

Your Life, Your Rights

Chapter 6:

Disability Rights

Easy Read Guidebook



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How to Use This Guidebook



This Guidebook is about your disability rights.



Disability rights come from laws that protect people with disabilities.



These laws make sure people with disabilities get treated fair and kind.



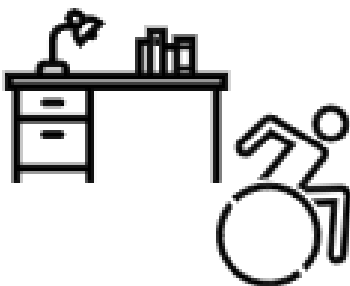
This Guidebook will explain some of your disability rights.



Some of this information may make you sad or upset.



Stop reading this guidebook and ask for support if you start to feel upset.



You do not have to read this guidebook all at once.



It is okay to take breaks as you read this guidebook.

Part 1: Disability Rights



People with disabilities have legal rights.



These legal rights come from many laws.



The rights come from laws like the Civil Rights Act and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).



To learn more about these laws, checkout the [Your Life, Your Rights: Antidiscrimination guidebook \(PDF\)](#).

Your disability rights include:



1. Make decisions about your life.



You have the right to make small daily choices, like what you eat or wear.



You also have the right to make big choices, like the career you want or whether you want to start a family.



You can take risks and make mistakes as you make choices



2. Have a personal life and relationships.



You have the right to spend time with people you want to, and to even meet new people.



You can also do things you like to do, like hobbies, while trying new things.



For more about your relationship rights, checkout the [Your Life, Your Rights Relationships Easy Read Guidebook \(PDF\)](#).



3. Have a job if you want one.



It is against the law to for a company to not hire you because you have a disability.



If you are already working, then you have the right to accommodations.



Accommodations are small changes a company makes to a job so you can best use your skills and abilities.



The accommodation can be to the workspace, like making sure a wheelchair fits in the office.



The accommodation can also be to the work itself, like having more time to do a task.



You can choose to stay at one job for many years or change jobs until you find the best one for you.



You also have the right to decide not to work if you don't want to.



4. Vote in elections.



Voting in elections is an important right that you have.



By voting, you help choose our government leaders, like our president.



It is against the law for others to keep you from voting or forcing you to vote.



Voting places must be accessible, which means you can enter the building to vote.



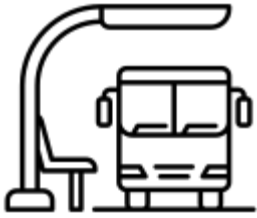
Voting places must have many ways to vote, like letting you vote by mail or bring someone to help you vote.



You also have the right to get voting information in the language you use.



You do not have to tell anyone who you voted for.



5. Use public travel like buses and taxis.



Buses, taxis, airplanes, and other travel types can't deny you services.



Buses must be **accessible**, which means you can get into them and know where the bus is traveling to.



You must have public travel options equal to what people without disabilities have.



6. Join community events and activities.



Public places like parks and businesses can't deny you entry.



This means they must have ways for you to enter them and enjoy what they offer.



You have the right to enjoy public events, activities, and services of your choice.



7. Join government programs.



Government programs are supports to help people get what they need.



The supports from the Division are examples of government programs.



You have the right to access these programs.



If you apply for a program but are not approved for it, then the government must explain why.



Government news must be easy to understand and offered in the language you need.



Government websites must be easy for you to use and understand.



Government buildings must have ways for you to enter and exit them that fits your needs.



8. Have access to information.



Information can be news, facts, stories, updates, and more to learn about things.



When you have access to information this means you can find it and use it in easy ways.



You must be able to access information in person, by phone, in the mail, and online.



9. Live in safe, comfortable housing you choose.



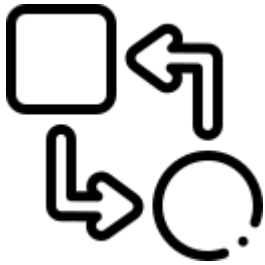
When applying for a new apartment or house, the application can't ask you if you have a disability.



It is illegal if you are not given an apartment or house because you have a disability.



You have the right to reasonable accommodations to your home.



Reasonable accommodations are changes to your home to make it safer and easier to live in.



A reasonable accommodation may be adding a ramp to the door or a walk-in shower.



If you have a service animal, they must be able to live with you at no extra cost.



You can't get kicked out of your home without a special court order called an eviction.



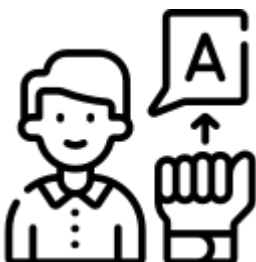
10. Communicate with others in ways that work best for you.



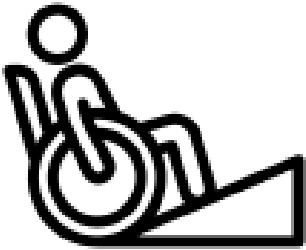
This is true if you speak with your voice, write, draw, use technology, and more.



This includes communicating in the language you use.



This also includes people sharing information with you in ways that work best for you.



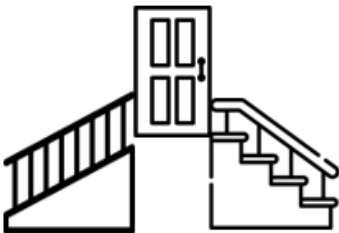
11. Stroll down streets and enter buildings with ease.



Places that are open to the public must give you the same opportunity to enjoy what they offer.



The public places can be hotels, offices, food stores, gyms, and more.



These places must have ways for you to enter and exit them no matter your ability.



Places should not have only stairs to get into them or blocked pathways that are hard to move around.



Places must allow you to bring your service animal in with you if you have one.



If the places share news with the public, people with and without disabilities must be able to find and use it.



This is true for news shared on websites and social media.



12. Go to college and training programs to keep learning.



As an adult with a disability, you have the right to continue your education after high school.



You can go to college to take classes and join activities you choose.



You also have the right to get services from the school you go to that will support your learning.

Part 2: Advocating For Fair Treatment



It is important to know what your disability rights are.



Knowing your rights is the first step to advocate for yourself.



Advocating for yourself means to stick up for yourself.



Advocating for yourself brings you closer to living the life you choose.

Part 3: Protecting Your Rights



You are the best person to protect your disability rights



If you anyone is harming you, call the BHDDH Quality Assurance (QA) hotline at **(401) 462-2629** to report the abuse.



If you think any of your rights are being broken, you can get legal help from places like [Disability Rights Rhode Island](#).

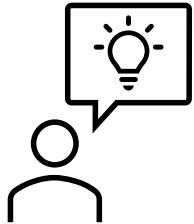


Remember, you have the right to fair treatment and to live your best life.

Part 4: Resources



In this section you will find a list of websites that were used to make this guidebook.



You can explore these websites to learn more about your rights.



You can never learn too much about your rights.



Once you learn your rights you will be better able to protect them.

List of websites to learn more:

Your Rights in Employment:

1. U.S. Department of Labor

- [Job Accommodations](#)
- Visit this website to learn about the rights you have as a worker.

Your Rights to Voting:

Visit any of these websites to learn more about your voting rights.

1. ADA.gov, U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, Disability Rights Section

- [The Americans with Disabilities Act and Other Federal Laws Protecting the Rights of Voters with Disabilities](#)

2. USAGov, U.S. General Services Administration

- [Voter accessibility laws](#)

3. Rhode Island Department of State

- [Accessibility and Voting Assistance](#)

Your Rights to Travel:

Visit any of these websites to learn more about your rights to public travel services.

1. Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA)

- [RIPTA Bus Accessibility](#)
- [Riders with Disabilities](#)

2. Northeast ADA Center

- [The ADA and Transportation Providers](#)

3. U.S. Department of Transportation

- [Traveling with a Disability](#)

Your Disability Laws

1. U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division

- [Guide to Disability Rights Laws](#)
- Explore this website for a summary of all the different civil rights laws that protect people with disabilities.

2. U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division

- [Introduction to the Americans with Disabilities Act](#)
- Explore this website for a summary on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Your Rights to Housing

1. Homes RI

- [Eviction FAQ for Tenants](#)

2. Disability Rights Rhode Island

- [Fair Housing Laws and Housing Discrimination](#)

3. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

- [Disability](#)

4. Rhode Island Fair Housing

- [Disabilities \(and Reasonable Accommodations\)](#)

Your Rights to Access

1. ADA.gov, U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, Disability Rights Section

- [Businesses That Are Open to the Public](#)
- Visit this website to learn how public places must be open to people with disabilities.

Your Rights to Education

1. Rhode Island College

- [Disability Services Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)
- Visit this website to learn what colleges must to support people with disabilities.