

Reservation Checklist for Persons with Disabilities

Sponsored by NYSILC Travel Sub-committee: Promoting a Positive Experience When Using Hotel and Motel Accommodations

Mission Statement

United States census data identifies that there are over fifty-four million Americans with disabilities. This represents a three billion dollar annual market to the travel industry.

For people with disabilities, traveling throughout New York State takes on a new meaning. In order to provide these individuals with accommodations appropriate to their needs, both the individual and the accommodation provider need to be informed.

The individual must research in advance what type of room accommodations they will need, and then make sure the provider understands their request. Once the hotel/motel understands the request, they must in turn, fulfill their commitment and provide the services required by the patron.

Hotel and Motel accommodation providers should offer their guests with disabilities an opportunity to express their level of satisfaction with their accommodations and any insights or thoughts on how they might be able to better provide for their needs in the future.

Tips for Disability Etiquette

- Not all disabilities are apparent, ask before you help
- Be sensitive about physical contact
- Always speak directly to the person with a disability
- People with disabilities are the best judge of what they can and cannot do
- Put the person first, not the disability
- Say "person with a disability" not "disabled person"
- Keep accessible entrances and ramps clear, with accessible doors unlocked
- Offer your arm to a blind person, do not grab their arm
- A sign language interpreter is the most effective way of communicating with a deaf person. For simple interactions, writing back and forth may serve as a short-term solution

What is NYSILC?

The New York State Independent Living Council, Inc. (NYSILC) is made up of representatives, the majority of whom have disabilities, from around the State. NYSILC is a not-for-profit, non-Governmental, consumer controlled organization. It looks to support the statewide network of Independent Living Centers (ILC) in New York by increasing funding and resources, raising public awareness, providing technical assistance and training, and developing and pursuing a public policy agenda that results in systems change.

NYSILC has a variety of public policy sub-committees that address issues such as travel, housing, transportation, election reform, inclusive education, civil rights/ADA, Olmstead implementation and consumer directed personal care.

Use the checklists on the following pages to determine whether your hotel or motel is capable of handling the needs of a person with a disability.

Reservation Checklist for Persons with Disabilities

Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Facility

- Prominent signage for hearing impaired
- Public Text Telephone available
- Hearing aid compatibility public phone available

Written copy provided of:

- _____ An orientation to the facility and services available
- _____ Routine instructions for guest
- _____ How to use the room phone and all available features
- _____ Television instructions for closed captioning operations
- _____ Thermostat control instructions
- _____ Local tourism information available, noting accessibility
- _____ Emergency Evacuation Plan

- Staff member trained in sign language
- Flashing emergency alarm lights in common areas

Room

- Pad and pen/pencil available
- Notification devices - visual or tactile alerts for phone, door, smoke detector
- Phone-hearing aid compatible
- Portable text phone with electrical outlet near the phone
- Closed caption television with channel listings or portable decoder

Visually Impaired

Facility and Room

- Train staff to recognize mobility aids (e.g., white cane, dog guides)
- Speak proper directions (e.g., left, right, straight; NOT over here)
- Ask what assistance they may need
- Ask if they would like to be shown to their room
- Read aloud documents that need to be signed before asking them to sign
- Make a tactile line for the person to sign
- Cut off corner of key cards for orientation

Provide a cassette player and tapes that:

- _____ Provide an orientation to the hotel and layout

- _____ Facility services and amenities
- _____ Description and layout of room
- _____ Key card use
- _____ Use of the phone, all of its services, and a hotel directory
- _____ Television instructions
- _____ Thermostat controls
- _____ Housekeeping and staff communication
- _____ Local tourism information available, noting accessibility
- _____ Emergency Evacuation Plan

Mobility Impaired

Facility

Ramps/Level Entrance

Reserved Accessible Parking (Car & Van with Access Aisle)

Curb Cuts for Wheelchair Access Accessible Restroom in Lobby

Room

- Trained staff who are knowledgeable about the availability of accessible rooms and can accurately describe them
- Room items are placed within reach of guests with a disability
- Wide doorways
- Proper turning radius for a wheelchair or scooter
- Lowered peephole, door lock and closet racks
- Roll-in shower with a transfer seat
- Hand-held shower head and grab bars
- Open front toilet seat with hand rails
- Wheelchair space under sinks and counters-with pipes covered
- Telephone, light switches and remote at accessible heights
- Tilted bathroom mirror or full length mirror
- Touch-lamps
- Cordless phones
- Emergency Plan in place to assist a person with a disability Local tourism information available, noting accessibility

Other points to consider

- Will you be bringing an attendant?
- Will you need an adjoining room or double beds?
- Do you have a service animal and need location of walking area?

Upon arrival of a person with a disability

- Review any special needs
- Escort the guest to their room. Have all requests been accommodated?

Guest's Name: _____

Confirmation Number: _____

Date: _____

Name of Reservation Agent: _____

The facility is asked to mail or fax this completed checklist to the guest in order to guarantee the availability of the room and the checklist contents.