



Governor's Commission on
Disability
Removing barriers to equality



Governor's Commission
 on Disability
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 Executive Director

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The Role of the Accessibility Specialist

In 2015, Ms. Colleen Durkin-Blackburn, MS, joined the Governor's Commission on Disability as the Accessibility Specialist. She brought a variety of technical and clinical skills, a fresh perspective, and an extensive work history with individuals of varying abilities.

The Accessibility Specialist provides coordination, consultation and technical assistance to improve statewide compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act; in an effort to minimize physical barriers, and equalize access to the physical environment.



As the Accessibility Specialist, Ms. Durkin-Blackburn provides a myriad of services to the State and the citizens of New Hampshire. She works with the public and private sector to determine levels of architectural and/or physical environment compliance within applicable ADA guidelines; conducts site surveys and plan reviews; develops architectural barrier solutions; analyzes policies, procedures, and guidelines; develops reports and recommendations; provides legislative assistance to the department; prepares for seminars and meetings; participates in committees; and various other duties.

Should you have difficulty with accessibility in the physical environment; the Accessibility Specialist can be a pivotal resource. Through consultation and collaboration, many locations have improved physical and/or program access. Citizens are referred to appropriate community resources, specific to their situations; and businesses are offered increased education and initiatives to improve accessibility and create accessible programs. It is our hope that the public's awareness of the Accessibility Specialist will continue to grow, which in turn, will have a domino impact and an end result of Equal Access for All.



The Governor's Commission on Disability attends various venues to increase disability awareness and education.

In doing so, we provide information that will lead to a better understanding of the American's with Disabilities Act, (ADA) and promote "Access For All".

United States Access Board Update:

Public Right of Way Access Guidelines (PROWAG)

Sidewalks, street crossings, detectable warnings, roundabouts, pedestrian signals, on-street parking, curb ramps, and other elements are considered parts of the public right-of-way; all of which can pose difficulty for accessibility. The United States Access Board developed "Proposed Guidelines for Pedestrian Facilities in the Public Right of Way" in July of 2011, which were published in the Federal Register on July 26, 2011, 36 CFR Part 1190. "The Board's aim in developing these guidelines is to ensure that access for persons with disabilities is provided wherever a pedestrian way is newly built or altered, and that the same degree of convenience, connection, and safety afforded the public generally is available to pedestrians with disabilities." - US Access Board, www.access-board.gov

The US Access Board formed a committee made up of 33 members from the disability community, public works departments, engineers, designers, and government agencies. Its initial report was issued in January 2001 and titled, "Building a True Community." These recommendations were taken into consideration in the development of the proposed guidelines.

The Governor's Commission on Disability Gets the Word Out at Local Conferences

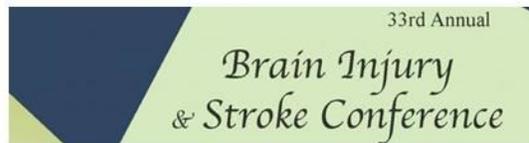
NAMI NH April 16, 2016



NH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS CONFERENCE June 9, 2016



BIANH May 18, 2016



A Message from the Executive Director

In my role at the Governor's Commission on Disability, I am also a member of other disability-focused boards, commission or committees, one of which is the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC). The SRC sits in an advisory capacity to NH Vocational Rehabilitation, and advises the Governor and the agency on matters relating to the employment of persons with disabilities.

As a delegate of the SRC, I recently attended the annual meetings of the National Council of State Rehabilitation Councils and the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation, held in Bethesda, MD. In this forum, I was able to learn and exchange ideas regarding the employment issues facing persons with disabilities within our state as well as nationwide. I was also able to share with others examples of the New Hampshire way of collaboration, as is evidenced with NH VR and the NH SRC.

During the same trip, the NH members of VR and the SRC, also travelled the short distance to Washington D.C. to meet with representatives of New Hampshire's federal delegation. This was a worthwhile and fruitful opportunity for the Governor's Commission on Disability to bring awareness of the activities of the Commission as well as to our role in our state government.



**Executive Director
Charles J. Saia Esq.**

The U.S. system of government offers every individual citizen of this spectacular country the opportunity to be heard. I urge all of us to take part in the process. Our federal and state legislatures are open and available. Please consider contacting your federal and state legislators to voice your interests.

House of Representatives

Frank Guinta	https://guinta.house.gov/contact/email	603-641-9536
Ann McLane Kuster	http://kuster.house.gov/contact	603226-1002

Members of the Senate

Kelly Ayotte	https://www.ayotte.senate.gov/?p=contact	603-622-7979
Jeanne Shaheen	https://www.shaheen.senate.gov//contact/	603-647-7500

NH General Court	http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/	603-2712154
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Announcements

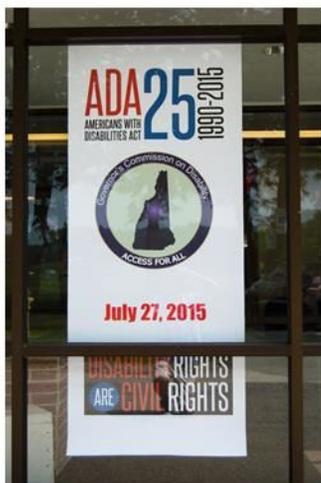
- Louise McBride was hired in April by the GCD as the Administrative Secretary. She can be reached at 271-2773
- Dack Rouleau was hired as the Program Assistant for the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) in June of 2016.
- Research & Information Specialist, Michael Racette retired on June 30th 2016. Mike has spent 31 years with the State of New Hampshire and his presence will be missed.
- The 2016 Governors Accessibility Awards (GAA) will be held at the State House Executive Council Chambers on July 26th. Please call the GCD office 271-2773 for more information.
- The ADA +1 Celebration will take place at the Philbrook Bldg., 121 South Fruit Street in Concord, on September 28th. Please call the office for more information at 271-2773.

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Community Mindfulness

As the warmer weather has returned, many people will enjoy being outside and participating in various activities. Some people with a disability have challenges with getting out to enjoy what many of us take for granted.

During this time, we ask that everyone be mindful of others. One way to be mindful is for all of us to pay attention to accessible parking spaces.

When we are not entitled to use accessible parking spaces, we are breaking the law and preventing others from participating in the daily living activities we all enjoy.

Process for ADA Assistance

The official website for the Governor's Commission on Disability has a new form titled Process for ADA Assistance. This form is made available for the purpose of referring people to the appropriate agency in the event of a concern regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act. Whether somebody requires assistance with a disability, is seeking information or clarification pertaining to disability rights, or believes that a violation of the ADA has occurred, the Process for ADA Assistance form will provide people with an opportunity to explain the situation and, with the help of the GCD, determine who can best address the situation.

Although the GCD does not provide legal counsel or any other form of representation, all members of the staff are more than happy to help citizens with any questions they may have. For more information on this feature, please visit our website at www.nh.gov/disability.

RSA of the Day 265:74

Parking Privileges for Persons With Walking Disability.

Any motor vehicle carrying the special plates or hanging windshield placard issued to a person with a walking disability, under RSA 261:88, or a similar license plate displaying the international accessibility symbol shall be allowed free parking in any city or town, including any state or municipal parking facility where a fee is charged. Each city or town shall have the discretion to set the time periods using guidelines which shall be provided by the governor's commission on disability. The free parking shall only be allowed if the person who qualifies for the special plates or hanging placard is being transported in the vehicle to or from the parking place. Parking places designated for persons with walking disabilities shall be utilized only if a person with a walking disability is being transported in the vehicle to or from the parking place. Notwithstanding the provisions of any local ordinance which has been adopted to regulate parking in places designated for persons with walking disabilities, any person who is convicted under this section shall be guilty of a violation and fined \$250 plus penalty assessment.