

# **SERVING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

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# TOPICS

- The Office of Student Disability Services
- Legal Statutes Related to Individuals with Disabilities
- Working with Visually Impaired/Blind Students



# OFFICE OF STUDENT DISABILITY SERVICES

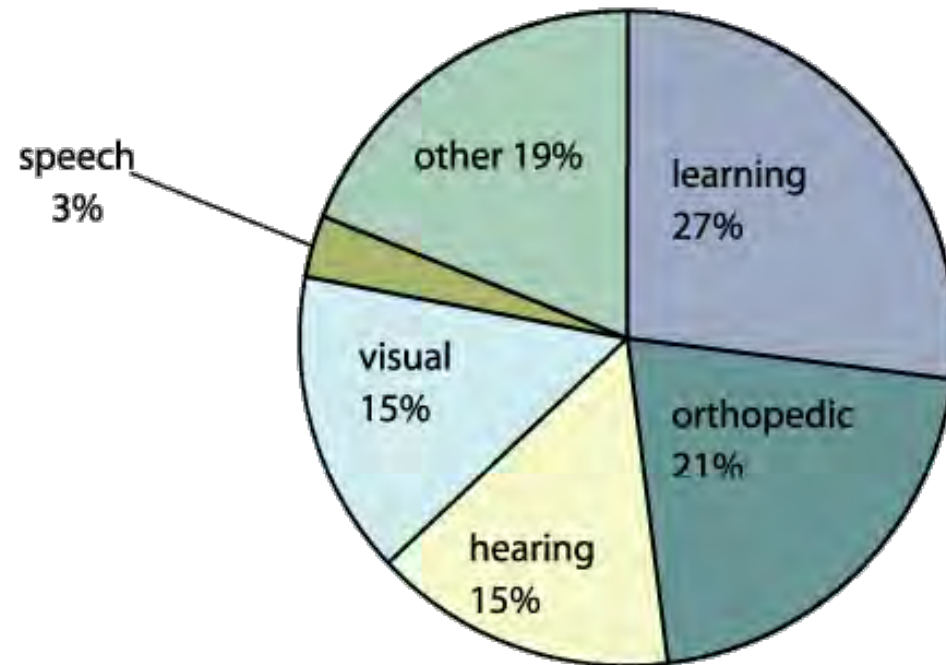
- The Office of Student Disability Services provides educational opportunities for individuals with disabilities through equal access, empowerment, support, resources, advocacy, collaboration and outreach throughout the University and community.



# OFFICE OF STUDENT DISABILITY SERVICES

- Currently serves nearly 700 students with disabilities

|            |     |
|------------|-----|
| Learning   | 27% |
| Orthopedic | 21% |
| Hearing    | 15% |
| Visual     | 15% |
| Speech     | 3%  |
| Other      | 19% |



# IT'S THE LAW

- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a civil rights law signed by President George Bush on July 26, 1990. It is the “Bill of Rights” for people with disabilities. The ADA contains four parts. They cover the areas of employment, public accommodations (including transportation services provided by private companies), state and local government services (including public transportation services), and telecommunications.



# COMMUNICATING WITH VISUALLY IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS

- Identify yourself - don't assume the person will recognize you by your voice.
- Speak naturally and clearly. Loss of eyesight does not mean loss of hearing.
- Use everyday language. Don't avoid words like "see" or "look" or talking about everyday activities such as watching TV or videos.
- Never channel conversation through a third person.
- In a group situation, introduce the other people present.



# COMMUNICATING WITH VISUALLY IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS

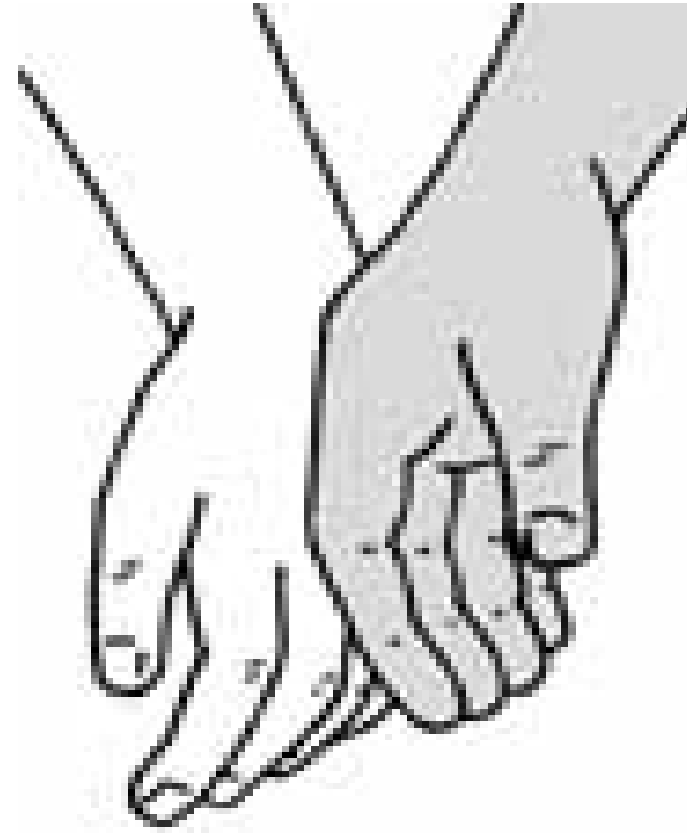
- Never leave a conversation with a person without saying so.
- Use accurate and specific language when giving directions. For example, "the door is on your left", rather than "the door is over there".
- Avoid situations where there is competing noise.
- Always ask first to check if help is needed.
- Relax and be yourself.



# GUIDING A PERSON WHO IS BLIND

- **Getting started**

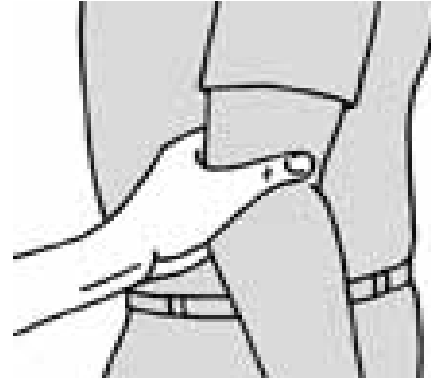
Ask the person if they need assistance. If they do need assistance, contact the back of their hand with the back of yours.



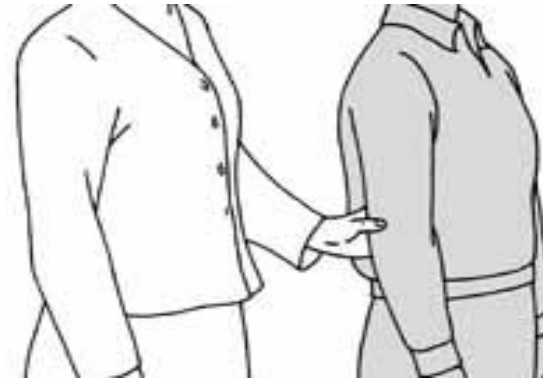


# GUIDING A PERSON WHO IS BLIND

They can then hold your arm just above the elbow.



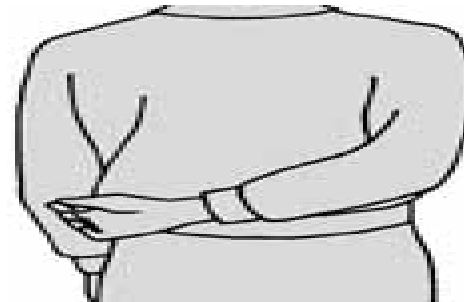
When walking, make sure the person is half a step behind you and slightly to the side. Walk at a pace that is comfortable for both of you. Look ahead for obstacles at foot level, head height and to the side.



# GUIDING A PERSON WHO IS BLIND

## Narrow spaces

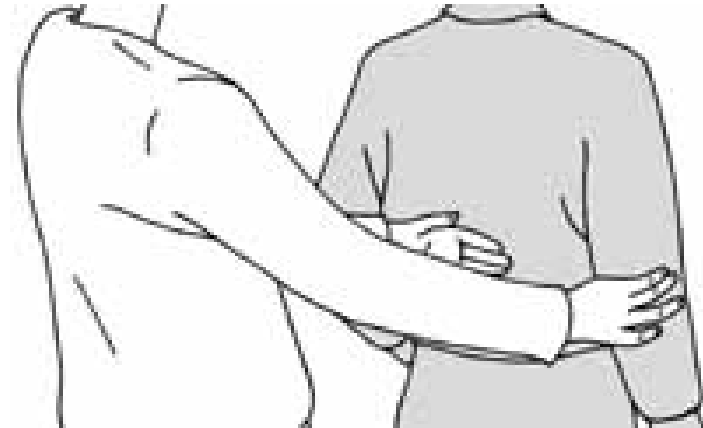
Tell the person you are guiding that a narrow space is ahead. Move your guiding arm towards the center of your back to indicate that they need to walk behind you. The person should step in behind you while still holding your arm. When you have passed through the narrow space bring your arm back to its usual position by your side.



# GUIDING A PERSON WHO IS BLIND

## Changing sides

If you need to change sides with the person you are guiding it is important they do not lose contact with you. This is easiest to achieve if you remain stationary. Allow the person to hold your guiding arm with both of their hands. They can then move one hand to reach your other arm without losing contact.



# GUIDING A PERSON WHO IS BLIND

## Doorways

When passing through a doorway, ensure the person who is blind or vision impaired is on the hinged side of the door. As you get close to the door, explain which way it opens. Open the door and walk through, allowing the person you are guiding to close it behind you using their free hand.



# GUIDING A PERSON WHO IS BLIND

## Steps and staircases

Stop at the first step and tell the person you are guiding whether the steps go up or down. Change sides if necessary to ensure the person you are guiding can use the handrail. Start walking when the person is ready, remaining one step ahead of them. Stop when you reach the end of the stairs and tell the person you are at the top or bottom.



# GUIDING A PERSON WHO IS BLIND

## Seating

- Explain which way the chair is facing and where it is placed in relation to the rest of the room. Then walk up and place your guiding arm on the chair and explain which part of the chair you are touching. The person you are guiding can then move their hand down your arm to locate the chair to seat themselves.

