



Distinction between Disability and Handicap

A **Disability** is a condition caused by an accident, trauma, genetics or disease, which may limit a person's mobility, hearing, vision, speech or mental function. Some people with disabilities have more than one disability.

A **Handicap** is a physical or attitudinal constraint that is imposed upon a person, regardless of whether that person has a disability. Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines handicap as "to put at a disadvantage."

Example:

Some people with disabilities use wheelchairs. Stairs, narrow doorways and curbs are handicaps imposed upon people with disabilities who use wheelchairs.

Definition of Disability:

The ADA defines an individual with a disability as a person who:

- has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities,
- has a record of such an impairment, or
- is regarded as having such an impairment.

Major life activities include caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.

Disability is more common than you think, it can happen to anyone:

- The total number of individuals with disabilities in the United States is estimated to be 54 million – almost one-fifth of the nation's population.
- A disabling injury occurs every two seconds.
- Three in 10 workers entering the work force today will become disabled before retiring.
- Over 6.8 million workers are receiving Social Security Disability benefits, almost half are under age 50.
- Adults with disabilities are more than twice as likely to be unemployed as non-disabled adults.
- Disability and poverty are inextricably linked. On average, people with disabilities earn \$6,000 less annually for full-time work than people without disabilities.
- Disability causes nearly 50% of all mortgage foreclosures, 2% are caused by death.