **Calm spaces**

“Low arousal” spaces that reduce sensory over-stimulation, eg spaces with:

- low noise levels
- reduced brightness, with as much natural lights as possible
- Minimalist layout, uncluttered, avoid overly bright colours and patterns
- Allows for personal space
- Natural textiles and materials (eg wooden surfaces rather than metal; woven carpet rather than linoleum)

## **Safety**

Fenced areas for safety (if premises have open spaces such as a garden)

## **Signage**

Signage should be simple and clear, and where appropriate, inclusive of universally recognisable symbols or icons

### **Sensory tools**

Availability of sensory tools – eg weighted blankets; fidget tools

### **Social narratives**

Familiar with the use of social narratives (simple stories that visually represent social situations and appropriate social behaviours)

### **Meeting options**

- Options to meet at accessible external location (eg hired meeting rooms)
- Home visit options
- Remote meeting options



# NEUROLOGICAL DISORDERS



*Neurological disorders are diseases of the brain and other components of the nervous system, can result in physical, psychological, and cognitive symptoms. . Examples of neurological disorders include cerebral palsy, Alzheimer's, multiple sclerosis, epilepsy and Parkinson's disease.*

## **Awareness training**

Staff should complete awareness training with regards to communicating with and accommodating people who have neurological disorders

## **Technological aids**

Staff to be comfortable with assistive aids/ communication devices (sometimes referred to as augmentative and alternative communication) used by people with neurological disorders. These can include electronic speech devices and paper-based picture charts.

## **Physical access features**

### **Lift/ramp and path access**

- Continuous path of travel from property entrance (or onsite car park if there is one) to amenities and relevant spaces (eg meeting rooms).
- Equitable access path to include lift access where applicable.
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- Tactile indicators at both ends of ramp

- Handrails along landings and other appropriate surfaces
- Non-slip floor surfaces

### **Steps**

- Colour contrast nosing on all stair treads
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### **Accessible toilets on premises**

- Accessible pathway to toilets
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### ***Hearing augmentation***

#### **Appropriate spaces**

- Spaces with low background noise
- Spaces that are well-lit and prevent glare

#### **Hearing augmentation**

- Spaces should have a hearing augmentation system, e.g.
- Hearing loops
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#### **Translation & dictation**

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# MEASUREMENT GUIDELINES

## ***FOR WHEELCHAIR/MOBILITY ACCESS***

### **Lift/ramp and path access**

- Path access: Path should be at least 1200mm (w) x 1800mm (h)
- Step ramp: Gradient of step ramp should be no steeper than 1:8 and no longer than 1520mm before a rest stop (flat surface)
- Ramp: Gradient of ramp should be no steeper than 1:14 and no longer than 9 metres
- Handrails: Should be 860mm to 1000mm above floor level

### **Lifts**

Lifts should have dimensions of at least 1100mm (w) x 1400mm (d)

### **Doors**

D or D lever style door handles should be located between 900mm to 1100mm height, to enable handles to be reached by standing or seated persons.

### **Reception area**

Counter should have set down height of 750-820mm  
Height of buzzer should be 900mm to 1100mm

Further resources: [Summary of Australian Standards referenced in the Access Code - Design for access and mobility](#)

# FONT SIZE FOR SIGNAGE

Australian Standard AS 1428.2 provides some guidance for the size of signage which can be applied in shopping centres and stores:

Required Viewing Distance	Minimum Height of Letters
2m	6mm
4m	12mm
6m	20mm
8m	25mm
12m	40mm
15m	50mm
25m	80mm
35m	100mm
40m	130mm
50m	150mm

Source: AS 1428.2 Table 2 Height of Letters for varying Viewing Distances



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