

The Road

FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

To Inclusion



The Recognition that Disability Rights - Is a Human Right

Inclusion is such a central issue for people with disabilities, that in 2006, the United Nations convened a conference of thought leaders, politicians, people with disabilities, business leaders, community leaders and more from around the globe to develop guiding principles by the largest human rights organization on the planet - the United Nations - to protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of persons with disabilities. Did you know that people with disabilities are the largest group of marginalized, disenfranchised people on the planet? And they are the largest group fighting for inclusion, diversity and equity.

The UN developed an international framework to guide national policy-making and legislation, and for building inclusive societies.

[United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#)





.....

“Nobody can discover the world for somebody else.
Only when we discover it for ourselves does it
become common ground and a common bond and we
cease to be alone.”

.....

—Wendell Berry



Setting the Stage at Work

An, *Advancing the Inclusion of People with Disabilities* study in 2009, found that adults with disabilities are more likely not to participate in the workforce. Making diversity a priority in our organizations is imperative – not just because it is the right thing to do, but because it is critical to the future success of our businesses, our communities, and the Colorado economy.

Over the last 18 months, we have dealt with the outcomes of a pandemic, protest and a very unstable local, national and world economy. Now, as we try to get back to normal and companies gear up to hire more people, we'll be doing so in an extremely competitive environment for talent.

To recruit and retain the best people in this market, we have to be open to the diverse groups within our communities and that includes people with disabilities.

In addition to the business need, research suggests that diverse, heterogeneous teams promote creativity, innovation and better decision-making.

Barriers to Disability Diversity

What are some of the barriers to employment that people with disabilities face?

Physical and architectural – Buildings or spaces that cause problems for people with disabilities who are trying to access them.

Information and communication – When people with disabilities have difficulties accessing the information that they need such as publications unavailable in large print.

Attitudinal – Discriminating against people with disabilities because it is assumed that they are not capable.

Technological – Not modifying technology to support assistive devices.

Organizational – Processes or policies that still discriminate against people with disabilities. For example, hiring practices that exclude disabled people



What Can We Do?

- **Ensure that senior leadership**, as well as middle management and human resources, understand the business case for diversity – and understand why it is a priority for CDHS. By encouraging and celebrating diversity, organizations will ultimately benefit from the talents and skills of people from all communities, including people with disabilities.
- **Change the dialogue.** Help people at all levels feel open to express their concerns when it comes to dealing with people with disabilities in the work environment. What are they self-conscious about? What don't they understand? What stereotypes do they hold?

People with disabilities need Allies as well!



What Can We Do?

- **Build awareness** about people with disabilities in your workplace. As employees begin to understand the business case and learn that people with disabilities can make a positive contribution to business at all levels, attitudes will change. Again, employee and leadership sensitivity training can be a real asset.
- **Be accommodating.** While CDHS already make accommodations for its employees, such as flex place, we must be willing to speak with disabled people about their needs and understand the level of accommodations, if any, are required to help them succeed in the workplace. Communicating with all our employees will remove barriers by getting any challenges and issues into the open before they become serious problems.

The State's employment system already accommodates employees, whether they have disabilities or not and that's something to remember.”



What Do You Mean?

Did you know that most disabilities are invisible? To help with disability language here's a list of common terms that can help you in any inclusive interaction.

Acquired Brain Injury (ABI)

A brain injury that occurs after birth. It can be a result of an internal injury (e.g., tumor, stroke, aneurysm), an external injury (e.g., motor vehicle accident, fall, sports injury) or ingestion of a toxic substance.

Asperger's Syndrome

A person with Asperger's Syndrome usually has normal intelligence and language development. The person may have problems with social skills, handling change, or reading social cues such as body language. The person might also have a preoccupation with a particular interest, or be oversensitive to sounds, smells, tastes, etc. Asperger's Syndrome is sometimes referred to as "high-functioning autism."



What Do You Mean?

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)

A diagnosis with symptoms that may include difficulty paying attention, being easily distracted and the inability to focus more than a few moments on mental tasks. (See also attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.)

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

A diagnosis with symptoms that may include difficulty focusing attention and effort to tasks, difficulty in impulse control or delay of gratification and increased activity unrelated to the current task or situation. Most people who have a diagnosis of ADHD alone are not eligible for developmental disability services.

Deaf

Hearing loss so severe that communication and learning are primarily by visual methods. Members of the deaf community who communicate primarily using American Sign Language refer to themselves as Deaf.

Deaf-Blind

Significant combined loss/impairment of both senses (hearing and visual). People who are deaf-blind may have unique problems with communication, mobility and other daily living skills that make achieving independence more difficult.

What Do You Mean?

Developmental Disability (DD) (As defined by federal law)

(A) means a severe, chronic disability of an individual that— (i) is attributable to a mental or physical impairment or combination of mental and physical impairments; (ii) is manifested before the individual attains age 22; (iii) is likely to continue indefinitely; (iv) results in substantial functional limitations in 3 or more of the following areas of major life activity: (I) Self-care. (II) Receptive and expressive language. (III) Learning. (IV) Mobility. (V) Self-direction. (VI) Capacity for independent living. (VII) Economic self-sufficiency; and (v) reflects the individual's need for a combination and sequence of special, interdisciplinary, or generic services, individualized supports, or other forms of assistance that are of lifelong or extended duration.

Hard of Hearing

Hearing loss, ranging from mild to profound, that can benefit from the use of hearing aids or other assistive listening devices and the person depends primarily upon spoken or written communication.

Hearing impaired: Refers to all people with hearing loss regardless of severity of loss, age at onset, communication methods, use of technology or socio-cultural factors.

What Do You Mean?

Intellectual Disability

A disability that involves significant limitations both in intellectual functioning and in adaptive behavior, which covers many everyday social and practical skills. This disability originates before the age of 18 and encompasses a wide range of conditions, types, and levels. Intellectual disability is caused by factors that can be physical, genetic, and/or social.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

A brain injury from externally inflicted trauma. The primary causes of TBI include incidents involving motor vehicles, falls, acts of violence and sports injuries. TBI can range from mild (concussions) to severe, with outcomes ranging from a few symptoms to lifelong impairment.

Anxiety disorders

Form a category of mental health diagnoses that lead to excessive nervousness, fear, apprehension, and worry



What Do You Mean?

Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)

People with OCD have obsessions and compulsions. In other words, they experience constant, stressful thoughts and a powerful urge to perform repetitive acts, such as hand washing.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

PTSD can occur after a person experiences or witnesses a deeply stressful or traumatic event.

Seasonal affective disorder (SAD):

Reduced daylight triggers during the fall, winter, and early spring months trigger this type of major depression.



QUESTIONS

Our goal: To create an inclusive culture that favors all employees. Creating that culture is not going to happen quickly or easily – there is a lot of work to be done by CDHS and the larger community for the disabled community. If we are committed to integrating people with disabilities into the workforce, we will truly be able to make a difference in the State of Colorado

