

AUSTRALIAN CASINOS – DOING BUSINESS WITH PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

INTRODUCTION

Australasian casinos are mindful of their responsibilities towards people with disabilities, both customers and staff.

It is a priority that we reflect the wide range of customers we serve. We recognise the value that people with disabilities can bring to our industry, which is why Australasian casinos have been working hard to provide facilities and programs to support people with disabilities.

PROVIDING FOR DISABLED CUSTOMERS

All Casinos are proud to comply with legislative requirements with regard to access and mobility for disabled customers.

Examples of initiatives/programs/awards at our casinos are set out below:

- Installation of hearing-aid loop in the casino theatres to improve the quality of sound for hearing impaired customers.
- Burswood won the Teresa Way Award from the Senses Foundation as a result of the contribution the casino made to the 14th Deafblind International World Conference in 2007 held at that property.
- Most casinos offer low gaming tables, firm and stable seating arrangements as well as ample space for free movement within the gaming area or part of the gaming area depending on the size of the casino gaming floor.
- Most casinos offer disability awareness training for their staff.
- One casino participated in training a guide dog for 12 months. The activity not only raised awareness of the staff but also patrons, and was recognised by receiving an award from the Guide Dogs Association.
- Most casinos offer hotel accommodation and those that do offer hotel rooms provide purpose built disabled access hotel rooms, tactile buttons, aids such as walking frames, shower chairs and wheelchairs, lifts equipped for customers with hearing and sight impairment, lowered gaming tables, firm and stable seating. Some casinos provide high visibility marking tape on request to assist with doorways, etc.

WORKING WITH DISABLED STAFF

All Casinos are equal opportunity employers and comply with Australian standards in relation to access and mobility for disabled patrons and staff. Staff with differing backgrounds and abilities enrich our industry and reflect the wide range of customers that visit our properties.

Although programs and initiatives vary from casino to casino, most casinos are flexible in dealing with the individual needs of their disabled staff and assess and adapt their programs and initiatives on a case-by-case basis in order to provide the most appropriate means of support to the staff member. Support is also often sourced from external disability workplace organisations.

Some examples of programs and initiatives that have been put in place are as follows:

- A program that allows participants to train in the casino and graduate with a nationally recognised qualification. The program is heavily geared towards participants who may otherwise struggle to prove that they are competitive, including those with a disability.
- A casino employee has a profound hearing impairment. As an inclusion strategy, the HR department has established weekly AUSLAN lessons provided by the young lady. The program has proven to be very successful and has enhanced the working environment and camaraderie within the HR department and casino as a whole.
- Staff disability program is being included in the Human Resources Department's FY09 Business Plan.
- Employee health questionnaires issued at point of recruitment enabling employees to disclose matters that they assess as being relevant to their ongoing health and safety, and for the employer to ensure that all staff are only given duties that are considered appropriate or implement modifications where suitable.
- A free employee assistance program for all staff providing support and counselling advice including managing issues associated with disabilities.
- Risk assessments for all property renovations and equipment purchases to ensure all employees are able to utilise with minimum risk.
- Dedicated OH&S resources are available to assist with the management and support of employee environmental requirements e.g. ergonomic seating, key pads, wrist supports, screens, foot rest, machinery assistance, workflow rotations, fatigue mats, rest steps and stools.
- Rehabilitation programs to enable employees to return to work as effective and productive team members.
- Intellectually handicapped employees are provided with support through programs such as the Government WELL program.

MAKING THE MOST OF DIFFERING ABILITIES

Casinos that make a record of staff with disabilities employ anywhere from 1-11 staff that have a physical or mental disability. However, several casinos chose not to make a formal record of staff with a disability and deal with each new recruit on an individual basis regardless of whether the employee has a disability or not.

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