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Making Your Facility Welcoming, Accessible, and Inclusive

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Speakers

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About the National Alliance

- 501(c)(3) – Founded in 2001
- Mission – *To increase the participation of individuals with disabilities in the game of golf*
- Online resources
 - Organizations, associations, golf courses, parks, staffs, and disabled golfers
 - Includes golf and medical/therapeutic organizations
- Education delivery via webinar and in-person events/conferences
- Grant Program
 - Approximately \$1M over the last 10 years
 - Golf programs and initiatives leading to participation



Overview

- Why is this important?
- About the National Alliance and who we serve
- Understanding ACCESS versus INCLUSION
- Creating a welcoming environment
 - Environment and culture
- Evaluating your facility
- Are you thinking about starting a program?
- Actions you can take ...

The Total Population

- There are 61 million individuals with disabilities in the United States
- 1 in 4 people in our country are disabled
 - Mobility, sensory, neurologically, intellectually, and other types
- Those with mobility disabilities account for 1 in 7 adults
- Of the US population, children with disabilities ages 5 to 17 amount to 5.6%



The Golfer Population

- Approximately 14 million individuals are interested in golf
- 6 million report they had played in the past, but no longer do
- More than 600,000 golfers with disabilities are currently engaged in golf

Let's ask ourselves "why"
6 million no longer play?

Is it equipment?

Access?

Something else?



Why is this important beyond the law?

- Golf is a sport ideally suited to accommodate individuals with disabilities
- The rehabilitative and therapeutic value of golf is without dispute
 - Physical & psychological
 - Just ask golfers with a disability what it means to them
- Adults, veterans, and children find golf helps with their healing, whether physical, emotional, sensory, neurological, intellectual or other



If we can attract and welcome just 5% of the 61 million, that's over 3 million new or returning golfers to the game

Accessible

- *Access* and/or *accessibility* relates to
 - Architectural design and physical layout of a golf facility's building structures (clubhouse, on-course facilities, etc.)
 - The golf course and practice areas
 - Use of all the club has to offer freely, and without restrictions or impediments (barriers)
 - The better the access, the more welcoming the environment

Inclusive

- *Inclusion* is a byproduct of access and a welcoming environment for golfers with disabilities
- Individuals with disabilities may easily participate with non-disabled individuals and are invited to do so
- They are welcomed as any other individual would be to the positive social experiences with friends and family that the game of golf so beneficially provides

Welcoming

Welcoming is created through

- The club's external presence
 - Marketing
 - Social media
 - Accessible facility
 - Your website - the entry point for most customers
- Communications
 - Acceptable terminology and imagery with disabled golfers
 - Properly trained staff across the entire property
 - Known as customer service to ALL customers



Are you public or private in the DOJ's eyes?

- Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in the activities of places of public accommodation (businesses that are generally open to the public, which includes recreation facilities).
- A privately owned golf club, whether for profit or nonprofit, that is open to the public, is subject to *Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act* if it meets the standard of a “public accommodation” through usage patterns that seem to exceed or deviate from the member-only standard.



Are you public or private in the DOJ's eyes?

- Per the ADA, if private, to be considered a “public accommodation,” and susceptible to Level III requirements, an entity:
 - Must be private, and it must own, lease, lease to, or operate a place of public accommodation, defined as a facility whose operations affect commerce and fall within at least one of 12 categories
 - Here are three of those 12 categories:
 - Places of lodging (inns, hotels, motels, except for owner-occupied establishments renting fewer than six rooms)
 - Establishments serving food or drink (restaurants and bars)
 - Places of exercise or recreation (golf courses, gymnasiums, health spas, bowling alleys)

Are you public or private in the DOJ's eyes?

- The nature and frequency of access by the public to the private facility is what the DOJ would look at regarding whether a private club can use, for example, temporary ramps for access versus permanent ones:
 - If a golf course holds one charitable golf event per year where the public is welcomed, it could maintain its exemption to Title III standards (public).
 - However, if the club routinely permits golf events, weddings or other events beyond the membership throughout the year as part of its business model, it may be obligated to ensure Title III access compliance, such as permanent ramps.



When are you expected to make changes under Title III?

Title III Changes

- Courses shall make changes to the course or a facility when to do so is **“readily achievable.”**
- Readily achievable - removal of barriers that would prevent public access by individuals with disabilities.
- Readily achievable - easily accomplishable and able to be carried out without much difficulty or expense.



When are you expected to make changes under Title III?

- **Readily Achievable Factors to consider:**
 - Nature and cost of the action needed under this part
 - Overall financial resources of the site or sites involved in the action
 - Number of persons employed at the site
 - Effect on expenses and resources
 - Legitimate safety requirements that are necessary for safe operation, including crime prevention measures
 - Impact otherwise of the action upon the operation of the site



When are you expected to make changes under Title III?

- **Readily Achievable Factors to consider:**

- The geographic separateness, and the administrative or fiscal relationship of the site or sites in question to any parent corporation or entity
- If applicable, the overall financial resources of any parent corporation or entity;
 - The overall size of the parent corporation or entity with respect to the number of its employees; the number, type, and location of its facilities; and
- If applicable, the type of operation or operations of any parent corporation or entity, including the composition, structure, and functions of the workforce of the parent corporation or entity.



Creating a Welcoming Environment

First Impressions Matter

- **Ensure your website is Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant**
 - The ADA applies to state and local governments (Title II) and businesses that are open to the public (Title III)
 - Inaccessible web content (online store, tee time inventory, information on lessons, etc.) means that people with disabilities are denied equal access to information
 - Affordable options exist that do not change website design, but permit access and integration with other software in use by people with disabilities



Accessibility Statement

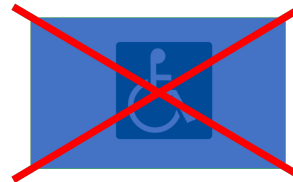
Key Components

- Welcoming Statement
 - *Thank you for choosing to play or considering <Club Name Here> for your next golf experience! Founded in XXXX, we pride ourselves in providing an accessible and inclusive environment for all golfers and it is our policy to welcome individuals of all abilities to enjoy full access to everything our golf club has to offer for enjoyment by you, your family, and your friends.*
- Provide a clear invitation to ALL golfers including those with disabilities
 - Starts with an accessible website
 - Let them know your golf course is accessible
- Share that staff training is a priority at your club
 - *<Club Name Here> makes it a priority to train our entire staff to be prepared to ensure that when you choose to visit us, your experiences are positive and provide many reasons for you to visit us again in the future.*

Accessibility Statement

Key Components

- Publish clear policies regarding “access” to areas of the course when weather, maintenance, or other safety reasons may occur.
- Use “Access Flags” versus “Handicap Flags”
 - Sends a more positive message - <https://www.pinflagsandmore.com/access>
 - “Handicap, or Handicapped” are terms that have fallen out of favor with the disabled community
- The club has the right to protect its asset (the golf course) but best to ensure the application of restrictions are defensible.
 - Generally speaking, if maintenance equipment can be used, the footprint for single rider golf cars (SoloRider or ParaGolfer) is no more intrusive



Creating a Welcoming Environment

First Impressions Matter

- Although “accessibility statements” related to websites are not presently required in the U.S., they are often the first place an individual with a disability may look to gauge access.
- The Department of Justice’s position is that the ADA’s requirements apply to all goods, services, privileges, or activities offered by public accommodations, including those offered on the web



The National Alliance can steer you toward a trusted provider.

Creating a Welcoming Environment

First Impressions Matter

- **Train your entire staff** in communication and etiquette when interacting with individuals with disabilities to include
 - Understanding the needs of the individuals
 - Being well versed in facility accessibility features
 - Maintaining clear paths (aisles) of travel
 - Clear policies for service animals, adaptive vehicles, wheelchair use
 - Awareness there are hidden disabilities
 - Respecting all patrons as valued customers

Some disabilities look like this



Some look like this





Creating a Welcoming Environment

First Impressions Matter

- **DO use** “person first” language such as:
 - Individual or golfer with a disability
 - Individual or golfer with a mobility disability
 - Individual or golfer with a visual disability
 - Individual or golfer with a hearing disability
 - Individual or golfer with an intellectual disability
- **DON'T use** antiquated and improper terms such as:
 - Crippled, Deaf/Dumb, Physically Challenged, Victim, Afflicted, or the “R” word

“Disabled” does not define the individual or the golfer.

It's not an adjective in this sense.

Disability Etiquette – A Starting Guide

GENERAL DO'S AND DON'TS

- ✓ Get to know your colleagues as **people** and **professionals**!
- ✓ Don't assume other people's needs/wants.
- ✓ Use '**Disability Pride**' language:
"**Wheelchair user**" instead of "confined to a wheelchair."

INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE BLIND OR LOW VISION

- Identify yourself when entering a conversation and announce when you leave.
- When serving as a sighted guide, offer your arm or shoulder rather than grabbing or pushing the individual.
- Describe the setting, environment, written material, and obstacles when serving as a sighted guide.
- Resist the temptation to pet or talk to a animal guide or service animal.

INDIVIDUALS WITH MOBILITY DISABILITIES

- Do not touch a person's mobility equipment.
- Be considerate of possible pain, balance, or post-traumatic stress issues during physical contact.
- Put yourself at the person's eye level when engaging in a conversation; rather than kneeling, pull up a chair.



Disability Etiquette – A Starting Guide

INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

- Gain the person's attention before starting a conversation.
- If the individual uses a sign language interpreter, speak directly to the person, not the interpreter; keep your eyes on the individual and not on the interpreter.
- Face the person and speak in normal tones.



INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE SPEECH DISABILITIES

- If you do not understand what the person is saying, ask the person to repeat what they said and then repeat it back to ensure you understood.
- Do not speak for the person or attempt to finish their sentences.



INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE NON-APPARENT DISABILITIES

- Recognize that disclosing their disability comes with risk.
- Engage in a dialogue to determine individual needs.
- Seek to understand their lived experience.
- Support accommodations.
- Honor requested confidentiality.



Marketing and Facility Imagery



Demonstrate through action and environment “who” is welcomed at your facility.

Different Customer Perspectives



Source: Aaron Holm, facebook

<<<<<

This individual may be
thinking, ***"Finally, this is
what we have been
talking about for years."***

This individual is likely
thinking, ***"Whooooaa,
there IS someone else
like me out there."***

>>>>>



Source: Smiley Morning Show, facebook

Wouldn't we like them both to shop here, or perhaps play golf?



Course Set Up and the USGA Rules of Golf

- Effective Jan 1, 2023, the “Modification for Players with Disabilities” was added as part of the Rules (Rule 25) versus “separate rules” to be adopted by the Committee if necessary
- Per the USGA, the Modifications will “apply to all competitions, including all forms of play. A player’s category of disability and eligibility determine whether they can use the specific modified rules in Rule 25.”
- A great step towards creating an inclusive environment for day-to-day play and competitions at your club, public or private



Course Set Up and the USGA Rules of Golf

- Some courses will be more accessible than others due to topography, geology, and design
- Courses should be prepared for the range of disabilities including mobility, neurological, intellectual, sight and hearing
- Areas of the golf course where access is expected are covered by an addendum to the ADA and a checklist to help (penalty areas and bunkers are not addressed by the ADA).
- The USGA provides rules for golfers with disabilities. For example, a player with a wheeled mobility device may
 - Take an unplayable lie back-on-the-line outside the bunker for a one stroke penalty versus two strokes for a non-disabled golfer
 - Take up to FOUR club-lengths versus TWO when taking lateral relief for a ball in a red penalty area.



Are You Thinking About Starting a Program?

- ☐ Mission, goals and objectives
- ☐ Target audience
- ☐ Area demographics and population
- ☐ Willing location with golf instructors
- ☐ Fundraising Plans ***
- ☐ Nearby schools and/or therapeutic organizations with interested clinical staff and/or participants



Are You Thinking About Starting a Program?

- ☐ Facilities to be used are in compliance with the ADA
- ☐ Instructor qualifications and experience
- ☐ Training your program staff
- ☐ Equipment requirements
- ☐ Transportation requirements
- ☐ Volunteer resources and training



Are You Thinking About Starting a Program?

- ☐ Lesson plans
- ☐ Refreshments, awards, recognition
- ☐ Inclusive activities
- ☐ Marketing
- ☐ Budget
- ☐ Business plan



Jan Bel Jan, ASGCA

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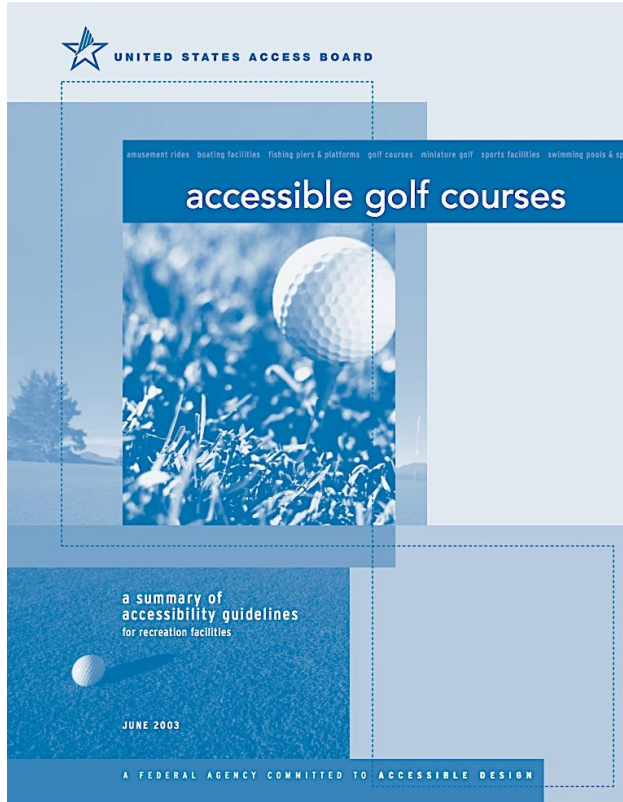
Owner, Jan Bel Jan Golf Course Design



Evaluating Your Park and/or Golf Course for Access

- Numerous checklists are available for a range of recreational facilities
- <https://www.accessgolf.org/resources/golf-course-guidelines-u-s-access-board/>
- <https://www.adachecklist.org>
- Golf Facilities, Play Areas and more
- Checklists provide an easy way to evaluate the current “access” your facility provides

United States Access Board – 11 pages



- Accessible Routes
- Alternative Golf Car Passage
- Accessible Route Guidelines
- Course Barriers
- Teeing Grounds
- Putting Greens
- Weather Shelters
- Driving Ranges
- Single Rider Golf Carts
- Temporary Facilities

Arrival Tips and Building Accessibility

- **Accessible parking spaces**
 - Passenger loading zones
- **Exterior accessible routes**
 - Bag Drop / Golf Car Rental
 - Golf Shop
 - Practice Facility
 - Restaurant
- **Compliance with ADA for infrastructure**
 - Signage
 - Ramps & curb ramps
 - Doors / entrances
 - Aisle width
 - Counter heights
 - Restrooms



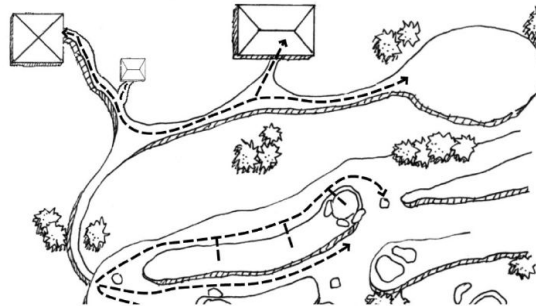
How Many Accessible Parking Spaces?

Total Number of Parking Spaces Provided in Parking Facility	(Column A) Minimum Number of Accessible Parking Spaces (car and van)	Minimum Number of Van-Accessible Parking Spaces (1 of six accessible spaces)
1 to 25	1	1
26 to 50	2	1
51 to 75	3	1
76 to 100	4	1
101 to 150	5	1
151 to 200	6	1
201 to 300	7	2
301 to 400	8	2
401 to 500	9	2
500 to 1000	2% of total parking provided in each lot or structure	1/6 of Column A (one out of every 6 accessible spaces)
1001 and over	20 plus 1 for each 100 over 1000	1/6 of Column A (one out of every 6 accessible spaces)

Golf Course Checklist – 7 pages

ADA Checklist for Existing Facilities

Golf Facilities



Project _____

Building _____

Location _____

Date _____

Surveyors _____

Contact Information _____

Golf facilities should be accessible to everyone, including people with disabilities.

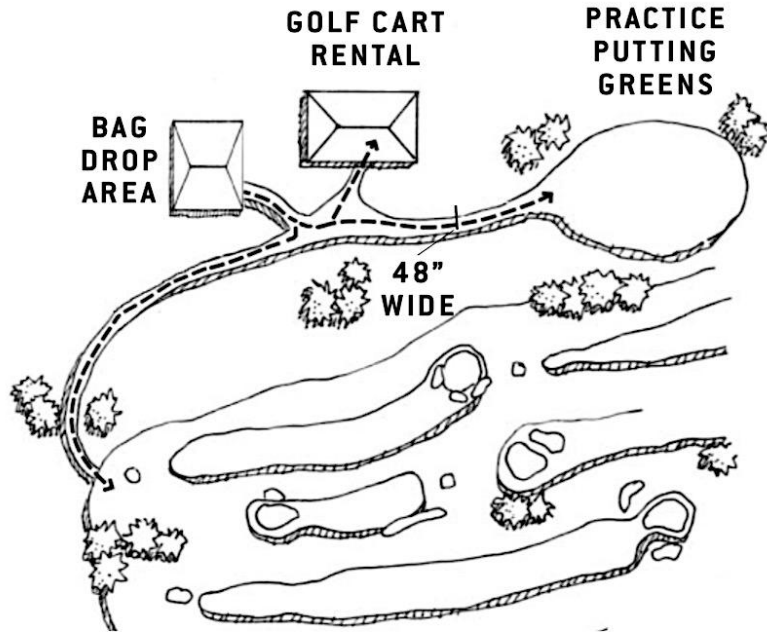


Institute for Human Centered Design
www.HumanCenteredDesign.org
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ADA National Network
Questions on the ADA 800-949-4232 voice/tty
www.ADAchecklist.org

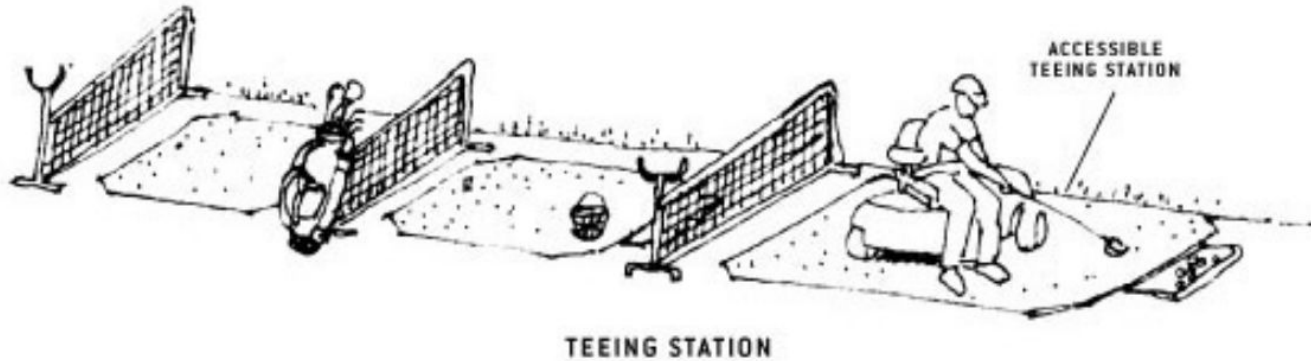
Compliance for Course Accessibility



**ACCESSIBLE ROUTE OR
GOLF CAR PASSAGE**

- Accessible route (48" wide)
- Practice green
- Practice tee (*minimum of one space or 5% of tee area*)
- Practice bunker
- Tees (*minimum of one per hole if topography permits*)
- Fairways (*entrance from cart path every 75 yards min.*)
- Greens

The Practice Tee

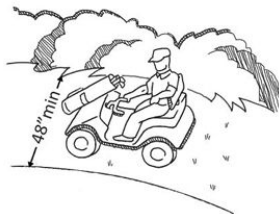


Minimum of one space or 5% of the practice tee area

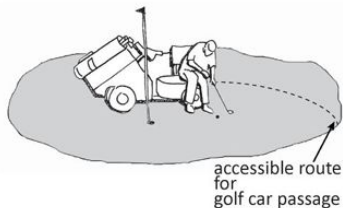
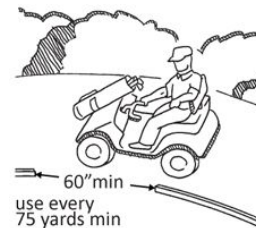
Tees

- Forward Teeing Ground: The forward teeing ground for each hole must be connected by either an accessible route or golf car passage
- Existing courses do not have to provide access to the forward teeing ground in alterations, if terrain makes compliance infeasible.
- Multiple teeing grounds:
 - With only one or two teeing grounds - only the forward teeing ground must be accessible either by an accessible route or a golf car passage (topography permitting).
 - Where three or more teeing are available - two teeing grounds must be accessible.

Fairways, Cart Path Access and Greens



- If a golf car passage is provided instead of an accessible route, the clear width of the passage must be at least 48"
- If a curb or other barrier on the golf car passage prevents golf cars from entering a fairway, there must be an opening at least 60 inches wide at intervals not more than 75 yards apart for golf car passages



- Can a golf car enter and exit each putting green?

On-Course Toilet Facilities

- In new construction, all toilet facilities must be accessible, except:
- Portable units: 5% minimum (example: 1 in 20 for events)
- Clustered single-user toilet rooms (2 minimum) are those that are next to, or close to, one another. No more than 50% for each use within a cluster must comply. Compliant toilet rooms and portable units must be labeled by the International Symbol of Accessibility unless all are accessible.



<https://www.access-board.gov/ada/guides/chapter-6-toilet-rooms/>

<https://www.accessibilityonline.org/ao/archives/111004>

The diagram illustrates a golf course layout with 18 numbered holes. Key features and accessibility callouts include:

- Driving Range:** A rectangular area at the top left.
- Parking:** A rectangular area below the driving range.
- Clubhouse:** A rectangular building with a chimney, located below parking.
- Golf Car Rental:** A small rectangular building next to the clubhouse.
- Practice Putting Greens:** A circular area with a golf car icon, located near the clubhouse.
- Accessible Route 36" Minimum:** A path leading from the parking area towards the clubhouse.
- Accessible Route 48" Minimum:** A path leading from the parking area towards the driving range.
- Golf Car Passage or Accessible Route 48" Minimum:** A path leading from the clubhouse area towards the practice putting greens.
- Teeing Grounds:** A rectangular area at the top right, with a callout indicating "2 GOLF CLUBS IN DEPTH".
- Weather Shelter:** A covered area with a golf car icon, with a callout indicating "60' X 96' MINIMUM".
- Putting Green:** A circular area at the bottom right, with a callout indicating "48' MINIMUM".
- Holes:** 18 numbered holes (1-18) distributed across the course, with some holes having associated green areas.

PUTTING GREEN

Lean Towards Access

- Adaptive golf cars and their tires are engineered to make no more of a footprint than a triplex mower.
- If the course is so wet that mowing of greens, tees, fairways and roughs is not possible, golfers with mobility devices can be asked to avoid sensitive areas.
- A golf course may absolutely protect its product (the course) but should aspire to be consistent and have policies in place related to the application of any restrictions that would not be deemed equitable for all golfers.



Resources



Did You Know?

The National Alliance for Accessible Golf has a toolkit to provide guidance to golf course owners and operators seeking ways to make their golf course more accessible to golfers with disabilities.

www.accessgolf.org
#inclusion



Resources

- National Alliance for Accessible Golf
 - www.accessgolf.org
 - <https://www.accessgolf.org/resources/resource-link-library/>
- United States Access Board
 - <https://www.access-board.gov>
 - Tech Assistance # - 202-272-0080 x3
- ADA Information Line
 - 800-514-0301 (voice)
 - 800-514-0383 (TTY)
- Center for Disease Control
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/infographic-disability-impacts-all.html>

Attitude is a Powerful Tool



- Individuals with disabilities are simply people who happen to have a disability.
- Welcome them as any other person coming to the facility who wants to enjoy the great game of golf.

Individuals with disabilities are not looking to “stand out” more than any other person beyond personal achievement goals.

They simply want to “stand-IN” and be like any other golfers.

Choose to include!



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THANK FOR YOU ATTENDING!!



Questions?