

National Benchbook Slovenia Summary

An Accessible Benchbook for Fair Treatment in Court



This guide is about making sure everyone has a fair chance in court, including people with disabilities.



In Europe, about 87 million adults have a disability. This is around one-quarter of the population. In Slovenia, about 12-13% of people have a disability.



Even though things are improving, many people still have wrong ideas about disabilities. This is often because they don't understand the challenges that people with disabilities face every day.



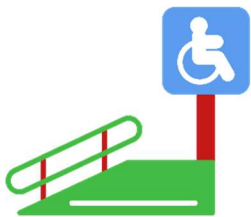
There are laws to protect the rights of people with disabilities. But in real life, these rights are often not respected.



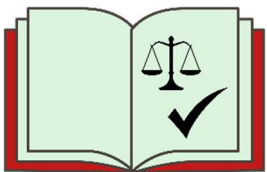
Many people with disabilities do not know about their rights. Also, many people who work in courts or the police do not know much about disabilities. They may not know how to make courtrooms or other places more accessible for people with disabilities.



People with disabilities often face many barriers. These barriers can make it hard for them to get the information they need, use services, or move around.



For example, a person with a disability might find it difficult to enter a building like a court because it is not designed for their needs.



This guidebook is here to help with these problems.



Guidelines for Fair Treatment

The guidebook gives advice on how to work with and talk to people with disabilities during court cases and other legal matters. It is for anyone who works with people with disabilities.



Here are some important tips:



Everyone's Needs Are Different

People with disabilities are not all the same. Just because two people have the same disability doesn't mean they need the same help. It's important to ask the person what they need instead of assuming based on their disability.



Focus on the Person, Not the Disability

When talking to someone with a disability, talk to them directly, even if someone else is helping them. Always treat them like an adult and respect their strengths.



Ask Before You Help

People with disabilities might not always want or need help. It's better to ask what they need instead of guessing.

Keep It Simple



Avoid using complicated words or terms that are hard to understand. If you do need to use a difficult word, explain what it means.



Check Understanding

Make sure the person understands what you are saying. You can ask them to repeat what you said in their own words.



Be Sensitive

Some people with disabilities might not want to talk about their disability. Ask questions in a kind and respectful way.



Explain Breaks

If the person needs regular breaks, explain how they can ask for a break without feeling like they need permission.



Use Clear Communication

Don't use abbreviations or technical language. If you do, explain what it means in a simple way.



Ask for Feedback

Check in with the person to make sure they understand everything. This also helps you understand them better.



Allow Comfort Items

If it helps the person to stay calm, let them use things like a stress ball or other objects.

Be Ready to Adjust

If the person needs changes to the process, be flexible and make the necessary adjustments.



More Information in the Guidebook

The guidebook also has more tips for different stages of a conversation. This includes how to plan a conversation and how to handle documents. There are also specific tips for talking to people who are deaf, blind, or have other types of disabilities.



The guidebook includes recommendations to help workers understand and meet the needs of people with disabilities. There is also a section that explains different types of disabilities.



Why This Guidebook Matters

This guidebook was first created to help people working in criminal courts. But it was soon clear that it could help



people working in other areas too. The guidebook is now a tool for anyone who works with people with disabilities, no matter what kind of case they are dealing with.



By using this guidebook, workers can make sure they are treating people with disabilities fairly. This will help ensure that everyone gets the justice they deserve.



The guidebook is part of the ENABLE project, which aims to make courts more accessible to people with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities. The guidebook will continue to be used even after the project ends. This will help the work of ENABLE last longer and help more people get fair treatment in court.

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Project description in English (Validity Foundation):

<https://validity.ngo/projects-2/enabling-inclusion-and-access-to-justice-for-defendants-with-intellectual-and-psychosocial-disabilities/>

Project description in Slovenian (PIC): <https://pic.si/enable/>

