

## What is Gently Used Equipment?

Gently used equipment makes life easier and can include wheelchairs, scooters, walkers, magnifiers, commodes, shower chairs, portable ramps, hospital beds and more.

## What is a Reuse Center?

California reuse centers make gently used equipment available to community members for free or very little cost. Reuse centers are nonprofit organizations that take in donations of assistive devices for accessible living. Reuse centers clean, test and, when possible, fix the equipment so it is ready to use.

## Why Look for Gently Used Equipment?

Reuse centers give people the opportunity to get the free or low-cost devices they need to live independently. Many people cannot afford to pay for expensive new equipment like power wheelchairs or scooters. Properly cleaned and repaired used equipment is often the best and only option available to them. California's reuse centers fill this need.

## What Should I Expect From Used Devices and Reuse Programs?

Some California reuse centers function according to National Reuse Standards, but many outlets offer recycled or gently used equipment that may not. We encourage you to use these tips before accepting or purchasing gently used equipment.

## Is the Device Clean?

Make sure the device has been cleaned before taking it home. Dirty equipment can create health problems. Some organizations machine clean and/or disinfect devices. If the reuse program does not clean the equipment, consider whether you can physically clean the device or know someone who can. Some devices need to be taken apart for cleaning, so it is important to get instructions on how to disassemble and reassemble the device.

## Is the Device the Correct Size?

Some devices must be properly fitted to an individual. If possible, have an occupational or physical therapist evaluate the equipment to make sure it fits you correctly.

Consider if the equipment fits your lifestyle. Will you be able to get the equipment into your home or your car? Will getting a scooter require you to get a ramp too?

It is important to learn about the equipment you are getting, so make sure to ask the reuse center staff to instruct you on how to properly use and care for the device. Try to get the owner's manual from the manufacturer's website.

### **Does the Device Function Properly?**

It is easy to tell if a device like a walker works correctly, but it may be harder with electronic equipment such as computers or power wheelchairs. Before taking the device home, try it to make sure it works correctly.

Do not accept any device or equipment that has been altered from its original state. Ask the reuse center staff how to operate the equipment safely and if they will contact you about recall alerts. You can also search online for equipment recall alerts.

### **Can the Device be Repaired?**

Before you take the equipment, find out whether replacement parts are still available. For example, you might find an older power wheelchair that does not have parts or replacement batteries available for it. Without new batteries, your device will not work. Before taking the device, you can ask the reuse program staff to help you search online or call a repair shop about replacement parts.

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**(800) 390-2699**



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