



COLORADO

Department of Health Care
Policy & Financing

Auxiliary Aids and Services for Individuals with Disabilities

October 2015

POLICY:

The Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing will take appropriate steps to ensure that individuals with disabilities, including individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or blind, or who have other sensory or manual impairments, have an equal opportunity to participate in our programs, services and activities. The procedures outlined below are intended to ensure effective communication with applicants, program participants, clients, companions, and other interested parties regarding the department's programs, services and activities as well as eligibility, enrollment and benefit information. The procedures also apply to, among other types of communication, communication of information contained in important documents, including waivers of rights, notice of privacy practices and HIPAA privacy forms, financial and insurance benefits forms, etc. The department will provide all necessary auxiliary aids and services in a timely manner and free of charge.

All staff will be provided written notice of this policy and procedure, and will be trained in effective communication techniques, including the effective use of interpreters.

PROCEDURES:

1. IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF NEED:

The Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing provides notice of the availability of and procedure for requesting auxiliary aids and services through notices in our program handbooks, public meeting agendas, eligibility and enrollment applications and correspondence, and through notices posted at all program sites and facilities and on the department website. When an individual self-identifies as an individual with a disability that affects the ability to communicate or to access or manipulate written materials or requests an auxiliary aid or service, staff will consult with the individual to determine what aids or services are necessary to provide effective communication in particular situations. Additionally, staff are expected to inquire about providing alternative methods of communication when and/or if they suspect that the

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method being used is not resulting in effective communication (i.e. emailing a summary of a phone conversation).

2. PROVISION OF AUXILIARY AIDS AND SERVICES:

The Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing shall provide the following aids and services to achieve effective communication with individuals with disabilities:

A. FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

(i) For individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing and who use sign language as their primary means of communication, staff will consult with the individual to provide effective communication. The department is responsible for providing effective interpretation (i.e. written materials, notes) or arranging for a qualified interpreter when needed.

In the event that an interpreter is needed, staff will obtain a qualified sign language interpreter in a timely manner. The Colorado Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing maintains a list of qualified sign language interpreters for hire. The list can be found at www.ccdhh.com. If assistance is needed, staff will consult with the 504/ADA Coordinator.

(ii) Communicating by Telephone with Individuals Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

The Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing utilizes Relay Colorado for external telephone with TTY users. We accept and make calls through Relay Colorado. Relay Colorado's service number is 711.

(iii) Staff will provide the following aids and services in a timely manner when requested. If assistance is needed, staff will consult with the 504/ADA Coordinator.

- Note-takers; computer-aided transcription services; telephone handset amplifiers; written copies of oral announcements; assistive listening devices; assistive listening systems; telephones compatible with hearing aids; closed caption decoders; open and closed captioning; telecommunications devices for deaf individuals (TDDs); videotext displays; or other effective methods that help make aurally delivered materials available to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.

(iv) Some individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing may prefer or request to use a family member or friend as an interpreter. However, family members or friends of the individual will not be used as interpreters unless specifically requested by that individual and after an offer of an interpreter at no charge to the individual has been made by the department. Such an offer and the response must be documented and given to the



504/ADA Coordinator to be placed in the individual's file. If the individual chooses to use a family member or friend as an interpreter, issues of competency of interpretation, confidentiality, privacy and conflict of interest will be considered. If the family member or friend is not competent or appropriate for any of these reasons, competent interpreter services will be provided.

NOTE: Minor children will not be used to interpret, in order to ensure confidentiality of information and accurate communication.

B. FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE BLIND OR WHO HAVE LOW VISION

(i) Staff will communicate information contained in written materials concerning programs, services, activities, benefits, waivers of rights, notice of privacy practices and HIPAA privacy forms by reading out loud and explaining these forms to individuals who are blind or who have low vision.

A number of large print and electronically formatted documents are available on the department's website at www.colorado.gov/hcpf. Questions should be directed to the 504/ADA Coordinator.

(ii) Staff will provide the following aids and services in a timely manner when requested. If assistance is needed, staff will consult with the 504/ADA Coordinator.

- Qualified readers; reformatting into large print; taping or recording of print materials not available in alternate format; or other effective methods that help make visually delivered materials available to individuals who are blind or who have low vision. In addition, staff is available to assist individuals who are blind or who have low vision in filling out forms and in otherwise providing information in a written format.

C. FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH SPEECH IMPAIRMENTS

To ensure effective communication with individuals with speech impairments, staff will provide the following aids and services in a timely manner when requested. If assistance is needed, staff will consult with the 504/ADA Coordinator.

- Writing materials; computers; flashcards; alphabet boards; communication boards; and other communication aids.

D. FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH MANUAL IMPAIRMENTS

(i) Staff will assist those who have difficulty in manipulating print materials by holding the materials and turning pages as needed.

(ii) Staff will provide the following aids and services in a timely manner when requested. If assistance is needed, staff will consult with the 504/ADA Coordinator.

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- Note-takers; computer-aided transcription services; speaker phones; or other effective methods that help to ensure effective communication by individuals with manual impairments.

STAFF TRAINING:

All staff must attend nondiscrimination compliance training which will address effective communication requirements, responsibilities, and methods. This training will be conducted by the 504/ADA Coordinator.

New employees will be trained as soon as possible after beginning work for the department. Training sessions will be offered at least once per month. Documentation of training completion will be retained by the Legal Division.

Prior to formal training, staff are expected to review SOP ADA-001 Disability Rights Policy and Grievance Procedure to ensure the programs, services and activities of the department are accessible to and useable by individuals with disabilities and to protect against discrimination on the basis of disability.

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