



11 June 2020

PRESS RELEASE

Every Customer Counts – Assisting Retailers

As retailers plan to reopen their doors, the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland is calling on all retailers to consider the needs of their disabled customers.

Frank Fleming, Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, said: “The Commission fully recognises the community spirit that has been shown across Northern Ireland during lockdown by retailers, groups and individuals. This concerted effort included creating specific early shopping times and priority delivery slots which ensured many of our most vulnerable people including those with a disability received essential food and medical supplies.

All retailers have obligations under the law to make reasonable adjustments for people with a disability to enable them to access goods, facilities and services.

He continued: “Businesses across the retail sector are facing huge challenges as we emerge from lockdown and are, in many cases, implementing new ways of working including the physical access to their businesses to protect the health and safety of their staff and customers. In all of this planning, they must consider how the new access arrangements impact on their disabled customers.

“One in five people have a disability, so as well as retailers ensuring they are operating within the law, it makes good business sense to ensure people with disabilities are able to access their business.

I would encourage retailers to make use of the [‘Every Customer Counts’ online resources](#). These resources will help retailers examine the accessibility of their services at each stage of the customer journey and to highlight any changes that may be required to improve accessibility for their disabled customers. In many cases, these changes may be simple changes with minimal or no cost.” concluded Frank Fleming.

Every Customer Counts resources are available online from www.equalityni.org/EveryCustomerCounts

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