

Deafness and hearing loss: Your rights



Information sheet G3

January 2020

This document is also available on request in Braille, large print, tape, disc and can be translated into different languages.

This information sheet is about:

- Your rights
- What to do if you experience discrimination because of your hearing loss
- Organisations that can support you with complaints

Your rights under the law

There are several pieces of legislation which protect the rights of people with disabilities:

Equality Act 2010

This replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single act to make the law simpler. It sets out the different ways that it is unlawful to treat someone. This can include direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation and failing to make a reasonable adjustment for a disabled person. The Act covers employment, goods and services provision, and education.

Examples of 'reasonable adjustments' and best practice include:

- Providing communication support such as interpreters, note-takers or speech-to-text
- Making printed information easier to understand
- Providing equipment such as loops, textphones, amplified telephones or flashing fire alarms

Examples of discrimination can include:

- Not serving you, or offering you a lower standard of service if you are deaf
- Not making reasonable adjustments for people who cannot hear through intercoms or reception glass
- Refusing to take a Text Relay (Typetalk) call
- Not allowing hearing dogs on transport

Where to go if you feel you have been discriminated against?

Initially, you should raise your complaint with the organisation concerned, using their Complaints Procedure.

If you would like support to make your complaint, there are some organisations locally that can help you:

Age UK

Ash House,
Cook Way,
Taunton
Somerset TA2 6BJ

Phone number: Information & Advice 01823 345613
(10am-3pm Monday to Thursday) or Main Office 01823 345610
Website: <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/somerset/>
Email: IandA@ageuksomerset.org.uk

Citizens' Advice Bureaux (CAB)

There are Citizens' Advice Bureaux in many towns in Somerset. They provide a range of services which include debt management, benefits advice and advice on legal matters.

CAB main contact:

Adviceline on 03444 889623.
Website: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk> (hyperlink)

Mendip CAB

5 King Street
Frome
BA11 1BH
Website: <http://www.citizensadvicemendip.org.uk/> (hyperlink)

Sedgemoor CAB

Clarence House High Street
BRIDGWATER
Somerset
TA6 3BH

Taunton CAB

St. Mary's House
Magdalen Street
Taunton

TA1 1SB
Phone: 01823 282235 (voice)
Fax: 01823 448966
Email: advice@tauntoncab.org.uk (email hyperlink)

South Somerset CAB

Petters House Petters Way
YEOVIL
Somerset
BA20 1SH
Phone: 01935 421167 (voice)
Fax: 01935 410561

Wells CAB

Town Hall
Market Square
Wells
BA5 2RB
Phone: 01749 675677 (voice)
Fax: 01749 675631

West Somerset CAB

The Lane Centre
Market House Lane
Minehead
TA24 5NW
Phone: 01643 704624 (voice)

Your opportunity to feedback

We welcome your comments about the services you receive. If you would like to tell us what you think, please either:

- Contact us on our website www.somerset.gov.uk (hyperlink), or
- Phone Somerset Direct on 0300 123 2224 (voice)

SMS text: 07781 482858

E mail: generalenquiries@somerset.gov.uk (email hyperlink)

- Contact the Adults and Health Customer Experience Officer:
Floor B2
County Hall
Taunton
TA1 4DY
Email: customerexperience@somerset.gov.uk (email hyperlink)

This document is also available on request in Braille, large print, tape, disc and can be translated into different languages.