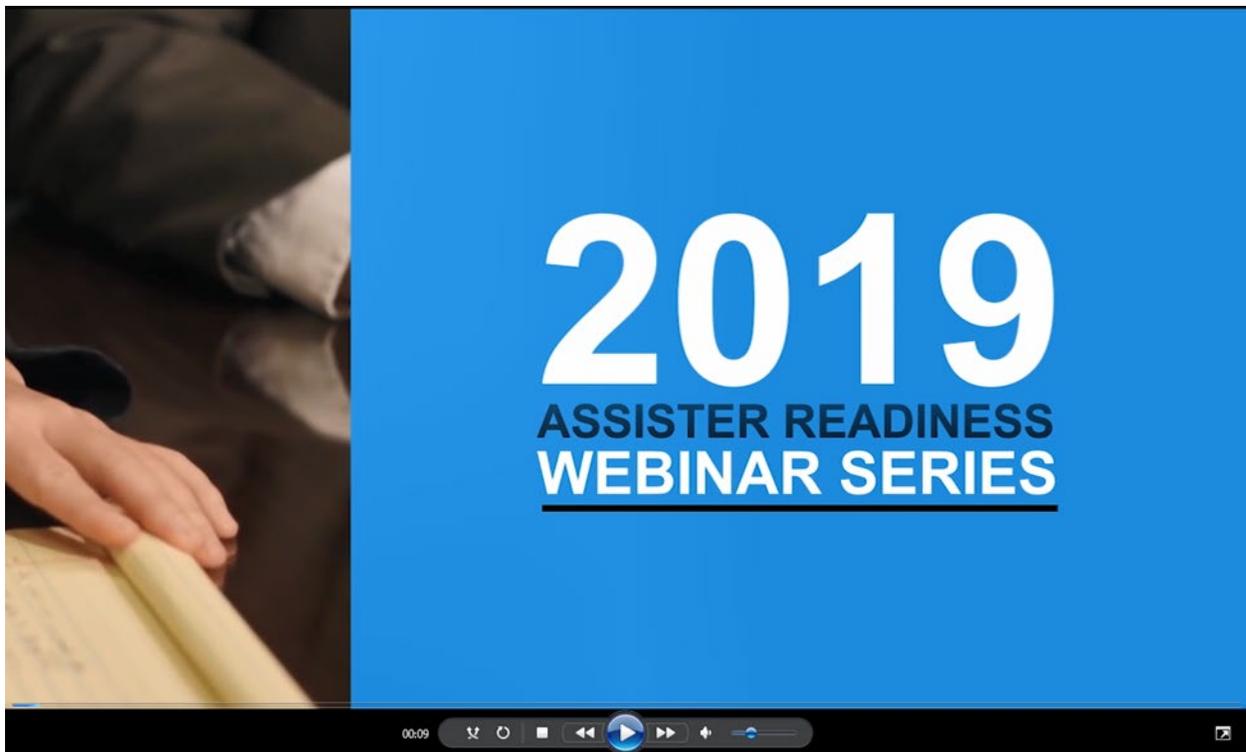


Working with Consumers with Disabilities: Providing Appropriate Services and Accommodations



This document is a transcript of the Marketplace Assister Technical Assistance Webinar.

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Disclaimer

This presentation is intended as training and technical assistance for Marketplace assisters (i.e., Navigator grantees, certified application counselors (CACs) and other assisters). This presentation is not a legal document.

- The slides summarize complex statutes and regulations and do not create any rights or obligations.
- Complete and current legal standards are contained in the applicable statutes and regulations.
- Members of the press should contact the CMS Media Relations Group at press@cms.hhs.gov.

Cover Slide

Hello and welcome to the 2019 Assister Readiness Webinar Series! I'm Leslie with the Consumer Support Group for the Marketplace and I'm joined by my colleague, Deborah. We'll be guiding you through today's webinar. Content in this module focuses on *Working with Consumers with Disabilities: Providing Appropriate Services and Accommodations* within the topic of *Making Coverage Accessible*.

2019 Assister Readiness Webinar Series Overview

Here is an overview of the entire 2019 Assister Readiness Webinar Series. This module, *Providing Appropriate Services and Accommodations*, is situated in the Week 4 installment of the series and falls under the topic of *Making Coverage Accessible*. If you have not yet viewed the other modules under this week's topic, be sure to do so in advance of our Friday LIVE webinar. On Friday's webinar, you'll also have an opportunity to ask questions, so remember to take notes and please bring your questions.

Titled Slide: Working with Consumers with Disabilities: Providing Appropriate Services and Accommodations.

<Silent>

Overview

Now I'll turn it over to Deborah to start us off. When consumers require reasonable accommodations or modifications to a policy, procedure, or a practice to access your services, you should make them on a case-by-case basis. One example of a modification is allowing a person with a disability to be accompanied by a service animal. In this presentation, we will cover types of disabilities such as physical disabilities, cognitive impairment or intellectual disabilities, vision impairment, and hearing impairment. We will also identify the types of accommodations that might be required for consumers with disabilities.

Types of Disabilities

First, consumers who have physical impairments may be substantially be limited in performing one or more major life activities, including but not limited to: caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking or working. Consumers who have cognitive impairments have trouble remembering, learning new things, concentrating, or making decisions that affect their everyday lives. Cognitive impairment ranges from mild to severe. With mild impairment, consumers may begin to notice changes in cognitive functions, but they may be able to do their everyday activities. Severe levels of impairment can cause

consumers to lose their ability to talk or write, live independently, or understand the meaning or importance of something. Cognitive impairments can occur at any age.

Intellectual Disabilities are characterized by significant limitations in intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior, which covers many everyday social and practical skills. These disabilities occur before an individual reaches the age of 18. And lastly, Hearing and Vision Impairments include consumers who are blind and/or deaf, as well as consumers with low vision or with difficulty hearing.

Accessibility for Consumers with Physical Disabilities around the Exterior of Your Facility

Now let us discuss accessibility on the outside of your facility. When you meet with consumers with disabilities, the area outside your meeting place must satisfy certain accessibility requirements. Otherwise, you should pick a different location. Buildings that are constructed or altered after July 18, 2016 are required to be accessible in compliance with the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design if they are used by an organization receiving federal funds or a State-based Marketplace.

Here are some examples of accessibility standards—first, parking. Your facility must be close to an accessible entrance, it must include an access aisle to provide space for mobility, and be on a level surface. Second, drop-off areas. Your facility must have an accessible drop-off area with the same features as described for accessible parking. Third, the route to entrance. Your facility's parking and drop-off areas must have an accessible, level route to the building entrance without steps or steeply sloped sidewalks. And fourth, building entrance. Your facility's entrance must be clear of any hazardous obstructions. An accessible door should accommodate a variety of mobility devices such as: crutches, canes, walkers, and wheelchairs.

Accessibility for Consumers with Physical Disabilities in the Interior of Your Facility

Now, let us discuss accessibility inside of your facility. The inside of your meeting location must satisfy certain physical accessibility requirements as well. Remember, you should pick a different location if your space does not meet these requirements. If you are a Navigator and you are assisting consumers in newly constructed or altered facility, your facilities must be physically accessible for consumers with disabilities.

Features of a facility that must be accessible include: one, the route to the meeting space. Like outside of the facility, the inside must also have an accessible route connecting the entrance to the meeting space. Second, the setup of your office. Your meeting space must have an accessible floor plan that allows consumers who use mobility devices for example, wheelchairs, walkers, and crutches to maneuver through the space. Third, technologies. Your meeting space must accommodate consumers who must use modified computers or telecommunication services such as: alternative keyboards, speech recognition software, or speakerphone options. And fourth, restrooms. Your facility's restrooms must be accessible to consumers with disabilities for example, use grab bars and stalls large enough to fit a wheelchair.

Knowledge Check Time!

Now let us do a quick knowledge check! Here is the scenario. Eve is 56 years old. She contacts you about setting up a time to meet about her options for health coverage, she mentions that she uses a wheelchair.

Knowledge Check Time! (Cont.)

Which of the following should you consider when scheduling an appointment with Eve?

- A. Accessible parking near the building entrance
- B. A drop-off area near the building entrance
- C. Large print reading materials for Eve
- D. A clear route to the meeting space within the building

What do you think the answer is? Take a moment to think about it.

Knowledge Check Answer

The correct answers are A, B, and D. Eve may need accessible parking or a drop-off area near the building entrance while she meets with you and a clear route to the meeting space. You need not consider providing large print reading materials unless she specified that she has a visual impairment. Now I'll turn it back out to Leslie.

Accommodating Consumers with Cognitive Impairments or Intellectual Disabilities

Thanks Deborah. Now, let's discuss accommodating consumers with cognitive impairments or intellectual disabilities. If you are a Navigator, you may be required to provide reasonable accommodations, modifications, and/or auxiliary aids and services to consumers with cognitive impairments or intellectual disabilities. This could include providing extra time and/or auxiliary aids and services, such as assistive technology, for your assistance to be effective. If a consumer's ability to read, write, organize thoughts, remember, or socially interact with you is affected by a disability, you should consider the following accommodations, modifications, and auxiliary aids and services. For example, if you are working with a consumer that has difficulties with reading, you can provide pictures, symbols, or diagrams instead of written information. You can also read written information out loud or provide information via audiotope or through a voice output on the computer or you can use a line guide to identify or highlight one line of text at a time.

Accommodating Consumers with Cognitive Impairments or Intellectual Disabilities (Cont.)

When assisting consumers with writing impairments, you may want to provide templates or forms to prompt requested information. You may also want to consider allowing verbal or typed responses instead of written responses. You can also consider using voice input functions on the computer and you want to also consider providing enough space on forms when written responses are required.

Accommodating Consumers with Cognitive Impairments or Intellectual Disabilities (Cont.)

To help consumers with organization, you may want to consider providing color-coded items or resources, making sure that all items are resources are properly labeled, you can also use symbols instead of words, and you also may want to consider providing a labeled folder or envelope to keep important information and instructions together.

Accommodating Consumers with Cognitive Impairments or Intellectual Disabilities (Cont.)

When providing assistance to consumers with memory impairments, you may want to use a voice-activated recorder to record verbal instructions or provide written information or checklists.

Accommodating Consumers with Cognitive Impairments or Intellectual Disabilities (Cont.)

In preparing to assist consumers who may have cognitive impairments or intellectual disabilities, assisters may want to obtain sensitivity training or disability awareness to learn how to interact appropriately with these consumers or use role-playing scenarios or training videos to learn how to assist consumers with these disabilities. I think it's important to remember that family members or friends may act as a consumer's interpreter, but only if this is the consumer's preference after you have explained that other auxiliary aids and services can be provided at no cost.

Auxiliary Aids and Services for Consumers with Vision Impairments

Now, let's move on to auxiliary aids and services for consumers who are blind or have low vision. Consumers with visual impairments may require auxiliary aids and services when you assist them.

Examples include written information in braille and access to information via: voice or large-print materials, clear black print on white or pale yellow paper, videos with audio description, and screen reading software. The HHS OCR Final Rule and CMS Marketplace regulations require Navigators to provide auxiliary aids and services at no cost when necessary or if requested by the consumer to ensure effective communication.

Accommodating Consumers with Hearing Impairments

Now let's talk about accommodating consumers with hearing impairments. Consumers with hearing impairments may require accommodations and auxiliary aids and services when you assist them such as: qualified in-person interpreters, video teleconference capabilities (VTC) with sign language interpreters, clear and understandable speech, willingness to repeat information as needed, and pen and paper to help with communication.

Knowledge Check Time!

Now, that you've learned about accommodations and auxiliary aids and services that can help consumers with disabilities, it's time to meet another consumer. Here is the scenario: Fang, a 55-year-old janitor, emails you, a Navigator, to schedule a meeting to discuss his options for health coverage. He tells you he has early-onset Alzheimer's disease and a hearing impairment but he knows sign language.

Knowledge Check Time! (Cont.)

To prepare for your meeting with Fang, which of the following should you consider providing?

- A. A sign language interpreter
- B. A pad of paper and pen for him to take notes

- C. Checklists to help him keep organized
- D. A large-print version of the paper enrollment form

Knowledge Check Answer

The correct answers are A, B, and C. You should provide a sign language interpreter, a pad of paper and pen, and checklists. Fang hasn't indicated he has a visual impairment that would require a large-print version of the paper enrollment form. Now I'll turn it back over to Deborah to go over some key points.

Key Points

Thanks so much Leslie. Here's some tips for you to keep in mind as you work with consumers with disabilities. Consumers may have different degrees of disabilities and you might be required to provide auxiliary aids and services or other accommodations to them. If you are required to provide reasonable accommodations or modifications to ensure that consumers can access your services, you should provide them on a case-by-case basis. If you are required to provide reasonable accommodations, modifications, and/or auxiliary aids and services, you should know the types of help that consumers with disabilities might need and be prepared to provide them with that help when necessary.

Assister Readiness Webinar Series Resources

Congratulations on completing the *Working with Consumers with Disabilities: Providing Appropriate Services and Accommodations* module of the Assister Readiness Webinar Series. Please proceed to the next Week 4 module, *Working with Consumers with Disabilities: Best Practices and Etiquette*.

Also, feel free to visit the Assister Readiness Webinar Series Resources listed on this slide, including training materials for Navigators and other assisters and the assister's webinars webpage.

If you have topical questions about this presentation: Navigators please contact your Project Officer directly and CACs can email the CAC Inbox at CACquestions@cms.hhs.gov.