

# Working with a Communication Assistant

## Lesson 1 Communication Access Rights



## About This Course

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There are 5 lessons in this course

- ❖ Lesson 1: Communication Access Rights
- ❖ Lesson 2: Communication Assistants
- ❖ Lesson 3: Finding, Interviewing and Paying for a Communication Assistant
- ❖ Lesson 4: Training a Communication Assistant
- ❖ Lesson 5: Communication Assistance in Critical Situations

## About This Lesson

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In lesson 1, you will learn about:

- ❖ Communication access rights
- ❖ Your right to communication assistance
- ❖ The role of a communication assistant



## Resources

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Lesson 1 resources include:

- ❖ Slides
- ❖ Audio script
- ❖ Communication access rights
- ❖ Communication access rights pictures
- ❖ Exercising your communication access rights



## Communication Access Rights

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- ❖ You have a right to use community services and opportunities in the same way as everyone else.
- ❖ You cannot be discriminated against, denied services or get inferior services because you have a disability.
- ❖ You have a right to get the supports you may need when using services.

## Human Rights Laws

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In Canada, your communication access rights are protected by:

- ❖ The Charter of Rights and Freedoms
- ❖ Provincial Human Rights Codes
- ❖ Provincial Accessibility Laws (where they exist)
- ❖ The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

## Communication Assistance is a Right

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- ❖ Some people may need support when communicating with service providers.
- ❖ They can't access these services without this support.
- ❖ They have a right to have someone assist them with communication.



## What is a Communication Assistant?

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A communication assistant is a person who supports someone to communicate in specific situations.

For example:

- ❖ An important situation
- ❖ At a meeting or event
- ❖ With new people they don't know
- ❖ With people who don't give them enough time to communicate



## What Does a Communication Assistant Do?

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Depending on your needs, you may want a communication assistant to:

- ❖ Make sure the person you are communicating with can understand your message
- ❖ Help you understand what the other person is saying
- ❖ Make sure you get the time and opportunity to communicate everything you want
- ❖ Assist with communicating over the telephone
- ❖ Assist with reading documents and completing forms



## How Does a Communication Assistant Work?

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A Communication Assistant should:

- ❖ Communicate only what you tell them to communicate
- ❖ Follow your instructions on how you want them to assist you
- ❖ Keep everything private
- ❖ Be respectful at all times



## What Does a Communication Assistant Not Do?

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A Communication Assistant should not:

- ❖ Make decisions for you
- ❖ Give advice on what or how you should communicate
- ❖ Advocate on your behalf
- ❖ Teach you how to communicate
- ❖ Censor what you communicate
- ❖ Give their opinions, unless you ask for their input



## Things to Think About and Discuss

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- ❖ Would you like to learn more about your communication rights? You can find a link in the resources.
- ❖ When do you think you might need someone to assist you with communication?
- ❖ What qualities would you like to see in a person who assists you communicating?



## Feedback

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Please complete the feedback form for this lesson  
before moving to the next lesson.