

Community Meeting Notes (Nov 22, 2017) - The Israeli equal rights for people with disabilities law, its background and regulations

Description

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The presentation will start with the historical background for the law and how it was a paradigmatic shift from previous paternalistic laws. We will examine the main chapters of the law and the accessibility regulations enacted through the law, and will touch on accessibility standards and their relation to the regulations.

Notes

- Accessibility Auditors
 - Have to study for a year and take government exams to be licensed.
 - They are more creating social change than for supervising.
 - They are a type of consultant and work on contracts.
 - This is not the same as Accessibility Consultants who are not licensed
- Background of Legal System
 - Legal system was based on the English Common Law
 - Also some Turkish law for real estate
 - No constitution, but there is declaration of independence which is more like a mission statement.
 - Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty.
 - Does not mention equality because religious groups did not want it to be added.
 - Boetzer Case (1996) first recognition of the weight to equality of people with disabilities
 - Prior to this case the view of people with disabilities was based on the medical model and saw them as needing welfare.
 - They were considered second class citizens and were often segregated.
 - They could even be removed from their home against their own and their families will.
 - In 1998 the Equality law was enacted with some of the provisions from the draft.
 - The expressed goal was to promote the full participation of people with disabilities
 - 2005 - Accessibility Chapter
 - Prohibition of discrimination in public places and public services
 - Duty to provide accommodations in public places, some exemptions include:
 - structurally impossible
 - contravene some other law, like historical places
 - undue burden
 - depends on the situation, for example a small restaurant would have an exemption because they could not fit accessible tables and it would be cost prohibitive.
 - 20 sets of regulations have been enacted
 - Not enacted regulations
 - individual accommodations for school children, primarily for blind and deaf children
 - only partially enacted for accommodations in health services
 - regulations during emergencies (e.g. hazmat incidents, earthquakes, wartime)
- Building regulations
 - Local Authorities have been most resistant to accessibility requirements and laws.
 - Requirements are very detailed
 - They also have alternatives. e.g. if you can't implement A, you can do B
- Regulations on Customer Service
 - Apply to nearly all services except for health, education, transport and voting
 - Couldn't use the word "discrimination" when it comes to accessibility because they didn't want to make lack of compliance a criminal offence.
 - Internet services must be accessible
 - Accessibility is determined by an Israeli standard based off of WCAG
 - will update as WCAG updates.
- The most effective tool for compliance is social media
 - public shaming is very quick and effective
 - it also allows for discussion
 - In Israel twitter is not popular, most people use Facebook.