SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES	Policy Number:
Reference: CFOP 60-10; CFOP 60-10	**Auxiliary Aids Plan**
Effective Date: 11/18/2026	**Approved By:** Executive Director
Revision Date:	**Review Date:**

PURPOSE

Lotus Behavioral Health (LBH) is committed to ensuring accessibility of auxiliary aids to all placing services, program, terms and conditions of employment and benefits to persons with Limited English proficiency (LEP).

SCOPE:

This procedure only applies to methods of effective communication and does not cover other requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act or Section 504, such as physical modifications of buildings or surrounding areas to accommodate for persons with disabilities.

POLICY

Lotus Behavioral Health is required to provide appropriate auxiliary aids to persons with disabilities and persons with LEP, to ensure that such persons have an equal opportunity for accessibility to programs, terms and conditions of employment, benefits, and services. The type of aid or service will vary depending on the complexity of the communication and the needs of the person with a disability. This policy will be disseminated to persons living with a disability and LEP and will be posted on Lotus Behavioral Health’s website.

Lotus Behavioral Health will provide auxiliary aids to qualified clients or companions, who have disabilities including hearing, vision, or mobility impairments, and those with impaired speaking skills. Auxiliary aids will also be provided for all qualified clients or companions who have LEP, by taking reasonable steps to provide services and information in appropriate languages.

Lotus Behavioral Health will at all times recognize the client or companion’s preference is the primary consideration in determining which auxiliary aids or services to provide. If communication through a specific auxiliary aid or service is deemed to be ineffective, staff will ask the client or companion to determine a more effective auxiliary aid or

service for communication. Documentation shall be made in the client's file regarding the attempt to improve the effectiveness of auxiliary aids and services.

Lotus Behavioral Health shall designate a Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to coordinate services according to the obligations of the DCF/HHS Settlement Agreement and the Americans with Disabilities Act and/or Section 504.

The SPOC will coordinate the provision of auxiliary aids and services to deaf or hard of hearing clients and companions. They shall ensure that all staff are equipped with resources necessary to ensure effective communication with deaf or hard of hearing clients or companions and shall ensure that all staff document the delivered services. This information includes, but is not limited to:

- Records relating to the auxiliary aids and service plan for persons with disabilities and LEP, such as the communication assessment and auxiliary aid/service record.
- Request/Waiver of free communication assistance, and customer feedback forms; and
- request for brochures, letters, memoranda, newspaper notices, and announcements.

PROCEDURE

Lotus Behavioral Health will make every effort to obtain auxiliary aids timely. The use of these aids will be provided at no cost to the client or potential client.

Staff that is not familiar with the auxiliary aid or service requested shall contact their SPOC, 504/ADA Coordinator (Civil Rights Officer) or their Supervisor, for assistance in locating appropriate resources to ensure effective communication with clients, clients and companions.

Lotus Behavioral Health will assess its auxiliary aids and services by:

Ensuring Accessibility

The following procedures are to be followed by LBH to ensure accessibility of programs and services to clients or companions with disabilities or those who have LEP:

A. Timing of Communication Assessment
Staff are required to determine, prior to providing service, the type of auxiliary aid or service that is needed to ensure effective communication with the disabled or LEP client or companion.

1. **Scheduled Appointment**
   If a client or companion who has a disability or has LEP is scheduled for an appointment, staff shall do a communication assessment as defined in Section I(B) (ADA) at the time of the scheduling of such appointment.

2. **Non-Scheduled Appointment**
   If a client or companion comes in without an appointment, staff shall do a Communication Assessment as defined in Section I(B) (ADA) upon their arrival.

B. Communication Assessment to Determine Services

Assess needs by consulting with the client or companion regarding his/her preferred communication method, and if applicable, with assigned counselors, parents, family members, guardians or other representatives. A determination will need to be made as to whether the aid needed is “aid essential” or “non-aid essential.”

1. **Aid Essential Communication**
   - Any circumstance in which the importance, length, and complexity of the information being conveyed is such that the exchange of information between parties should be considered essential. (Section I(C) (ADA).
   - Staff shall provide requested auxiliary aids services to clients or companions.

2. **Non-Aid Essential Communication**
   - Any circumstance not considered aid essential (as defined above)
   - LBH has the flexibility to determine the appropriate auxiliary aid or service to provide, to ensure effective communication and whether it is necessary to provide such aid.
   - If it is determined that the communication issue does not warrant provision of the auxiliary aid or service requested, staff shall advise the client or companion of the denial, the name and title of the person who made that determination, and the basis for the determination. (Section I(D)(1) (ADA).
   - When making this determination, LBH staff shall account for all relevant facts and circumstances, including without limitation the following:

- The type of auxiliary aid or service requested by the client or companion;
- the nature, length, and importance of the communication at issue;
- the individual's communication abilities; and
- the number of people involved in the communication.

- If communication is not effective or if the nature of the communication changes significantly after the initial assessment, staff shall reassess which appropriate auxiliary aids and services are necessary, when possible, with the client or companion.

- If a client or companion does not request auxiliary aids and services, but staff have reason to believe after conducting the communication assessment that such person would benefit from appropriate auxiliary aids and services for effective communication, staff should reiterate that these services are available free of charge.

C. Communication Options

Interpreters

1. **Resources**
   - To the extent such resources result in effective communication, staff may utilize any of the following interpreter resources for Aid Essential Communication:
     - Certified contract sign language and/or language interpreter
     - Qualified interpreter from LBH personnel

2. **When communicating with a client or companion in a non-aid essential situation, staff may also utilize the following:**
   - Traditional Relay Service (text only) through a TTY or via the Internet
   - Video Relay Service using videophone or a computer webcam with a sign language interpreter

3. **Family members and advocates/friends of clients or companions should not be used to interpret or facilitate communications unless the following factors are present:**

- The client or companion desires such person to provide communication assistance, and the person agrees to do so;
- such use is appropriate under the circumstances, considering any privacy and confidentiality issues that may arise;
- the client or companion has been made aware of the full range of auxiliary aids and services options available, free of charge, using the materials and formats described herein;
- the client or companion provides written confirmation that he/she was made aware of relevant auxiliary aids and services available, free of charge, and agrees to the use of such person to interpret or facilitate communication.
- The interpreter of their choosing is eighteen (18) years of age or older.

4. Timely Provision

- Staff will provide interpreters for clients and companions who are deaf or hard of hearing or LEP in a timely manner in accordance to the following standards:
    - Non-Scheduled Interpreters Request:
        - For any emergency that is not a scheduled appointment, staff shall make an interpreter available as soon as possible, but in no case later than 2 hours from the time the client, companion or staff requests an interpreter, whichever is earlier.
        - If the situation is not an emergency, staff shall offer to schedule an appointment as convenient for all parties, but at least by the next business day.
    - Staff shall continue to try to communicate with the client or companion who is deaf or hard o hearing insofar as the client or companion seeks to communicate, between the time an interpreter is requested and the time an interpreter arrives.

5. Definitions

- Certified Interpreter
    - Shall mean a qualified interpreter who is registered by the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf or other

national or state interpreter assessment and certification program. All interpreters' certifications shall be verified.

- Qualified Interpreter
  - Shall mean a person who is able to interpret competently, accurately, impartially and effectively, both respectively and expressively, using any specialized terminology necessary for effective communication.

D. Documentation

1. Customer/Companion Communication Assessment and Auxiliary Aid/Service Record Form

   - This form must be filled out each time the client or companion needs services from the Organization, marking whether it is an initial appointment, subsequent appointment, or a reassessment of the client or companions need for auxiliary aid services. The original is to be kept in the associated client's case file.

   - A communication plan should be developed and attached to the Customer/Companion Communication Assessment and Auxiliary Aid/Service Record Form for clients or companions who need long-term services from the Organization. Communication plans should be updated at least quarterly, but also each time there is a change or reassessment. The communication plan should include the following:

     - a listing of service situations such as weekly staffings, group classes, etc.;
     - whether communication assistance in these service situations is aid essential or non-aid essential;
     - what type of auxiliary aid or service will be provided at these service situations; and
     - the staff member responsible for arranging for or providing the auxiliary aid or service.

E. Other Communication Assistance

See attachment for information on other communication assistance available for non-aid communication.

2. If the communication is deemed non-aid essential and there is a denial of auxiliary aid or service, this must be documented in the designated section on this form. The information should include the name and title of the person who made the determination, the

basis for the determination, the date and time of denial.

F. Customer or Companion Request for Free Communication Assistance or Waiver of Free Communication Assistance Form

1. This form must be filled out each time the client or companion needs services from LBH. The original is to be kept in the associated client's case file.
2. If a client or companion chooses a family member or advocate/friend to interpret for them (see Section 1(C)(1)(a) for a listing of standards), a certified or qualified interpreter should be hired to verify that communication is happening effectively and accurately.

G. Customer/Companion Feedback Form

1. Each client or companion who is provided an interpreter or other appropriate auxiliary aid or service shall be provided with this form.
2. The purpose of this form is to collect data on the effectiveness and appropriateness of the auxiliary aids or service provided and the performance of the interpreter provided.
3. This form is not to be collected by LBH. The client or companion should submit this form directly to DCF.
4. Staff shall offer assistance, including additional interpreter services, for clients or companions to complete the feedback form.
    - An American Sign Language video interpretation of instructions for completing and submitting this form are posted on the DCF website.

H. Dissemination & Notification

Lotus Behavioral Health will provide notification of its auxiliary aids plan to clients, potential clients, providers, candidates for employment and staff.

1. Lotus Behavioral Health's SPOC or designee will distribute copies of the auxiliary aids policy to staff, each time it is updated.
2. Lotus Behavioral Health will display the following posters in its facility in order to provide information about the availability of appropriate auxiliary aids and services at no-cost to clients or companions with disabilities and how to request them:
    - DCF Hearing Impaired Poster which includes the contact information for the DCF ADA/Section 504 Coordinator;
    - DCF LEP Poster;
    - DCF Non-Discriminatory Poster; and
    - Auxiliary Aids Information Poster
3. Notices (60s)

- When meetings, conferences, interviews, or staffings are scheduled where candidates, clients or potential customers may attend, information will be included in the advertising or notice of the meeting that sensory impaired or LEP participants will be provided with the necessary auxiliary aids or interpreters at no cost to them.
- Notice must include contact information and date by which clients or potential clients must request this assistance. If assistance must be provided by LBH, the scheduler of the meeting should notify the SPOC.
- The following is required if auxiliary aids are needed at meetings, conferences and staffings:
    - Qualified/Certified Interpreter (as described herein);
    - Adequate lighting in meeting rooms for sign language interpretation;
    - Readers or recordings for visually impaired persons; and
    - Agenda or other materials translated into usable formats for visual, hearing impaired or LEP participants.

I. Staff Training

Training is essential to the on-going success of providing auxiliary aid/service to persons with disabilities, deaf or hard of hearing or those who are LEP.

1. Lotus Behavioral Health's SPOC will attend, within thirty (30) days of assignment to the SPOC position, the DCF Foundations of Disability Rights and Serving Our Customers Who Are Deaf and Hard of Hearing Single Point of Contact (SPOC) Designee Training.
2. All staff will attend the DCF Foundations of Disability Rights training annually (also, within sixty (60) days of hire) on how to provide assistance to person with disabilities and who are LEP clients and companions in obtaining assisting devices and/or aids or other reasonable accommodations. This training is mandatory and will be tracked. This training is available on the DCF MyFLLearn website and includes:
    - Guidance for serving clients who are deaf and hard of hearing;
    - Protecting the rights of people with disabilities.
    - The course provides an in-depth examination of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (DCF MyFLLearn).
3. After completing the DCF Foundations of Disability Rights training, staff will upload their certificate to the training website, Relias.

J. Reporting, retention and monitoring

1. Reporting
    - On the 5th of each month, LBH is required to compile and submit a monthly summary report documenting the details of any

auxiliary aids service that were provided. Reporting will be accomplished through DCF's document submission setup through FormSite: OCR HHS Monthly Summary Report
    - Lotus Behavioral Health is required to upload any "Customer/Companion Communication Assessment and Auxiliary Aid/Service Record" and "Customer or Companion Request for Free Communication Assistance or Waiver of Free Communication Assistance" forms filled out for services on a monthly basis via the upload feature on this website.
    - DCF staff will send a confirmation report on submission via e-mail along with a copy of the submitted monthly summary report. The SPOC will forward confirmation of the monthly summary report submission to the DCF contract manager.
2. Document Retention
    - The SPOC will collect copies of the Customer/Companion Communication Assessment, Auxiliary Aid/Service Record, and Customer or Companion Request for Free Communication Assistance Forms from LBH staff, to upload to the FormSite platform with the monthly summary report.
    - Any documentation collected by SPOC's should be maintained for at least ten (10) years.
3. Monitoring
    - The SPOC will be responsible for the ongoing monitoring of the plan at least on an annual basis.
    - The monitoring will include the review of client's files who have received auxiliary aid support for Customer/Companion Communication Assessment and Auxiliary Aid Service Record, Customer/Companion Request for Free Communication Assistance or Waiver of Free Communication Assistance, communication plan when ongoing services are provided, entry in the file about distribution of Customer/Companion Feedback Form and a file entry about auxiliary aid service provided.
    - The monitoring will also include the review of the employee HR file to ensure that it contains the attestation and certificate of the DCF Foundations of Disability Rights Training.
    - The monitoring will also include the review, if any, of complaints/grievances regarding the provision of auxiliary aids.
    - Conduct a review of notifications or materials available to the public to ensure accommodations are made for individuals with disabilities.
    - Should LBH have any auxiliary aid equipment, it will be monitored for inspection and maintenance.

Attachment

Other Communication Options

The following information will provide a description of communication options available at Lotus Behavioral Health for non-aid essential auxiliary aids use only. The SPOC should be contacted if there is a question about the availability of these items or any items not listed.

Hearing Impaired:

Communication options available for the hearing impaired should include but are not limited to telephone facsimile transmittal, sign language interpreters and relay services interpreters, flash cards, lip- reading, written notes, charts, signs or a combination of these.

A. Telephone Facsimile Transmittal:

    1. Telephone Facsimile Transmittals are a communication option for hearing impaired communicating remotely. They can be used to communicate back & forth by written word through a FAX machine.

B. Interpreter Services:

    2. Florida Relay Service - Communications link for people who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired. People who use specialized telephone equipment can communicate with people who use standard telephone equipment.

       To call Florida Relay, dial 7-1-1, or use the toll-free numbers below:

       1-800-955-8771 (TTY) - Allows a person who is deaf, hard of hearing, deaf/blind, or speech impaired to communicate with anyone by phone.

       1-800-955-8770 (Voice) - Allows standard telephone users to make phone calls to people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired.

       1-800-955-1339 (ASCII) - Allows clients to call the relay from their personal computer, which will display two split windows (horizontal or vertical). One window displays ASCII's user's text and the other displays the OPR's text.

       1 -877-955-8260 (VCO-Direct) - Allows Voice Carry Over (VCO) calls to go to a group of agents specially trained for VCO calls.

1-800-955-5334 (STS) - Allows speech impaired clients to have their calls processed by a trained Relay OPR familiar with speech patterns. The OPR then makes the call and repeats the words exactly.

1-877-955-8773 (Spanish)

1-877-955-8707 (French Cr)

C. Sign Language Interpreters: Below is a listing of two organizations for sign language interpreters.

1. American Sign Language Services
   ASL Services 1-888-744-6275
   Availability - 24 hours a day

2. Interpretek
   Interpretek | Sign Language Interpreter Services
   407-339-4835

D. Flash Cards: Flash cards may be used with hearing impaired Clients or Companions to communicate in person.

F. Lip Reading: Some hearing-impaired clients or companions can read lips, so, this also may be used as a communication tool if the option is available.

G. Written notes, charts & signs: The client or companion may use written notes, calls and/or signs to communicate with a staff member who has been trained in auxiliary aids.

Visually Impaired:

Communication options available for the visually impaired should include but are not limited to magnification devices, taped material, readers, or a combination of these:

A. Magnification Devices: Magnification devices can be utilized on request by any client or potential client.
B. Taped Material: Any form of written material used for services information can be audio recorded so that it may be utilized by visually impaired clients of companions.
C. Readers: Any staff member that has had auxiliary aids training may read materials to clients or companions who need assistance.

Speech Impaired:

Communication options available for the speech impaired should include but are not limited to sign language interpreters and relay service interpreters, written notes, or a combination of these.

A. Interpreter Services:
    - Sign Language Interpreters – see section under Hearing Impaired
    - Florida Relay Service – see section under Hearing Impaired
    - Written Notes – the client or companion may use written notes to communicate with a staff member who has been trained in auxiliary aids.

Mobility Impaired:

Communication options available for the mobility impaired will depend on their disability and may include using a combination of any of the communication modes available in this plan.

Video Remote Interpreting:

Through a video remote interpreter people can use an interpreter via technology to communicate with a participant instead of an in-person interpreter. This is a good resource for emergency situations with limited time to get an in-person interpreter as well as if there are few local community resources for certified interpreters. Below is the phone number for the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf which will provide contact information for certified video remote interpreting.

Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf: (703) 838-0030 (Video Remote Interpreters)

Limited English Proficiency:

Communication options available for persons with LEP should include but are not limited to language interpreters & translators, written notes, charts & signs, or a combination of these.

A. Interpretation/Translation Services:

    - Qualified Staff Member - Interpretation/translation services can be rendered by a qualified staff member in accordance with Section 1(C)(1)(C).

    - Certified Interpreter – Below is a listing for LEP interpreters and/or translators.

        - Propio Language Services (Contracted with Lotus Behavioral Health)

B. Written notes, charts and signs: The client or companion may use written notes, charts and/or signs to communicate with a Lotus Behavioral Health staff member who has been trained in auxiliary aids.

CART – Captioning Real Time and Providers:

Captioning Real Time or CART is the simultaneous conversion of spoken words to text, through computer-assisted transcription or court reporting, and displaying that text on a video screen. This communication service is beneficial to individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing who do not use sign language or for whom assistive listening devices and systems are ineffective.

Auxiliary Aids Plan | State Attorneys Office, 19th Circuit

Kaptions4U, LLC
Brandi Kent, RPR, CBC, CRR, CCP
352-516-8310

Tanya Ward English, CRR-CCP-CBC
CAPTION CREW
Florida Realtime Reporting
954-767-6363
tanya@floridarealtime.com

Marianne E. Sayers, RPR, CRR
Fort Myers Court Reporting
2231 First Street
Fort Myers, FL 33901
941-334-1411
941-334-1476 fax

How to Report a Complaint:

If you believe you were wrongfully denied access to services or discriminated against:

A. Inform the person who denied access to services that you believe they wrongfully denied you services and why you believe that is the case.

B. Ask to speak to a manager, immediately.

C. You may submit your complaint/grievance in writing or verbally. Direct your concern to the Director or Manger. Include the following information:

- What service were you denied?

- What were you told was the reason you were denied service?
- What person denied you services?
- What was the date you were denied service?

Florida Commission on Human
Relations 2009 Apalachee Park way, Suite 200
Tallahassee, FL 32301
Phone: (850) 488-7082
Fax: (850) 488-5291
Web Site: http://fchr.state.fl.us
E-N ail: fchrinfo@fchr.myflorida.com

For those with communication Impairments: The Florida Relay Service Voice (statewide) is 711.

Lotus Behavioral Health will provide accommodations, including American Sign Language interpreters, assistive listening devices, alternative formats of printed materials and real-time captioning upon request for persons who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing or are living with disabilities. To ensure accommodations, please make your request within seven days prior to the event to info@lotusbh.org or (321) 280-9044.