

# Disability Equality Duty – A law for disabled people

## Easy Read Guide



## What is the Equality and Human Rights Commission?



The Equality and Human Rights Commission works to make sure that people are treated fairly and equally.

We are working to stop **discrimination** against disabled people, men and women and people from different races and cultures.

### **Discrimination**

This means treating someone worse than other people for some reason.

We are also working to make sure that people of different ages, **lesbian** and **gay** people and people from different religions are treated fairly and equally.

### **Lesbian and gay**

**Lesbian** means a woman who is attracted to other women. **Gay** means a man who is attracted to other men.

We also want to make sure that people's **human rights** are respected.

### **Human rights**

Basic rights and freedoms that belong to every person in the world.

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## What this book is about



This book is about a law called the **Disability Equality Duty**.

### **Disability Equality Duty**

This is a law about places like schools, hospitals and councils. It says they must work hard to make things better for disabled people.

They will have to ask disabled people what they need to make things better.

This book says how disabled people can tell them what they need.

## What the law says

The law says that **public authorities** must make things better for disabled people.

### **Public authorities**

This means places like schools, hospitals and councils.

Public authorities must make sure disabled people have the same chances as everyone else.

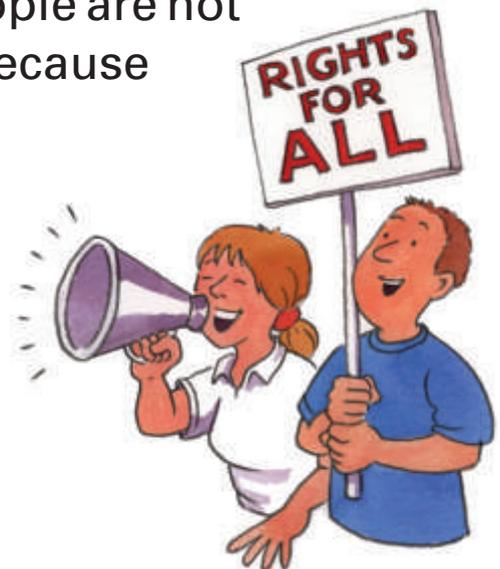
They must stop **discrimination** against disabled people.

### **Discrimination**

This means treating people worse than other people for some reason.

They must make sure people are not bullied or called names because they are disabled.

They must make it easier for disabled people to take part in making decisions.



## Asking disabled people what they need

Public authorities must ask disabled people what they need to make services better.

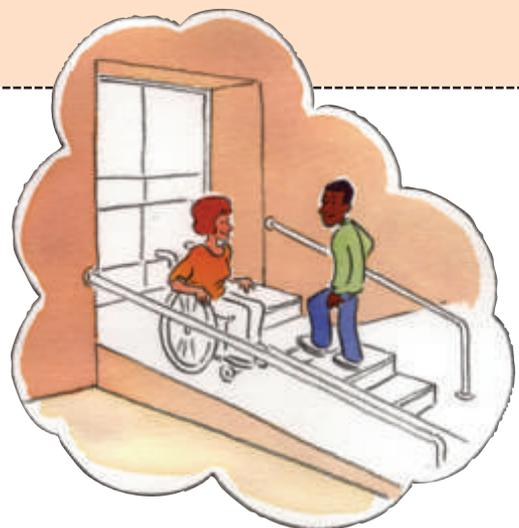
They must make it easy for disabled people to tell them.

They must make sure disabled people know they can talk to them.

They must make it easy for disabled people to come to meetings.

### Examples

- They should have meetings in places where wheelchair users can come in easily.
- There should be enough money to pay for meetings.





## Questions to ask a public authority

A public authority might ask you to say what you think.



They might ask you on your own. They might ask you as part of a group that works with disabled people.

### Here are some things to ask the public authority:

Which other people and groups are being asked about what they think?

Will you be able to talk to these other people and groups? Sometimes when you work together you come up with better ideas.

How much time will it take?

Will the public authority pay for things you need to go to the meeting?

### Examples

- You might have to take a bus or taxi to a meeting in a hospital.
- A student might need a support worker to go with her to a meeting at her college.



## Disability Equality Scheme

Public authorities have to write about how they are making things better for disabled people. They write this in a report called a **Disability Equality Scheme**.

### **Disability Equality Scheme**

This is a report which says how public authorities like schools, hospitals and councils are making things better for disabled people.

The Disability Equality Scheme says how they have found out what disabled people think.

It says what they are going to do.

It says how they will know if their changes are working.

You can ask to see the Disability Equality Scheme. This is one way to find out if the public authority is making the right changes.

## Action plans

The public authority should also write an **action plan**.

### **Action plan**

The public authority writes an action plan to say what it will do to make things better for disabled people.

It should do the things in the action plan.

The action plan should say what are the most important changes for disabled people.

It should say who needs to make the changes.

It should say when the changes will happen.



## Finding out if changes have worked

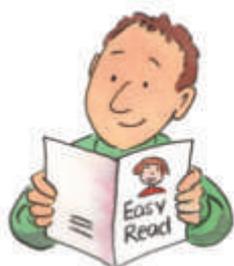


Public authorities might ask disabled people and groups to tell them if the changes they are making are working.

Disabled people can find out if the public authority is doing what it said it would.

They can say what has gone wrong.

They can say how to make it right.



### Example

- A group for disabled people checks the booklets that a council gives out. You can't get some of them in Easy Read.

They tell someone at the council.

## Asking public authorities for changes

Sometimes disabled people and groups might think that a public authority is not making things better for disabled people.

You can ask the public authority what they are doing.

Here are some questions you can ask:

1. What are the most important changes the public authority wants to make?
2. Were disabled people and groups asked what they thought about these changes?
3. Have things got better since they said what changes they would make?



4. What things still need to change to make things better for disabled people?
5. Does the public authority have a Disability Equality Scheme?
6. Have they showed the Disability Equality Scheme to disabled people and groups?



## What to do next

Public authorities should listen to what disabled people say. They should make changes where things aren't working.

You might think a public authority isn't making the right changes.

You might think it hasn't made any changes at all.

The public authority might be breaking the law.



If you think a public authority isn't being fair to disabled people, you can call the Equality and Human Rights Commission Helpline. The telephone numbers are on the back cover of this book.

We can tell you what the law says.

We can tell you what to do next.



## Words list

These are some of the words we use in this book.

### **Disability Equality Duty**

This is a law about places like schools, hospitals and councils. It says they must work hard to make things better for disabled people.

### **Public authorities**

This means places like schools, hospitals and councils.

### **Discrimination**

This means treating someone worse than other people for some reason.

### **Action plan**

The public authority writes an action plan to say what it will do to make things better for disabled people.

### **Disability Equality Scheme**

This is a report which says how public authorities like schools, hospitals and councils are making things better for disabled people.



You can find out more about us by going to our website: [www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)

You can ask us about how we can help you by using the Equality and Human Rights Commission Helpline. There are different numbers for England, Scotland and Wales.



### England

**Telephone** 08456 046 610  
**Textphone** 08456 046 620  
**Fax** 08456 046 630



### Scotland

**Telephone** 08456 045 510  
**Textphone** 08456 045 520  
**Fax** 08456 045 530



### Wales

**Telephone** 08456 048 810  
**Textphone** 08456 048 820  
**Fax** 08456 048 830



The Helplines are open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm, except Wednesday 9am to 8pm