

|  |
|--|
| <p style="text-align:center"><b>RHODE ISLAND STATE LAW LIBRARY</b><br/><b>POLICY STATEMENT FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES</b></p> |
|--|

In order to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and to provide meaningful access to all library patrons, the Rhode Island State Law Library establishes the following policy:

**Provision of Accommodations and Auxiliary Aids and Services**

The State Law Library will make all reasonable efforts in meeting the needs of patrons with disabilities who wish written materials converted to alternative formats, or who request auxiliary aids or services. In addition, the State Law Library will be responsive to requests for auxiliary aids and services; these may be either purchased or borrowed by the State Law Library.

Primary consideration will be given to the request as made, unless another equally effective means of communication is available, or if the means requested would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of the services, programs, or activities or in undue financial and administrative burdens. The decision to not grant the request for an auxiliary aid or service because it would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of the program or undue financial and administrative burden must be made in writing by the ADA Coordinator. All resources available for the use in the funding and operation of the State Law Library must be considered in making the decision. The State Law Library must take some action that would ensure, to the maximum extent possible, that individuals with disabilities receive the benefits or services provided by the State Law Library.

To request written materials in alternate formats, such as Braille or cassettes, or auxiliary aids, such as sign language interpreters or assistive listening devices, patrons should contact:

**State Law Librarian**  
**Rhode Island State Law Library**  
250 Benefit Street, 8th Floor  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903  
Telephone (401) 222-3275, Facsimile (401) 222-3865, or TTY (401) 222-3269  
RI RELAY at 7-1-1 or 1-800-745-5555; TTY machine is on 3rd Floor

The request for materials in alternate formats or other types of auxiliary aids should be made through the ADA Request Form if possible, and at a reasonable time period before the aid or service is needed. For example, if a person who is deaf or hard-of-hearing requests a sign language or oral interpreter, the request should be made, if possible, at least five (5) business days before the interpreter is needed, but preferably three (3) weeks in advance.

**Accommodating Patrons with Impairments**

Accommodating Patrons with Low Vision

While large print legal materials are not generally available from standard commercial sources, the State Law Library staff will make every effort to assist patrons with low vision by: (1) Locating relevant materials; (2) reading selected portions of the text; (3) assisting with the photocopying of materials too lengthy to read in the library by employing an enlargement mode on the library's photocopiers; (4) directing to or assisting with the use of assistive software or equipment.

### Accommodating Patrons Who Are Blind

Legal materials in Braille are not generally available from standard commercial sources; however, the State Law Library staff will make all reasonable efforts to assist blind patrons in using library materials. These efforts may include: (1) Locating relevant materials; (2) reading relevant portions of the text; (3) photocopying relevant materials desired by the patron; and (4) directing to or assisting with the use of assistive software or equipment.

If patrons with visual impairments do not find the above-mentioned services sufficient, they may follow the procedures outlined previously to request written materials in alternate formats or other auxiliary aids and services.

### Accommodating Patrons Who Are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing or Have Communication Impairments

The State Law Library staff shall provide assistance to patrons who are deaf or hard-of-hearing or have communication impairments. The State Law Library staff will make every effort to communicate with such patrons by (1) using clearly articulated speech to communicate with those who read lips; (2) employing written dialogue in lieu of oral dialogue; and (3) when communication is complex and lengthy, providing (at the library's expense) a sign language or oral interpreter, if requested by the patron.

If patrons who are deaf or hard-of-hearing or who have communication impairments wish to request an auxiliary aid, such as a sign language interpreter or assistive listening device (such as a Williams Sound PockeTalker Pro), they may follow the procedures outlined in the above section "Provision of Accommodations and Auxiliary Aids and Services" to request the sign language interpreter or other auxiliary aids or services. Patrons who are deaf or hard-of-hearing or have communication impairments and use TDD/TTY devices may also communicate with the State Law Library staff by contacting them through the telecommunications device for the deaf/text telephone (TDD/TTY) at (401) 222-3269 (3rd Floor/Room 304) and/or the 8th Floor/Library facsimile machine (401) 222-3865. TTY users may also use RI RELAY at 7-1-1 (TTY) or 1-800-745-5555 to access (401) 222-3275.

### Accommodating Patrons with Mobility Impairments

The State Law Library is accessible to persons with mobility impairments. While both the 8th and 9th floors are accessible by elevator, security concerns dictate that persons with mobility impairments inform the State Law Library staff that access to the 9th floor is desired so that doors may be opened. If direct access to the 9th floor is not required, the State Law Library staff shall retrieve desired materials from that floor. The State Law Library staff shall assist patrons with mobility impairments with the retrieval of materials on upper shelves of all stacks to guarantee effective access to all parts of the collection.

### Prohibition Against Providing Legal Advice

In assisting lay or pro se patrons with disabilities, the State Law Library staff shall exercise caution to ensure that the reference assistance provided does not constitute legal advice. State Law Library staff shall inform such patrons that the selection of some relevant materials does not guarantee that all relevant materials have been located or that the solution to the patron's particular legal problem is necessarily contained therein.

## Signage and Notice

Appropriate signage shall direct those patrons with disabilities to the reference desk for appropriate assistance. Patrons with visual impairments shall be assisted by oral means. Copies of this policy will be made available at the State Law Library information desk.

## **Questions or Complaints**

If you have any questions about this policy or wish to file a complaint concerning the accessibility of the State Law Library programs to individuals with disabilities, please contact:

Erika Kruse Weller, Esquire  
General Counsel and ADA Coordinator  
Licht Judicial Complex  
250 Benefit Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903  
(401) 222-3266 or through RI RELAY at 7-1-1  
[ada@courts.ri.gov](mailto:ada@courts.ri.gov)