



**Scottish Accessible
Information Forum**

**Is your business attractive to
potential customers and employees
who are disabled people?**

Does your business meet the
requirements of the
Disability Discrimination Act?

**Don't know?
Read this guide.**

The statistics

- There are 830,000 disabled people in Scotland, about 1 in 7 of the population.
- Disabled people account for 20% of the working age population and 11% of people in work.
- About 40% of disabled people work. Many more are able to work and available to start within two weeks.
- It is estimated that disabled people in Scotland spend £4.5 billion a year on goods and services, about 10% of total consumer spending.

The law

- If you are a service provider it has been unlawful since **1996** for you to treat disabled people less favourably for a reason related to their disability.
- Since **1999** you have been required to make “reasonable adjustments” to meet the needs of disabled people. This means providing extra help and making changes to the way you deliver services – such as providing information in other formats such as tape, large print or Braille.
- From October **2004** you have to make other “reasonable adjustments” to the physical features of your premises to ensure there are no barriers to access.

The questions

- Are you doing enough to attract potential customers who are disabled people with money to spend?
- Are you doing enough to attract potential employees who are disabled people with all the skills you need?
- Are you a socially responsible service provider and employer?
- Are you breaking the law?

The answers

- Don't **only** try to meet the requirements of the law. It won't work.
- Implement best practice, work within the spirit of the law, and end up with more satisfied customers and employees.
- Put in place a policy to meet the access needs of disabled people as customers or employees.
- It will cost less than you think and be cost effective in the longer term.

Practical steps you can take to meet the needs of most disabled people

- Produce all information in plain language and a minimum type size of 12 point, preferably 14 point.
- Use a clear, easily recognisable, sans serif font. Use a matt paper of contrasting colour. Justify type on the left. Don't print sentences in block capitals.
- On request, provide information in alternative formats such as large print, audio tape, Braille, and an easy-to-understand version.
- Use interpreters for people who need to communicate in a sign language or other community language.
- If you have one, get your website designed and developed in a way which makes it accessible for disabled people.
- Provide your service in a flexible way, where appropriate using home visits, telephones, the internet or different opening hours.
- Ensure that your premises are fully accessible to people with mobility or sensory impairments.
- Provide publicity materials which tell disabled people what you can or cannot do.
- Have good working relationships with other service providers which can help, and good referral arrangements.
- Provide your staff with disability equality training. A key barrier for disabled people is negative attitudes towards them.
- Get regular and organised feedback from disabled people about the accessibility of your service.
- Involve disabled people in service planning and training delivery.

The Scottish Accessible Information Forum (SAIF)

- Produces guidance and develops policy which is designed to promote the use of accessible information.
- Supports the rights of disabled people and carers to have access to information in the format or method which meets their needs.
- Is a small organisation funded by the Scottish Executive and based in the Scottish Consumer Council.

There is a compelling business case for being accessible to all potential customers, including disabled people. Make services to disabled customers an integral part of your product and service standards.

Organisations which can help you:

The Disability Rights Commission (DRC)

DRC Helpline, FREEPOST, MID 02164

Stratford upon Avon CV37 9BR

Tel: 08457 622 633

Email: enquiry@drc-gb.org

Website: www.drc-gb.org

Update

Scotland's National Disability Information Service

27 Beaverhall Road, Edinburgh EH7 4JE

Tel: 0131 558 5200

Email: info@update.org.uk

Website: www.update.org.uk

Employers' Forum on Disability

Offers a one-stop shop for advice, information and guidance.

Nutmeg House, 60 Gainsford Street, London SE1 2NY

Tel: 020 7403 3020

Email efd@employers-forum.co.uk

Website: www.employers-forum.co.uk

Scottish Accessible Information Forum (SAIF)

Scottish Consumer Council, 100 Queen Street, Glasgow G1 3DN

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Email: info@saifscotland.org.uk

Website: www.saifscotland.org.uk

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