



WISCONSIN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

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October 1992

The Bishops of the United States reminded us:

The same Jesus who heard the cry for recognition from the people with disabilities of Judea and Samaria 2,000 years ago calls us, His followers, to embrace our responsibility to our own disabled brothers and sisters in the United States. . . . We call upon people of good will to reexamine their attitudes toward their brothers and sisters with disabilities and promote their well-being, acting with the sense of justice and the compassion that the Lord so clearly desires. Further, realizing the unique gifts individuals with disabilities have to offer the Church, we wish to address the need for their integration into the Christian community and their fuller participation in its life. (On People with Disabilities, 1978, 1989)

At the same time, the Bishops reaffirmed their pastoral concern for persons with disabilities. Observing that the parish is the primary door by which most persons with disabilities enter the Christian community, they emphasized, "It is the responsibility of the pastor and lay leaders to make sure that this door is always open." (On People With Disabilities)

In July of 1990, President George Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The law was prompted by lack of accessibility, specifically in the areas of transportation, job opportunities, facilities and communication.

In 1991, the U.S. Bishops noted, "Families with disabled children need and deserve extra support and encouragement ... from their church." They observe that parents with disabilities face discrimination, isolation and segregation at work and in society. Finally, the Bishops call for all Americans to "work together to see the (ADA) fully and properly implemented to benefit children and adults with disabling conditions." (Putting Children and Families First)

In light of the Gospel and the pastoral position of the Church in regard to persons with disabilities we, the Bishops of the State of Wisconsin, recognize the rights of all people including those with disabilities. We embrace this law as a guide and, where appropriate, strive to implement it and do even more than the law requires.

We invite the institutions of the church: parishes, schools, nursing homes, hospitals, and any other groups organized in the name of the church, to examine, with the help of persons with disabilities, their facilities, programs, policies, ministries, and practices and to make those adaptations which will provide accessibility for all people when this is readily achievable. We want to do all that is possible in order that no person be denied the opportunity to worship, to minister, to receive or give religious education, to be employed in those diocesan and parish positions for which they qualify, or to participate in all aspects of parish and diocesan life.

To assist in the implementation of this vision, a video entitled *The Spirit of Inclusion* and a set of *Pastoral Implementation Guidelines* are available. Staff members of each diocese are ready to assist you as your consultants regarding accessibility issues.

May the Lord of Kindness enrich our domestic Churches and the entire family of humankind with peace and love.

Archbishop Rembert G. Weakland, Archdiocese of Milwaukee
Bishop Robert J. Banks, Diocese of Green Bay
Bishop John J. Paul, Diocese of La Crosse
Bishop George O. Wirz, Diocese of Madison
Bishop Raphael M. Fliss, Diocese of Superior

The Dioceses of Wisconsin have a history of working towards appropriate inclusion of persons with disabilities in religious and social activities. Each Diocese has a variety of competent resources. Initial contact may be made with those listed here.

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Pastoral Implementation Guidelines AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Wisconsin Catholic Conference

<i>The Law</i>	<i>Church Response</i>	<i>Suggested Action</i>	<i>Resources</i>
<p>Title I — Employment</p> <p>Employers with 15 or more employees may not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities. For the first two years after July 26, 1992, the date when the employment provisions of the ADA go into effect, only employers with 25 or more employees are covered.</p> <p>Employers must reasonably accommodate the disabilities of qualified applicants or employees, unless an undue hardship would result.</p> <p>Employers may reject applicants or fire employees who pose a direct threat to the health or safety of other individuals in the workplace.</p> <p>Applicants and employees are not protected from personnel actions based on their current illegal use of drugs. Drug testing is not affected.</p>	<p>The Church is an institution that works to model justice and dignity for all people, not only avoiding discrimination but also actively promoting a hospitable and welcoming environment for all persons including those with disabilities.</p> <p>A religious entity may not discriminate against a qualified individual because of his or her disability.</p>	<p>Become informed about discriminatory hiring practices.</p> <p>Evaluate the situation regarding job opportunity and access to qualified persons who may have disabilities such as impaired sensory, physical, manual, or speaking abilities.</p> <p>Examine these areas:</p> <p>Recruitment: Consider ways to encourage people with disabilities to apply, such as newsletters which target people with disabilities as their audience.</p> <p>Interview: Check application form and interview process for discriminatory questions and language. Provide auxiliary aids and services to individuals with disabilities so that they can have an equal opportunity to participate in the interview process.</p>	<p>Wisconsin State Dept. of Industry, Labor, and Human Relations Equal Rights Division P.O. Box 7946 Madison, WI 53705 608-266-6860</p> <p>Wisconsin Dept. of Health and Social Services Division of Vocation Rehabilitation 1 West Wilson Street, 8th Floor Madison, WI 53703 608-266-1281 608-266-9599 (TDD)</p> <p>DVR Regional Offices Contact Client Assistance Program (CAP) 1-800-362-1290 (V/TDD)</p> <p>Wisconsin Easter Seals 101 Nob Hill Road, Suite 301 Madison, WI 53713 608-277-8288 (V/TDD)</p>

<i>The Law</i>	<i>Church Response</i>	<i>Suggested Action</i>	<i>Resources</i>
<p>Title I — continued</p> <p>Employers may not discriminate against a qualified applicant or employee because of the known disability of an individual with whom the applicant or employee is known to have relationship or association.</p> <p>Religious organizations may give preference in employment to their own members and may require applicants and employees to conform to their religious tenets.</p> <p>Complaints may be filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Available remedies include back pay and court orders to stop discrimination.</p>	<p>Title I applies to dioceses, parishes, and other religious hiring groups. As personnel directors look to implement Title I, it is advisable to consult with attorneys about the impact and requirements at both the diocesan and parish level.</p>	<p>Job Description: Focus on the essentials of the job.</p> <p>Adaptation: Examples of appropriate adaptations might include furniture or special equipment ensuring accessibility to necessary work space. Benefit package, employee handbook and orientation materials might be placed on audiotape or written in braille or large print.</p> <p>Employee Handbook: Include a statement that persons with disabilities will not be discriminated against.</p> <p>These suggested actions for employment are only meant to serve as a starting point. Especially in the area of employment, it is important to know and implement the law.</p>	<p>The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities 1111 20th Street, NW Washington, DC 20036 202-653-5044 202-653-5050 TDD 202-653-7386 FAX</p> <p>Office on the Americans with Disabilities Act Civil Rights Division U.S. Department of Justice P.O. Box 66118 Washington, DC 20035-6118 202-514-0301 202-514-0381 TDD 202-514-0383 TDD</p>
<p>Title II — Public Services</p> <p>State and local governments may not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities. New construction and alterations to existing facilities must be accessible. Existing facilities must meet program accessibility requirements consistent with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.</p> <p>New buses and rail vehicles must be accessible.</p> <p>One car per train must be accessible.</p>	<p>We support and promote every effort to make transportation accessible.</p> <p>It is our goal as a welcoming church to be sensitive and responsive to the transportation needs of our sisters and brothers.</p>	<p>When transportation is offered, ensure availability to persons with disabilities.</p> <p>Maintain up-to-date list of providers of accessible transportation, e.g., Red Cross or other community transportation providers.</p> <p>Properly sign and maintain all parking areas. Parking accessibility is well defined by state law.</p>	<p>Newsletter <u>Access America</u> United States Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board Suite 501 1111 18th Street, NW Washington, DC 20036-3894 1-800-USA-ABLE (V/TDD)</p> <p>WI Department of Transportation P.O. Box 7910 Madison, WI 53707-7910 1-608-266-1113</p>

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<p>Title II — continued</p> <p>Comparable paratransit must be provided to individuals who cannot use fixed route bus service to the extent that an undue financial burden is not imposed.</p> <p>Amtrak passenger cars must have same number of accessible seats as would be available if every car in the train were accessible.</p>	<p>We will strive to provide accessible transportation whenever we would normally provide transportation to those we serve.</p>	<p>Identify accessibility needs on forms, such as parish census and applications to camps, workshops, classes, and retreats.</p> <p>These suggested actions are a few of the ways parishes have accommodated the transportation needs of their people.</p>	
<p>Title III — Public Accommodations</p> <p>Public accommodations such as restaurants, hotels, theaters, doctors' offices, retail stores, museums, libraries, parks, private schools, and day care centers may not discriminate on the basis of disability.</p> <p>Physical barriers in existing facilities must be removed if readily achievable (i.e., easily accomplishable and able to be carried out without much difficulty or expense.) If not, alternative methods of providing services must be offered, if those methods are readily achievable.</p> <p>New construction in public accommodations and commercial facilities must be accessible.</p> <p>Alterations to existing facilities must be accessible. When alterations to primary function areas are made, an ac-</p>	<p>We recognize that all persons should be able to have access to public buildings and facilities.</p> <p>As the Dioceses of Wisconsin, we desire to have our facilities, programs, and ministries accessible to all without discrimination because of disabilities.</p>	<p>Increase organizational accessibility by inviting qualified persons with disabilities to be readers, eucharistic ministers, greeters, council members, catechists.</p> <p>Review policies to insure wording that emphasizes invitation and sensitivity to persons with disabilities.</p> <p>Accessibility awareness is important when planning social functions.</p> <p>Designated diocesan staff can review plans and blueprints for new buildings and for alterations intended for existing structures in light of accessibility. Newly constructed and renovated buildings will be designed with accessibility in mind.</p>	<p>United States Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board Suite 501 1111 18th Street, NW Washington, DC 20036-3894 1-800-USA-ABLE (V/TDD)</p> <p>North Country Independent Living P.O. Box 1245 Superior, WI 54880 715-392-9118 (V/TDD)</p> <p>Center for Independent Living UW - Stout Menomonie, WI 54751 715-232-2150 (V/TDD)</p> <p>Independent Living Service of North Central WI 1100 Lakeview Drive Wausau, WI 54402 715-848-4390 715-848-2168 (TDD)</p>

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<p>Title III — continued</p> <p>cessible path of travel must be provided to the altered area, and the rest rooms, telephone and drinking fountains serving the altered area must also be accessible, to the extent that the added accessibility costs are not disproportionate to the overall alterations costs.</p> <p>Elevators are not required in newly constructed or altered buildings under three stories or with less than 3,000 square feet per floor, unless the building is a shopping center, mall, or health provider's office. The Attorney General may determine that additional categories of such buildings require elevators.</p> <p>New buses and other vehicles (except automobiles) operated by private entities must be accessible or system in which vehicles are used must provide individuals with disabilities a level of service equivalent to that provided to the general public (depending on whether entity primarily engaged in business of transporting people, whether system is fixed route or demand responsive, and vehicle seating capacity).</p> <p>New over-the-road buses must be accessible.</p>	<p>We are a welcoming community and work toward eliminating social and prejudicial barriers even as we remove the physical and communication barriers that prevent full and free participation by all persons.</p>	<p>An accessibility review or audit on existing facilities may include the concerns of persons who are deaf/hard of hearing and persons with visual impairments.</p> <p>Remove physical barriers in existing facilities if readily achievable (i.e., easily accomplishable and able to be carried out without much difficulty or expense). If accessibility is not readily achievable, seek alternative methods for providing services.</p> <p>Include person(s) who have knowledge of and sensitivity to accessibility issues on Buildings & Grounds Committees. This may be a person(s) with a disability.</p> <p>Worship space and meeting rooms can be made accessible with ramps and elevators so that persons with disabilities may assume their rightful roles as liturgical ministers and parish leaders.</p> <p>Additional auxiliary aids and services may be deemed necessary such as certified interpreters for people who are deaf, assistive listening systems/devices, e.g., audio loop, FM, AM, or infrared systems for people who are hard of hearing.</p> <p>This list of ideas is not meant to be a checklist, but rather a catalyst for further discussion and activity.</p>	<p>Lifestyle Division of Riverfront 2709 South Avenue La Crosse, WI 54601 608-788-2711 (V/TDD)</p> <p>Access to Independence 1954 East Washington Avenue Madison, WI 53704 608-251-7575 608-251-7731 (TDD)</p> <p>Independent Living Program P.O. Box 8027 Green Bay, WI 54308 414-468-1161 414-468-8848 (TDD)</p> <p>SEWCIL 6222 West Capitol Drive Milwaukee, WI 53216 414-438-5622 414-438-5627 (TDD)</p> <p>Society's Assets 1511 Washington Avenue Racine, WI 53403 414-637-9128 414-552-9658 (TDD)</p> <p>Self Help for Hard of Hearing People, Inc. 7800 Wisconsin Avenue Bethesda, MD 20814 301-657-2248 301-657-2249 (TDD)</p> <p>National Captioning Institute, Inc. 5203 Leesburg Pike Falls Church, VA 22041</p>

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<p>Title IV — Telecommunications</p> <p>Telephone companies must provide telecommunications relay services for hearing-impaired and speech-impaired persons 24 hours per day.</p>	<p>Our call is to communicate the message of Christ to all. One way we best accomplish this is by constantly evaluating our various modes of communication, including telecommunications, the printed word, and audio/visual productions.</p> <p>Our goal is to create a variety of options to initiate and to maintain two-way communication with the people we are called to serve.</p>	<p>Purchase Telecommunication Devices for the Deaf (TDDs/TTYs) for your offices and inservice your staff for telephone communications with persons who are deaf or speech impaired.</p> <p>Honor requests for the services of a professional, certified interpreter from individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.</p> <p>Consider the need for open captioning when using or creating videos or when purchasing television time.</p> <p>Provide assistive listening systems/devices for individuals who are hard of hearing.</p> <p>Written transcripts of audio tape productions may be made available. Supply large print and braille versions of printed material when requested in advance.</p>	<p>The IBM National Support Center for Persons with Disabilities P.O. Box 2150 Atlanta, GA 30301-2150 1-800-426-2133 1-800-284-9482 (TDD)</p> <p>State Office for Hearing Impaired 1 West Wilson Street Madison, WI 53707 1-608-266-8081 1-608-266-8083 (TDD)</p> <p>Volunteer Braillists, Inc. 517 North Segoe Road, #200 Madison, WI 53705 1-608-233-0222</p> <p>Milwaukee Public Library Volunteer Services 813 West Wells Street Milwaukee, WI 53233 1-800-242-8822</p> <p>Catholic Guild for the Blind 180 North Michigan Avenue Chicago, IL 60601 1-312-236-8569</p> <p>(See Independent Living Centers listed under Title III)</p>