



PARISH CONTACTS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Office for Persons with Disabilities & The Deaf Apostolate

Description

The Parish Contact acts on behalf of persons with disabilities to ensure that all are invited to share in the life of the parish. The contact/advocate serves as liaison between persons with disabilities and their parish and between the parish and the Archdiocesan Office for Persons with Disabilities.

Suggested Roles, Responsibilities, and Tasks:

- 1. To assist the pastor in his ministry with Persons with Disabilities & their families**
 - Ascertain the needs of parishioners with disabilities and their families
 - Work with parish leaders to overcome architectural & attitudinal barriers
 - Recruit and coordinate other volunteers including Persons with Disabilities
 - Assist in setting and communicating short and long term goals

- 2. To identify persons with disabilities in the parish**
 - Help to identify parishioners with disabilities
 - Communicate with the pastor, parish staff, parish leaders
 - Notice the presence or absence of persons with disabilities at Mass and parish functions
 - Mention in parish bulletin who you are and ask people to contact you with information regarding parishioners with disabilities
 - Identify individuals in group homes and institutions within the parish limits
 - Contact people with disabilities either by phone or a personal visit

- 3. To heighten awareness of the gifts and needs of persons with disabilities.**
 - Inform parish leaders of the talents & needs of those with disabilities
 - Provide opportunities for awareness education
 - Sponsor talks on specific disabilities and topics of inclusion
 - Help organize Sunday liturgies that encourage awareness of persons with disabilities, in either participation opportunities, or homily
 - Provide parish bulletin inserts
 - Ask that the needs of persons with disabilities be included in the Universal Prayer
 - Advocate for persons with disabilities in affirming their rights

4. To welcome persons with disabilities and their families into parish life

- Invite and assist persons with disabilities to become active in parish life (liturgical, educational and social) according to their interests and abilities.
- Work toward physical accessibility of the church and other parish buildings.
- Assist with transportation options for parishioners with disabilities
- Collaborate with the Director of Religious Education (DRE) and adult faith formation leader to accommodate the needs of learners with disabilities.

5. To make referrals to appropriate agencies, Catholic Social Services, or the Office for Persons with Disabilities.

- Be aware of existing resources and share that information.
- Develop your own list of local agencies, contacts and resources.
- Contact the Office for Persons with Disabilities, opd@archphila.org or call 215-587-3530.

Support

The Office for Persons with Disabilities will provide consultation, training, information, and support services on a continuing basis for the fulfillment of the Parish Contact's responsibilities. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any help you may need this year. Please reach out to Sister Kathleen or Cassandra Doughty. We are here to help you.

OFFICE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES & THE DEAF APOSTOLATE

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