INMATES WITH DISABILITIES: KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Jails and Prisons MUST NOT:

• discriminate against inmates because of their disability
• discriminate against an inmate’s friends or family because of the inmate’s disability
• discriminate against an inmate’s friends or family members who have a disability

Jails and Prisons MUST:

• give disabled inmates equal access to programs, services, and benefits
  o Exception: if the inmate’s participation would be a significant health or safety risk or a direct threat to others
• make reasonable changes, accommodations, or modifications when necessary to give equal access to disabled inmates
  o Exception: if the change is a fundamental alteration or undue burden
• provide effective communication to disabled inmates including necessary auxiliary aids and services such as
  • Sign language interpreters
  • Videophones
  • Braille documents
  • Audio documents
  • Captioned video and TV
  • Explanations of documents

If you or someone you know is being discriminated against in jail or prison, contact CREEC at info@creeclaw.org or 303.757.7901 for possible help.
Examples of Discrimination against Disabled Inmates

**Inmates with Hearing or Vision Disabilities**
- No sign language interpreter for medical appointments
- Grievance information only in written English
- No videophones provided
- Greater access to telephones than videophones
- No large print or Braille information
- No visual fire and emergency alarms
- No closed captions on TVs

**Inmates with Mobility Disabilities**
- Housing all wheelchair users in a medical unit
- Classes only in an inaccessible building
- No way for wheelchair users to exercise
- No accessible showers or toilets
- Taking away a wheelchair as a penalty
- No additional time for travel between locations

**Inmates with Psychiatric Disabilities**
- Penalties without treatment for behaviors
- No access to prescribed medications

**Inmates with Other Disabilities**
- No diabetes or allergy diets
- No treatment for HIV or Hepatitis C
- No reminders for inmates with dementia

These are only examples. Disability discrimination can happen in many ways.

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