# People-First Language (PFL)

# Metro Regional Quality Council

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### What is Peope-First Language?

• People-First Language puts the person before the disability.

## Why use it?

- By placing the person first, the disability is not the thing that defines the person
- It reduces generalizations and stereotypes by focusing on the person
- It removes barriers and encourages mutual respect

## **Tips for using People-First Language:**

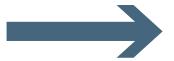
- Avoid using terms or descriptions that suggest pity (i.e. "suffers from"). This assumes the person with a disability is living a reduced quality of life.
- Focus on people's abilities rather than their disabilities. Emphasize what they can do or like to do, not what they cannot do.
- Use the term accessible rather than disabled or handicapped to refer to facilities. Avoid outdated, offensive words such as handicapped, retarded, crazy, challenged, etc.
- When talking to or writing about someone with a disability, ask them which words or phrases they prefer.
- Refer to the person with the disability the same way you would refer to yourself, a family member or friend.

# **Examples of People-First Language:**

#### **Instead of this:**

Disabled people

Ben is confined to a wheelchair



#### Say this:

People with disabilities

Ben uses a wheelchair

If you have questions or want to learn more about people-first language, contact:

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