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(Jae Jin Pak)

Welcome to this recorder presentation entitled What Is a Disability presented by the Immigrant and Refugee Led Capacity Development

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Network of Illinois Project, based out of the University of Illinois at Chicago, Institute on Disability and Human Development,

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with generous funding and support from the Illinois Office of Welcoming Senators and Illinois Department of Human Services.

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So to begin with, we want to talk, lay down some very concrete facts regarding rights for immigrants and refugees with disabilities.

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The US Constitution and all its amendments guarantee basic rights to all people in the United States, regardless of immigration or disability status.

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Again, the US Constitution and its amendments guarantee basic rights to all people in the United States,

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regardless of immigration or disability status. And sometimes there is a question of do immigrants with disabilities have rights?

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And the answer is yes. Immigrants with disabilities have disability rights regardless of status.

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And these rights are protected by federal and state legislation and laws, which will cover some of those and in a few slides.

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So, again, immigrants and refugees with disabilities do have

protection and rights under federal and state laws in the US.

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So, this training is to give you a

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Definition of disability. Before we talk about disability,

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some things to keep in mind is that definitions of disabilities are varied depending on federal state jurisdictions

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or or certain governmental agencies or health care systems have their own criteria or definitions of disability.

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And the key thing about definitions of disability is that in many of these systems, the definition is used to help with eligibility criteria.

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So as you work with your families and individuals from the immigrant communities that may disclose or you have concerns or believe,

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they may have a disabling condition, and as you talk about accessing services,

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let them know that they if they have a disability, disabling condition under federal

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or state laws or under the health care system that they are interfacing with,

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that they are eligible and have the right to pursue those services.

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And it's not necessarily against their culture, but it's taking advantage of the U.S. culture and system definitions.

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Okay. So let's talk about what is a disability, so

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In your work of providing services for immigrants, refugees and families you help them support to connect with employment resources, family supports,

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learning and education, even leisure time, and of course immigration and refugee services and all of those things are intertwined.

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And disability is just another layer or another circle of interaction, just like family supports.

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So I want to share that so that to to break the myth or the misperception that disability is a separate thing.

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Just as you worked for language access to employment access and housing

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access and support for families, individuals through then navigating the immigration system,

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That energy and the way that you support them to understand those systems can apply to connecting

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with disability resources and we'll share some of those resources at the end of this presentation.

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OK, so what is a disability? There, as I mentioned, there are many definitions,

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and as you go through as you interface and support your families and individuals interfacing with different systems, you can learn about those.

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But the benchmark legislation that

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Is a good reference point is the Americans with Disabilities Act or the ADA and the ADA defines disability in three major criteria,

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A person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more

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major life activities and major life activities are things like being able to go to work,

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being able to have relationships and eat and take care of one's home and daily living activities,

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learn, all those activities that we used to go through our daily lives.

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If there is a mental, physical or mental impairment that significantly impairs that, then that person can be considered having a disability.

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Secondly, if the person has a record of such an impairment,

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so if they go see a doctor or a psychiatrist or psychologist or an accredited professional and after they see that person and that professional says,

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based on my examination or screening, I can say that you will qualify as a person with a disability and fall under the protections of the ADA.

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And third is a person is regarded as having such an impairment through normal observation.

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So if you observe someone walking on the street and they have a limp, you a person can reasonably assume that because they're limping,

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they may have a disability and therefore they have the protection of the ADA.

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It's that kind of just reasonable observation.

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And that's, generally speaking, the, the, the general framework of what the ADA considers having a disability.

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Now, there are many different categories of disability and we'll go over some of those. Again just to give you a broad sense.

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So, first of all, intellectual disabilities, intellectual disabilities are this are,

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Disabling conditions or disabilities that affects a person's intellectual functioning, their ability to reason and learn information or problem solve.

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So some examples could be learning disabilities, all the different array's learning disabilities,

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someone who has who is on the autism spectrum disorder.

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Those are examples of intellectual disabilities. Developmental disabilities,

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Developmental disability is an umbrella term that encompasses a number of different disabilities.

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Some of the characteristics are severe and it's a severe chronic disability and

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developmental disabilities can combine both cognitive and physical disabilities,

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one or both, and developmental disabilities most likely are lifelong.

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So these can be some examples: could be multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy can be considered developmental disabilities.

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Mental health, mental health is considered disabilities. Mental health conditions are disabilities that affect a person's ability to regulate

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their mood or help in terms of emotionally identifying relationship boundaries,

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appropriate boundaries for friendships, personal relationships, romantic relationships, different types of relationships and boundaries.

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And again, have. Influences or impacts a person's ability to moderate their mood and emotions.

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OK. And these examples of mental health conditions are chronic depression, anxiety disorders, panic attacks, those types of disorders, disabilities.

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So in another category is sensory disability, sensory disabilities or any disability that impacts a person's any of the five major senses.

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So vision, hearing, taste, smell or touch.

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So people who are blind or visually impaired, deaf, hard of hearing, if someone has their ability to smell,

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touch or taste is impacted, they can be considered having a disability.

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Mobility disabilities are disabilities that impact a person's ability to use one or more of their extremities.

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So limitations in their ability to use their fingers or wrists or hands or arms, legs, feet,

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their ability to, they're not, they don't have the full range of motion or they don't have the full ability of strength of grip.

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So like picking something up, their fingers aren't able to fully grasp or grasp it tightly.

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So those types of conditions can be considered mobility disabilities.

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As well as in some cases, mobility disabilities may require someone to use adaptive equipment,

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be it walkers, canes, wheelchairs, kind of like physical disabilities.

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Our disabilities that are that primarily of impact, a person's body,

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they may require assistive technologies like and physical disabilities are things that physically affect a physical body such as I,

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which is why such as deafness and vision loss.

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Because because maybe if their eyes are damaged or physically, there's an impairment or damage to one's hearing or nerve damage.

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That's a physical disability or physical injury or physical reason and considered a physical disability.

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So people who with physical disabilities may use adaptive equipment like hearing aids, braille, cane, walkers, wheelchairs and kinda like.

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So, again, these are just broad, quick snapshots of the different categories,

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To give you a sense of some of the of of of the unique characteristics of each.

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Don't feel like you have to be an expert in any of these, again this is just to give you a snapshot.

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So let's talk about prevalence as we summarize what different, what disability is,

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one of the misconceptions is that disability isn't that common when in fact it is.

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According to the twenty, twenty, twenty ten census, the 2010 census,

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among the adults in the US, it was found that one in five American adults have a disability.

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So 20 percent of American adults in twenty, in twenty ten were living with a disability.

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In relation to the prevalence of mental health, approximately 15 percent of adults live with a mental illness,

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according to the World Health Organization, from twenty seventeen.

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So if we look at, and the World Health Organization pulled data from international numbers, so 15 percent of adults

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Who participated in the World Health Organization study that were found that it's 15 percent of adults are living with some form of mental illness,

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so disability, mental illness, it is, it is fairly common.

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And it is important to acknowledge that and to support families and individuals so that they can move. If you, as a service provider, integrate

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Disability.

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Questions and supports and services and openness in your organization and in your programs to recognize and support disability in your practice,

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you will help all immigrants, refugees move toward a happy and meaningful life, which is all that we want to do.

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OK. As we close out, one thing I want to share is,

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Highlight three resources to start from, three key resources that can be very useful resources to you.

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Those are the Centers for Independent Living, Equip for Equality, and the Great Lakes ADA Center.

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Centers for Independent Living are are analogous to what you as a welcoming center are.

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They are a one stop shop to get connected to and learn about resources around all types of disabilities,

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all disability groups and all areas of service, whether it's education, housing,

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youth services, senior services, employment, health care, whatever the question or the concern might be,

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a center for independent living is a great place to start with those questions.

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They are well connected to to a number of resources that can help individuals connect to resources and as well as peer supports.

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And in, in Illinois, there are twenty two centers across the state of Illinois.

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So there is most likely a center for people living in your county or in your region.

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And if you click on this link, you'll get to a directory that you can find

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The center is close to you. Equip for equality is the statewide protection and advocacy agency.

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They have attorneys and advocates and experts on staff in disability, justice, law, litigation and representation.

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So if you are working with a family or individual who has a who has a disability and they're facing discrimination

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or some kind of civil rights challenges or have legal questions regarding their rights around disability,

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equip for equality is a great place to reach out to.

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They are based in Chicago, but they are statewide. They have representatives and staff throughout the state.

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And again, analogy,

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they're kind of like the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant Refugees or the National Immigrant Justice Center Organization of the Disability World.

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Again, they have their staff are just superbly expert in disability rights laws.

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And lastly, the Great Lakes Center, the Great Lakes Idea Center is our local region expert on accommodation's and accessibility,

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they are a great resource to help you give you information and insights on how

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to make your facility and your programs accessible and meet the ADA guidelines,

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as well as just other tools and other trainings or webinars to help you learn about disability, accessibility and accommodations.

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OK. Just to let you know,

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Along with the, along with the Recorded webinar, as a handout, there are additional resources to a variety of organizations and groups,

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specifically different disability organizations, that you're welcome to investigate on your own.

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One resource I do want to highlight is the Illinois ASL or American Sign Language Interpreter Referral Directory.

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This is a website where you can go on and connect with ASL interpreters who are certified and you can look, you can search by region,

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by subject area or by licensure. There are different types of ESL certifications from beginner to moderate to master.

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And again, it gives you a chance to connect with an interpreter or organization.

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So thank you very much. If you have any other questions, you can contact Jae Jin Pak,

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who is the Community Education and Training Coordinator at the University of Illinois at Chicago's Institute on Disability and Development.

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At his email, JJPAC@UIC.EDU

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Thank you so much.