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## **Disability Discrimination Act 1995**

### **Introduction**

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) aims to end the discrimination which many disabled people face. This Act gives disabled people rights in the areas of:

- employment
- access to goods, facilities and services
- buying or renting land or property.

The employment rights and first rights of access came into force on 2 December, 1996; further rights of access came into force on 1 October, 1999; and the final rights of access will come into force in October 2004.

### **Disability Discrimination Act Part I - Definition of disability**

The Act defines a disabled person as someone with "a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities."

More information on who is likely to be covered by this Act is available via other statutory guidance.

### **Disability Discrimination Act Part II - Employment Provisions**

- The employment provisions apply to employers with 15 or more employees. The provisions, including those that require employers to consider making changes to the physical features of premises that they occupy, have been in force since December 1996.
- There are two ways in which an employer might unlawfully discriminate against a disabled employee or job applicant:
  - by treating him or her less favourably (without justification) than other employees or job applicants because of his or her disability, or
  - by not making reasonable adjustments (without justification).

### **Disability Discrimination Act Part III - Access to Goods and Services**

- Part III of the DDA gives disabled people important rights of access to everyday services that others take for granted.
- Duties under Part III are coming into force in three stages.
  - Treating a disabled person less favourably because they are disabled has been unlawful since December 1996.
  - Since October 1999, service providers have had to consider making reasonable adjustments to the way they deliver their services so that disabled people can use them.
  - The final stage of the duties, which means service providers may have to consider making permanent physical adjustments to their premises, comes into force in 2004.

### **Part III Consultation**

The final stage of the goods and services provisions in Part III of the DDA will come into force on 1 October 2004. The new duties will apply to service providers where physical features make access to their services impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people.

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