

Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing Supports

Policy

It is the policy of Central Florida Behavioral Health Network, Inc. (CFBHN) to comply with the deaf or hard-of-hearing requirements as defined in the master contract with the Department of Children and Families (DCF), and meet requirements pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and CFOP 60-10, Ch. 4, “Auxiliary Aids and Services for the Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing.”

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for ensuring the provision of Network services to deaf or hard-of-hearing individuals served and their companions. .

Procedures

A. CFBHN Responsibilities

1. All deaf or hard-of-hearing individuals served, and their companions, in need of auxiliary aids are offered these services at no additional cost as per federal law and contractual agreement.
2. When CFBHN holds a public meeting, conference, or seminar, an addendum to the documents advertising the events is be added, stating: “Pursuant to the provision of the Americans with Disabilities Act, any person requiring special accommodations to participate in these meetings is asked to advise the agency at least 48 hours before the meeting by contacting (Insert Name of SPOC or designee here) at (813) 740-4811. If you are hearing or speech impaired, please contact the agency using the Florida Relay Service, (800) 955-8771 (TDD) or (800) 955-8770 (Voice).”
3. A copy of the policy and procedure is posted on CFBHN’s website to be made available to the public for informational purposes for both individuals served and organizations. Upon request, to assist in ensuring effective communication, printed documents (including this policy and procedure) are made available in alternate formats and in the preferred method of the individual served, or their companion,. Staff may be required to translate written documents in Braille, taped recordings, or large print.
4. CFBHN has designated a Single-Point-of-Contact (SPOC), who is responsible for maintaining files that document the required information for the deaf or hard-of-hearing. SPOC duties include but are not limited to:
 - a. Ensuring that information regarding no-cost auxiliary aids is available to individuals served /companions that are deaf or hard-of-hearing, and posted to be easily visible when entering the building. This includes posting information related to: interpreter services for the hearing-impaired, the DCF non-discrimination policy; and limited English proficiency resources.
 - b. Conducting an assessment prior to the start of services to determine the individual served or companion’s preferred method of communication. The SPOC (or designee) first complete the Customer Companion Communication Assessment Form and the Request for or Waiver of Free Communication Assistance Form. These completed items are kept on file in the SPOC’s office. The individual served/companion is provided with the preferred method of communication and auxiliary aid services needed.

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- c. If the individual/companion has a scheduled appointment, the preferred method of communication shall be available at the time of the appointment. If for any reason the preferred method of communication is unavailable, a reasonable substitute is made available as soon as possible, but no later than two hours after the scheduled appointment. When an individual served or their companion is hearing-impaired, the SPOC (or designee) ensures that the preferred method of communication is available within two hours (or no later than twenty-four hours) of a non-scheduled appointment. If an auxiliary aid or service is found to be ineffective, the SPOC (or designee) shall re-assess to determine an alternative form of communication to be used in order to ensure the individual served, or their companion, fully understand the information that is being provided.
 - d. At no time shall an auxiliary aid or service to an individual served or companion who is deaf or hard-of-hearing be denied. Denial determination can only be made by the Regional Managing Director (or designee) or the Contracted Client Services Provider Administrator (or designee).
 - e. The SPOC (or designee) shall obtain verification of the interpreter's certification, and keep it on file for future reference. A listed of certified interpreters is maintained in the office of the SPOC.
 - f. CFBHN will ensure that qualified foreign language interpreters (as requested) are available at time of scheduled appointments for deaf and or hard-of-hearing individuals served/companions. The SPOC (or designee) shall obtain verification of the interpreter's certification, and keep it on file for future reference. A list of foreign language lines is maintained in the office of the SPOC.
 - g. Ensuring that individuals are aware of and know how to use the Florida Relay Service. To call the Florida Relay, dial 7-1-1, or use the following toll free numbers:
 - 1-800-955-8771 (TTY)
 - 1-800-955-8770 (Voice)
 - 1-800-955-3771 (ASCII)
 - 1-877-955-8260 (VCO-Direct)
 - 1-800-955-5334 (STS)
 - 1-877-955-8773 (Spanish)
 - 1-877-955-8707 (French Creole)
- CFBHN does not have access to TDD/TTY equipment, but can accept phone calls from individuals who use these items to communicate.
- h. CFBHN maintains information on Pocket Talkers and Personal Listening Devices in the office of the SPOC.

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- i. CFBHN ensures that individuals served are aware of, and know how to use, the Federal Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) and Video Relay Interpreting (also known as the Federal Video Relay service, or VRS) services. The Video Remote Interpreting software can be downloaded at: https://www.fedvrs.us/supports/what_is_vri. The phone number is (877) 689-7775, and the service is available Monday through Friday from 7:00am to 11:00pm EST. English-to-Spanish Translation is available with 24 hours' notice. The Video Relay Interpreting software can be downloaded at www.fedvrs.us, and the service is also available in Spanish. CFBHN does not currently have access to the equipment needed for Video Remote/Relay Interpreting, but can accept phone calls from those individuals who use these items to communicate.
 - j. CFBHN ensures that individuals served are aware of and know how to use the Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) services. CART providers can be found on-line at <http://psl.ncra.org/index.asp>. A list of CART providers in Florida is maintained in the office of the SPOC.
 - k. Employees of CFBHN are initially trained on the requirement for the deaf or hard-of-hearing in their orientation when they are hired, but no later than 60 days from the commencement of employment. Refresher training on how to provide assistance to persons who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, persons with disabilities, and those who are limited English proficient is conducted on an annual basis for all employees.
5. If an employee of CFBHN is assisting a deaf or hard-of-hearing individual served, or their companion, and is unfamiliar with an auxiliary aid or service requested, the employee may contact the SPOC (or designee). If the SPOC (or designee) is unavailable, contact information for the regional DCF SPOC is available at this website: [HHS_CivilRightsOfficers-ADA-504Coordinators.pdf \(myflfamilies.com\)](https://www.myflfamilies.com/HHS_CivilRightsOfficers-ADA-504Coordinators.pdf)
- B. Network Service Provider Responsibilities
- 1. NSPs that employ 15 or more staff members are required to:
 - a. Designate a single point of contact to ensure effective communication with the deaf or hard-of-hearing and/or their companions.
 - b. Follow to the standards outlined in this policy.
 - 2. NSP performance related to services for deaf or hard-of-hearing individuals and companions are assessed as a component of the CQI monitoring process.

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| <p style="text-align: center;">Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing Supports</p> <p>Approval: </p> <p style="text-align: center;">Linda McKinnon, President/Chief Executive Officer</p> | <p>Date Issued: <u>08/12/10</u></p> <p>Last Revision: <u>04/06/2021</u></p> <p>Review Date: <u>04/06/2021</u></p> |
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