

Dealing with a Difficult Situation

- Stay calm; do not raise your voice.
- Reassure the person that they are not under pressure.
- Avoid correcting the person; live in the person's world.
- Say: "You're safe here", "May I help you?"
- If the person forgets to pay, ask if you can help; if they do not understand they need to pay it is up to your business as to how you deal with the situation.

Call law enforcement if you need assistance

Medic Alert + Safe Return

The Medic Alert + Safe Return program provides identification for persons with dementia in the event they wander and become lost.

Look for a necklace, shoe tag, or bracelet. The item will have a toll free number for you to call to reach the Alzheimer's Association. They will then notify the listed contact on file for that person.



Mesa Police Department Adult ID Kit

The Adult ID Kit is a valuable tool for those caring for someone with dementia. A caregiver records some identifying information about the person with dementia on the form so the information is readily available to law enforcement if the person goes missing.

You can view and download the Adult ID Kit at:
<http://www.mesaaz.gov/police>

Resources:

Alzheimer's Association (National)
www.alz.org
24/7 Hotline: 1-800-272-3900

Alzheimer's Association (Arizona)
Desert Southwest Chapter
www.alz.org/dsw
602-528-0545

Banner Alzheimer's Institute
www.banneralz.org
602-839-6900



Alzheimer's Aware

Recognize. React. Respond.

**Become a
Dementia
Friendly
Business**



Mesa Police Department
P.O. Box 1466
Mesa, AZ 85211
www.mesaaz.gov/police
Non-emergency:
480-644-2211

Every 68 seconds someone in the U.S. is diagnosed with Alzheimer's or a related dementia.

Chances are you will have persons with dementia who patronize your business. You may encounter persons who:

- ⇒ Have wandered away from home and are lost or disoriented.
- ⇒ Have problems finding words and/or understanding what you are saying.
- ⇒ Have problems handling money or have difficulty using self-service credit card machines.
- ⇒ Attempt to leave your business without paying for items.
- ⇒ Exhibit disruptive or combative behavior due to their illness or medications.

Not everyone with dementia behaves or reacts in the same way. Kindness, a calm demeanor, common sense, and a smile go a long way in providing great customer service to persons with dementia.

This guide is meant to assist you in serving and communicating with persons showing signs of Alzheimer's or a dementia related illness.

Tips for Assisting Customers with Dementia:

T.A.L.K

Take it slow

- * Someone with dementia may not be able to answer questions or understand what you are saying. Allow the person to take their time.
- * Approach the person slowly and from the front; do not startle them.
- * Put the person at ease with a smile and friendly tone.
- * Speak clearly and calmly and at a slower pace.

Ask Simple Questions

- * Ask questions with yes/no or one-word responses.
- * Use short, simple sentences.
- * Do not rephrase questions; simply ask the same question over again.

Limit Reality Checks

- * Do not argue with them about reality.

Keep Eye Contact

- * Do not cover your mouth.
- * Do not speak to them as if they were a child.
- * Be conscious of your body language; listen and focus on them.

A person accompanying the customer may show you a card that reads:

*My companion has a medical condition that affects memory and thinking.
Your patience is appreciated.*

Offer Support

- * Ask if they need assistance.
- * If someone cannot remember how to do something, offer to show them how to do it.
- * Break down tasks into smaller tasks.
- * If the person continually forgets what you are telling them, repeat yourself patiently as if you had not said it before.
- * Provide a quiet place for one-on-one assistance. Quite often after a break, a person can function more effectively.

Physical Environment

- * Noisy and busy places can make people with dementia uneasy.
- * Objects that are reflective or shiny can cause people to mistake what they are seeing.
- * Shadows, steps, and patterned walls or floors may cause issues for some people with dementia.
- * Some people with dementia have problems with vision and depth perception.