

For our loyal customer, Casey Dutmer, using the Aira app within our stores helped him discover products he never knew existed, especially in the candy aisle. Blind since birth, Casey appreciates the help of remote agents through the Aira app on his phone that can guide him through the aisles, and he especially appreciates our partnership with Aira to offer its services free of charge in all our stores.

Aira is a service that connects blind and low-vision people to highly trained, remotely located agents through cameras on their smartphones. At the touch of a button, Aira connects customers who need immediate visual assistance with anything from reading in-store signage to product labels.

“With the Aira app, I do not have to be afraid or overwhelmed by all the sounds and vastness of a store,” Casey said. “I know I can access this app in Meijer, and the agents will tell me where I am, what is around me, and where to go for specific items.”

The partnership with Aira began in 2020, and part of our efforts to make customer shopping experiences more inclusive. Instead of a per-minute fee that is usually incurred to users, we absorb the cost entirely so that our customers can utilize the app free of charge.

“The initiative with Aira came about because members of our Meijer Disability Advocacy and Awareness Group (mDAAG) brought the app to our attention,” said Kathrine Lee Baker, Manager for Diversity and Inclusion at Meijer. “They wanted to see us make shopping more accessible to our customers and community.”

Meijer is also a longtime partner with the Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ABVI).

“For ABVI and our clients, allowing the independence to shop in a place like Meijer is a game changer,” said Brad Kauffman, Director of Development for the Association of the Blind and Visually Impaired. “The fact that Meijer supports the blind and low-vision community through the Aira app provides that independence.”

Dutmer is no stranger to advocacy for the blind and low-vision population.

“I feel like more of an equal part of the community knowing that we have the support of Meijer,” said Casey, who is President of the Michigan Council for the Blind and Vision Impaired and a volunteer for ABVI.

---

Additional assets available online: [\(1\)](#)

<https://meijercommunity.com/Free-Aira-App-Assists-Blind-and-Low-Vision-Customers-Browsing-Meijer-Aisles>