



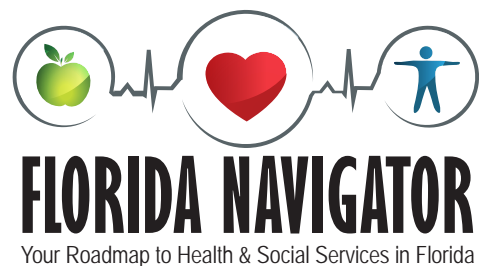
Spring 2015

**Guide to Community Resources and Disability Rights
for People with Visual Impairments**

Broward • Palm Beach • Treasure Coast

Sponsored by:

**Accessible Publications Consultants,
A Division of Florida Navigator, LLC**



Compiled by Robert Goodman, MSW • Designed by Stephanie Davis

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Disability Rights

Americans with Disabilities Act	3
Air Carrier Access Act	4
Architectural Barriers Act	4-5
Fair Housing Act	5
Rehabilitation Act	5-6
Section 504	5-6
Section 508	6-7
Florida Civil Right Law	7
Voting Accessibility	7

General Sources of Disability Information

General Resources	8-11
Palm Beach and Treasure Counties Resources	12-13
Broward County Resources	13-14

Steps To Becoming An Effective Self-Advocate

15

Locating and Accessing Community Resources and Services

16-18

Disability Related Rights Under Federal Law

Do you know your rights? Many laws have been passed to protect your rights and guarantee you equal access to goods and services. These laws cover employment, government services, businesses, transportation, voting rights, and housing.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act all businesses, health care providers and government agencies are required to provide reasonable accommodation in communicating with customers, clients and patients. A public accommodation must reasonably modify its policies, practices, or procedures to avoid discrimination.

Complaints of title III violations may be filed with the Department of Justice. Title III may also be enforced through private lawsuits.

Under the ADA, health care providers must offer auxiliary aids and services to provide effective communication for patients, family members, and visitors who are blind or have low vision. These services may include readers, taped texts, Braille materials, buying or modifying equipment, or other effective means of conveying the information. All information that generally is made available in print must be effectively communicated, including general health guidance, side effect information, billing invoices, and appointment reminders. Other examples of auxiliary aids and services are:

- Assistance with reading and completing admission and consent forms, or reading discharge information, medication names and dosages;
- Providing text materials in an accessible, electronic format;
- Providing documents in Braille or audio;
- Providing a Braille-output TTY to

a patient who is deaf and blind; or,
– Making health care plan websites accessible.

Note: a health care provider cannot require a person who is blind to bring someone with him or her to interpret or facilitate communication, and cannot rely on a companion to interpret or facilitate communication.

For more information on filing a complaint regarding ADA violations, contact:

U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division
Disability Rights Section - NYAV
www.ada.gov, 800-514-0301

Air Carrier Access Act

The Air Carrier Access Act prohibits discrimination in air transportation by domestic and foreign air carriers against qualified individuals with physical disabilities. Requirements address a wide range of issues including boarding
People may enforce rights under the Air Carrier Access Act by filing

a complaint with the U.S. Department of Transportation, or by bringing a lawsuit in Federal court.

For more information or to file a complaint, contact:

Aviation Consumer Protection
Division, C-75
U.S. Department of Transportation
<http://airconsumer.ost.dot.gov>
800-778-4838

Architectural Barriers Act

The Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) requires that buildings and facilities that are designed, constructed, or altered with Federal funds, or leased by a Federal agency, comply with Federal standards for physical accessibility. ABA requirements are limited to architectural standards in new and altered buildings and in newly leased facilities.

For more information on any accessibility issues or to file a complaint, contact:

U.S. Architectural and
Transportation Barriers
Compliance Board
www.access-board.gov
800-872-2253

Fair Housing Act

The Fair Housing Act prohibits housing discrimination on the basis of disability. Its coverage includes private housing, housing that receives Federal financial assistance, and state and local government housing.

Complaints of Fair Housing Act violations may be filed with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

For more information or to file a complaint, contact:

Office of Compliance and
Disability Rights Division
Office of Fair Housing and Equal
Opportunity
U.S. Department of Housing and

Urban Development
www.hud.gov/offices/ftheo
800-669-9777

Rehabilitation Act

The Rehabilitation Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in programs conducted by Federal agencies, in programs receiving Federal financial assistance, in Federal employment, and in the employment practices of Federal contractors. The standards for determining employment discrimination under the Rehabilitation Act are the same as those used in title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 protects individuals from discrimination based on their disability. The nondiscrimination requirements of the law apply to government agencies, businesses and organizations that receive financial assistance from the Federal government. These

include hospitals, nursing homes, mental health centers and human service programs that receive Medicare and Medicaid funds. Section 504 forbids organizations and employers from excluding or denying individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to receive program benefits and services. It defines the rights of individuals with disabilities to participate in and have access to, program benefits and services.

For information on how to file 504 complaints with the appropriate agency, contact:

U.S. Department of Justice
Civil Rights Division, Disability
Rights Section - NYAV
www.ada.gov
800-514-0301

Section 508

Section 508 establishes requirements for electronic and information technology developed, maintained, procured, or used by the

Federal government. Section 508 requires Federal electronic and information technology to be accessible to people with disabilities, including employees and members of the public.

For more information on Section 508, contact:

U.S. General Services
Administration
Office of Government-wide Policy
IT Accessibility & Workflow
Division (ITAW)
www.gsa.gov/portal/content/105254
202-501-4906

U.S. Architectural and Transportation
Barriers Compliance Board
www.access-board.gov
800-872-2253

Under these laws you have the right to request reasonable accommodations in the way health care providers and other businesses assist you or communicate with you.

Reasonable Accommodations include:

- Assisting you in filling out applications or other forms
- Providing admissions information in large print, Braille, or other accessible formats
- Providing discharge planning documents in large print or other accessible formats
- Allowing a guide dog to accompany you
- Helping you locate information or a product in a store

If you are admitted to a hospital, nursing home (for rehabilitation services) or receive home health care, enforce your rights and request publications and other documents in large print or other accessible format.

Florida Civil Right Law Public Accommodations

It is unlawful for an individual to be denied access or to receive poor service or lesser quality accommodations because of his or

her race, color, national origin, sex, disability, familial status or religion.

To file a complaint contact:

Florida Human Rights
Commission

1-800-342-8170

<http://fchr.state.fl.us/>

Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act and the Help America Vote Act of 2002

The Voting Rights laws aim to improve access to voting for people with disabilities. These laws require states to make available registration and voting aids for disabled and elderly voters.

For more information, contact:

U.S. Department of Justice, Civil
Rights Division

Voting Section - 1800 G
800-253-3931 (voice/TTY)

www.usdoj.gov/crt/voting
800-253-3931

General Sources of Disability Information

Assistive Technology

- Florida Reading and Vision Technology 954-525-5311
www.floridareading.com
- Humanware 800-722-3393 www.humanware.com/
- LS & S 800-468-4789 www.lssproducts.com/category/assistive-technology
- MaxiAids 800-522-6294 www.maxiaids.com
- Freedom Scientific (computer technology) 800-444-4443
<http://www.freedomscientific.com/>
- Enhanced Vision 561-232-4482 www.enhancedvision.com
- Innovative Vision Systems 954.344.7399
www.innovativevisionsystems.com
- Microsoft Accessibility Technology for Everyone Website
425-882-8080 www.microsoft.com/enable
- Ai Squared 1-802-362-3612 www.aisquared.com

Computer Accessibility

- Computer Use with Age Related Macular Degeneration
<http://www.amd.org/improving-the-appearance-of-your-computer/>
- Microsoft Accessibility
<http://www.microsoft.com/enable/guides/vision.aspx>

Educational Programs

- Hadley School for the Blind 800-526-9909 ww.hadley.edu

Financial Assistance for Eyecare

- New Eyes for the Needy
www.neweyesfortheneedy.org
www.nei.nih.gov/health/financialaid
Eye Exams and Surgery

- EyeCare America
- American Academy of Ophthalmology
877-887-6327 <http://eyecareamerica.org>
- VISION USA - American Optometric Association
800-766-4466 www.aoa.org/visionusa.xml
- Lions Clubs International www.lionsclubs.org/EN/find-a-club.php
- Mission Cataract USA www.missioncataractUSA.org

Free 411 Information From Your Phone Company

- AT&T Special Needs Center 800-772-3140
www.att.com/esupport/article.jsp?sid=KB414146&cv=807
- Comcast 855-270-0379
<http://customer.comcast.com/help-and-support/account/accessibility-services>
Note: Many cell phone companies offer this service. For information contact your cell phone provider.
- Verizon 888-262-1999
www.verizonwireless.com/accessibility/index.html

General Information on Visual Disabilities

- Lighthouse International 800-829-0500 www.lighthouse.org
- Prevent Blindness America 800-331-2020
www.preventblindness.org
- Macular Degeneration Association 941-870-4399
- American Macular Degeneration Foundation 888-622-8527
www.macular.org
- Blinded Veterans Association 800-669-7079 www.bva.org
- Canadian National Institute for the Blind 800-563-2642
www.cnib.ca
- American Foundation for the Blind 800-232-5463 www.afb.org
- AFB Service Directory www.afb.org/directory.aspx?action=browse
- Glaucoma Research Foundation 800-826-6693
www.glaucoma.org

General Sources of Disability Rights Information

- ADA Information Line 800-514-0301 (voice) www.ada.gov
- Southeast ADA Center 404-541-9001 www.adasoutheast.org
- ADA National Network 800-949-4232 www.adata.org

Florida Civil Rights Law

- Florida Human Rights Commission 1-800-342-8170
<http://fchr.state.fl.us/>

Prescription Drugs

- NeedyMeds
www.needymeds.org
- Partnership for Prescription Assistance
888-477-2669 www.pparx.org
- Patient Access Network (Age Related Macular Degeneration)
866-316-7263 www.panfoundation.org
- RX Assist 401-729-3284 <http://rxassist.org>

Services for People with Hearing Impairments

- Nationwide Interpreter Resources 561.362.0594
<http://nationwideinterpreterresource.com/>
- Florida Telecommunications Relay 711
<http://www.ftri.org/FloridaRelay>
- Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
866-602-3275 www.fccdhh.org
- ATT Relay Service <http://relayservices.att.com>
- Services for People who are Deaf-Blind
- Florida Deaf-Blind Association <http://fldeafblind.org/>
- National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program
800-222-3448 (V) or 888-447-5620 (TTY) or email ndbedp@ftri.org

Services for People with Visual Disabilities - Advocacy Organizations

- American Council for the Blind www.acb.org
- Florida Council for the Blind 800-267-4448 www.fcb.org

- National Federation of the Blind www.nfb.org

Publications

- New York Times 800-631-2580 www.NYtimes.com
- Readers Digest 800-310-2181 www.rd.com
- Choice Magazine Listening 888-724-6423
www.choicemagazinelistening.org

Religious Materials

- JBI International 800-433-1531 www.jbilibrary.org/
- Jewish Heritage for the Blind 800-995-1888
www.jhbinternational.org/
- Lutheran Braille Workers 800-925-6092 www.lbwinc.org/
- Braille Bibles International 800-522-4253 www.braillebibles.org/
- Christian Record Services for the Blind 402-488-0981
www.christianrecord.org
- Audio Bibles for the Blind 941-748-4100
www.audiobiblesfortheblind.org

Vision and Aging

- National Institute on Aging
www.nia.nih.gov/health/publication/aging-and-your-eyes
- National Eye Institute
www.nei.nih.gov/nehep/programs/visionandaging
- Vision Aware
www.visionaware.org
- Center for Disease Control
www.cdc.gov/visionhealth/pdf/vision_brief.pdf

Information About Services for Older Adults and People with Visual Impairments

- Dial 211 or call the Elder Helpline at 1-800-96-ELDER (800.963.5337)
- To Report Abuse, Neglect or Exploitation call 1-800-96-ABUSE

Resources for People with Visual Impairments: Palm Beach County and Treasure Coast

Counseling and Support Groups

- Ruth Rales Jewish Family Services (561) 852-3333
- Morse Life Neighbors2Neighbors (561) 531-9844

General information on services in the community:

- Information and referral 211 www.211palmbeach.org/
- Area Agency on Aging (Elder Helpline) 561-684-5885
www.youragingresourcecenter.org

Government Benefits / Services

- Social Security Administration 800-772-1213 www.ssa.gov
(Social Security, Social Security Disability, SSI)
- Medicare 800-633-4227 www.medicare.gov
- Non Driver's ID Cards: Delray Beach, 501 S. Congress Ave.
www.gathergoget.com/

Homestead Exemptions

(older adults, people with disabilities, veterans)

- Palm Beach County 561-355-2883 www.pbcgov.com/papa

Senior Services

- Palm Beach County Department of Community Services
561-355-4700
- The Volen Center 561-395-8920
Adult Day Care, Senior Center, Transportation

Services for People With Hearing Impairments

Free Phones for the Hearing Impairments

- Audiology with a Heart 561-366-7219
- Deaf and Hearing Resources of Palm Beach County 561-802-3353

Services for people with Visual Impairments:

- Florida Division of Blind Services 866-225-0794,
<http://dbs.myflorida.com>
- Palm Beach/Treasure Coast: 561-681-2548
(866) 225-0794
- Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches/Treasure Coast
561-586-5600 www.lighthousepalmbeaches.org
- Talking Books Library 888-780-5151
www.pbclibrary.org/services/talking-books
- Radio Reading Service 800-273-6677
<http://wlrn.org/programs/radio-reading-service>
- NFB Newsline 866-504-7300 <https://nfb.org/audio-newspaper-service>
- Braille Club of Palm Beach County <http://brailleclub.webs.com>
561-585-2301
- Florida Outreach Center for the Blind 561-642-0005
www.flblindcenter.org
- Blind Rehabilitation and Low Vision outpatient program
561-422-5260
www.westpalmbeach.va.gov/services/blind_rehabilitation.asp

Transportation:

- Palm Tran Connection 1-877-870-9849
<http://www.co.palm-beach.fl.us/palmtran/information/connection.htm>
- Ruth Rales Jewish Family Services 561-852-3333
- The Volen Center 561-395-8920

Services for People with Visual Impairments: Broward County

General information on services in the community:

- Information and referral 211 www.211-broward.org

Government Benefits

- Social Security Administration 800-772-1213 www.ssa.gov
(Social Security, Social Security Disability, SSI)
- Medicare 800-633-4227 www.medicare.gov
- Homestead Exemptions
(older adults, people with disabilities, veterans)
- Broward County 954-357-6830 www.bcpa.net

Senior Services

- Broward County Elderly and Veteran's Services
954-357-6622
www.broward.org/HumanServices/ElderlyAndVeterans
- Jewish Family Services
954-370-2140 www.jfsbroward.org

Services for People with Disabilities

- Lighthouse of Broward County
954-463-4217 www.LHOB.org
- Talking Book Library 954-357-7555
www.broward.org/library/mylibraryonline/pages/talkingbooklibrary.aspx
- Florida Division of Blind Services 866-225-0794
<http://dbs.myflorida.com> (866) 225-0794
- Broward: 954-746-1770
- Center for Independent Living of Broward
954-722-6400 www.cilbroward.org
- Paratransit (TOPS) 954.357.8400
www.broward.org/BCT/Riders/Pages/Paratransit.aspx

10 STEPS TO BECOMING AN EFFECTIVE SELF-ADVOCATE

1. *Believe in yourself*
2. *Realize you have rights*
3. *Discuss your concerns with your service provider*
4. *Get the facts in writing*
5. *Use the chain of command to solve a problem*
6. *Know your appeal rights*
7. *Be assertive and persistent, not aggressive*
8. *Outline your concerns and be a good listener*
9. *Ask for help from other agencies*
10. *Follow-up. Be sure you're getting the service that meets your needs...and remember to say thank you*

Appendix II

LOCATING & ACCESSING COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND SERVICES

"I need help and I don't know where to turn!" Where would you begin to look if you needed help for a loved one? There are many government and community-based services available to assist older adults, caregivers, and people with mental, developmental, or physical disabilities. Locating and accessing their services is often where the difficulty begins.

HOW DO I BEGIN THE SEARCH?

Step One: Organize your or your loved one's records:

- Personal Records
- Health Insurance Information
- Legal Documents
- Financial Records
- Medical Records

Step Two: Add all your sources of income to determine your monthly income. Next add the total value of all your assets.

Step Three: Determine what kind of help the person needs. Make a list of the things the person can or cannot do and who is available to help, with what, and how often. Can the person:

- Take medication on time and in the correct dosage
- Sleep through the night
- Go shopping for food/clothing
- Visit friends or drive a car
- Travel by bus or taxi

- Do light housekeeping
- Do heavy housekeeping
- Do the laundry
- Afford to pay the bills
- Write checks and pay bills efficiently
- Take care of legal matters
- Maintain personal cleanliness
- Get dressed
- Use the toilet
- Safely use the stairs/steps
- Look up phone numbers and make calls without help
- Be safely left alone

WHERE DO I FIND THE SERVICES I NEED?

1. Internet (Google search)
2. Library
3. White/Yellow Pages
4. Information & Referral/Crisis Helplines (2-1-1)
5. City/county/state/federal government
6. Area Agencies on Aging

7. Hospital social work/case management departments
8. Community health fairs/expos
9. Religious institutions
10. Referrals from friends, relatives, and colleagues

AFTER LOCATING A PARTICULAR SERVICE

Once services are located, it's important to learn about the services and how they can address the needs of the person who needs help. Visit the agency/organization's website and take notes. What you glean may be enough for you to know if this is what you're looking for. Narrowing down your choices this way without having to make numerous phone calls saves time and energy. It also provides prior knowledge about the agency before placing a call to them. Although some services and programs can be searched or applied for online, others should be contacted by phone.

PRIOR TO CALLING AN AGENCY FOR SERVICE

1. Be clear on your goals and the services the person needs. Put this information and your questions in writing.
2. Make a list of agencies you want to call.
3. Have your previously organized records near the phone for reference and quick access, saving you frustration and time.
4. Have a notebook and pen ready for taking notes—don't use small scraps of paper that could easily be lost.

CALLING THE AGENCY

Sample Script

"My name is _____. I am caring for _____ who is my _____. I need help with _____ during the hours of _____. Can you help me?" If the answer is no, ask "Can you give me another name or agency to call?" If the answer is yes, ask "What services do you provide? What are the costs and how are they paid? Eligibility requirements? Is there a wait list? Can you send a brochure and application? What is your website address? Can you do an intake over the phone? To whom am I speaking? Do I need to speak to anyone else?"

Tips When Speaking with the Agency

1. Try to call in the morning.
2. Describe exactly what you need, any limitations you may have in paying for services, and all the questions above. “Interview” the agency. Determine by their demeanor and response if this would be the appropriate agency to fill the need.
3. Call several agencies to compare.
4. Keep good notes, including the name and number of the agency, the person you spoke to, additional phone numbers, email address, website, questions and responses, and names and contact info of additional agencies you were referred to.
5. Enlist the support of those you are calling; don’t put them on the defensive.
6. Be persistent and patient—it may take many calls to get the services you want.
7. Be assertive—call back and ask for a supervisor if you are not satisfied with the answers or advice. Document date, time, and contents of call, and file a complaint with appropriate funding agency, better business bureau, or chamber of commerce.
8. If denied services, ask how to appeal. You have the right to a written decision.

DENIALS AND APPEALS

Make a log of all correspondence and phone calls regarding denials. Include dates and names of people. When did you receive notice of the denial? How did you receive notification of the denial? Who notified you directly about the denial?

Most programs and insurance plans have a formal grievance procedure. Get the procedure in writing and follow through.

ONCE SERVICES ARE APPROVED

1. Develop a detailed file: name/contact info of agency, description of service, referrals to other services, if needed.
2. Follow up to be sure the services are appropriate and are being provided for in an efficient and effective way.
3. Document any gaps in service or problems and follow up with agency to resolve problem.
4. If gaps of service are due to budget or other cuts, advocate before your elected officials.

MAGNIFIERS • TALKING DEVICES • BRAILLE • CANES
HOME PRODUCTS • VIDEO MAGNIFIERS • BIG BUTTON PRODUCTS
LARGE PRINT ITEMS • SCAN & READ SYSTEMS



Vision Technology Center
 at Lighthouse of Broward
 650 N. Andrews Avenue
 Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33311
954-525-5311
www.floridareading.com

Store Hours: Tues - Fri 11:00am-4:00pm

- Specializing in leading edge technology related solutions from around the world for the blind and visually impaired
- Assisting individuals in choosing and effectively using assistive technology to achieve their personal educational and work related goals
- Enhancing lives, strengthening independence & increasing productivity through the use of assistive technology



At Boca Regional Urgent Care

We can accommodate the needs of people with visual disabilities.



20665 Lyons Road #A3
 Boca Raton, FL 33434
 (NW Corner of Glades/Lyons Roads, next to Pier One)

(561) 883-6677
 Open 9am-9pm Every Day.
 Most Insurance Accepted,
 Including Medicare.



BACK IN ACTION
PHYSICAL THERAPY

7431 W. Atlantic Avenue
 Ste. 52
 Delray Beach

Located in The Villages
 of Oriole Plaza next to
 The Movies

561-638-7455
www.backinactiondelray.com

Macular Degeneration? Low Vision? *We Can Help!*

Our easy-to-use video magnifiers have helped thousands to read, write and remain visually independent.



Read • Write • Enjoy Hobbies

We have a solution for every need & budget

enhanced

vision

Call today for more information:

Barbara Brown, COMT

561-232-4482

enhancedvisionflorida@gmail.com