

Blindness Etiquette

Don't assume someone who is blind or visually impaired needs help. Ask first if assistance is needed.

Speak directly to the person, not through others.

Use verbal responses and expressions and avoid nodding your head.

Identify yourself and address the person by name, especially in crowded places.

When you are walking away, excuse yourself so it's known you are leaving.

Feel free to use words like "see" and "watch," i.e., Did you watch the news last night?

Use person-first language, like "people who are blind" (rather than blind people), to avoid defining a person by the disability.

Dog guides are working while in harness. Do not feed, distract or pet the dog without permission

When guiding a person who is blind, offer her/him your arm and walk normally.

When in a buffet setting, offer to assist in getting food and finding a table.

When offering a seat, place the individual's hand on the back of the chair.

When handouts or other materials are distributed in a meeting, contact the person's hand with an object or papers. Tell the individual what you are passing to her/him so it will be expected.

Relax and be yourself.