

PRESIDENTIAL MEMORANDUM #88

SUBJECT: Effective Communication for Individuals with Disabilities

DATE: July 18, 1997

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this memorandum is to assure compliance with Title II of the ADA, 28 CFR 35.160-35.164, 28 CFR 130(b)(1)(i-vii) and Florida Statute 240.153 to provide effective methods for communicating with people with disabilities.

II. POLICY

All communications, printed documents, meetings, activities, etc. offered by the University must be made accessible to people with disabilities. However, no action is required that would fundamentally alter programs or services or create undue burdens.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES

Each college or department within the University is required to "...take appropriate steps to ensure that communications with applicants, participants, and members of the public with disabilities are as effective as communications with others."

How and what type of effective communication is provided will depend on the nature of the communication and the situation. Most important, primary consideration should be given to the requests of the individual with disabilities. The request of the individual should be honored unless another effective method exists or unless the desired aid would be an undue burden.

- A. Responsibility for providing alternate formats of printed documents or auxiliary aids and services lies with each department, college, etc.
- B. The Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) provides this service to students who are registered with OSD for specific courses in which they are enrolled.
- C. No surcharge may be imposed for providing auxiliary aids or services.
- D. Individuals with disabilities should be given the opportunity to make requests for auxiliary aids or services with the appropriate department or college.

IV. PROCEDURES

There are situations where alternate formats or auxiliary aids and services may be required to ensure appropriate and effective communication for individuals with disabilities. It is the individual departments' responsibility to ensure these services are provided. Publications from departments should contain the phrase "available in alternate formats upon request."

Effective communications are provided using "auxiliary aids and services." Examples of auxiliary aids and services are: qualified sign language interpreters, large print (18 pt. font), recorded telephone messages, computer disk, readers, taped text, or braille. Deferring to the individual's request is desirable because of the range of disabilities, variety of auxiliary aids and services, and different circumstances requiring effective communication.

Example applications:

- A. A deaf student may want to request application documents, in which case a pen and paper may suffice to convey that request.
- B. If a deaf employee was being called to a meeting with his supervisor to be formally disciplined, in order to ensure due process and complete understanding, a qualified sign language interpreter may be advised.
- C. A person with a visual impairment may require large print documents. These can be supplied by using computers to enlarge the font, putting text on floppy disks in ASCII text, or enlarging documents with a copy machine.
- D. A blind individual or individuals with physical impairments may require the services of someone to read a document and/or provide assistance in filling out forms.

The department is not required to take any action that would present an undue burden, an action that would fundamentally alter the service, program, or activity, or create administrative burdens. The decision not to provide a particular auxiliary aid or service does not necessarily mean the department is in violation of the ADA.

The decision that supplying a specific auxiliary aid or service is an undue burden must be made by the head of the college or department after considering all resources available for use in the operation of the service, program, or activity, must be documented by a written statement of the reasons for reaching that conclusion and must be kept on file.

If the action is considered an undue burden, the department will take any other action that would ensure that, to the maximum extent possible, the individual with a disability is effectively communicated with, using the most appropriate method.

V. ASSISTANCE

- A. The Office of Equal Opportunity Programs is available to provide technical assistance and resource referrals, but not to assume individual departments' responsibilities.

- B. The ADA Accommodation Committee will review requests for the special needs submitted by the department heads.

Anthony James Catanese
President and Professor

AUXILIARY AIDS AND SERVICES RESOURCE LIST

Below find a list of vendors or service providers that you can contact for auxiliary aids or services to facilitate effective communications pursuant to Policy #88. If you should have any questions contact the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs at 7-3004.

Assistive Services for the Deaf

Sign Language Interpreters:

1. Deaf Service Center
3111 S. Dixie Highway, ste. 237
West Palm Beach, FL 33405
(561) 802-3353
Silvia Garcia, Program Coordinator
Request for service should be made as soon as possible, however, immediate response possible. Emergency 24 hour service request use beeper, (561) 936-6159.
2. United Hearing and Deaf Services
2800 W. Oakland Park Blvd., ste. 306
Oakland Park, FL 33311
(954) 731-7203
Nancy Weintraub, Special Projects

Real-time Captioning:

1. Florida Real-time Captioning
1107 S.E. 4th Avenue
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33316
(954) 767-0450
Tanya English
Services include: Real-time captioning of speeches, speaking events, etc., to T.V. monitors, big screen TVS, printouts plus many more technical applications.

Assistive Services for the Blind or Dyslexic

Braille Services:

1. Linda Iverson
Stuart, Florida
(561) 288-2040
2. Braille Bookstore
(561) 286-8366
(800) 336-3142

3. Lighthouse for the Blind
650 N. Andrews Ave.
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301
(954) 463-4217
4. California Transcribers Association
(909) 880-0993

Audio Tape Services:

In most cases if printed material needs to be put on audio cassette tapes, it can be done by staff. The protocol for doing this may be obtained by contacting the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs at 7-3004. When books, pamphlets or other long documents require transcription the following service providers are available.

1. Second Sight Taping Studio
1508 Jensen Beach Blvd.
Jensen Beach, FL
(561) 334-7666
2. Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic
20 Rosel Road
Princeton, NJ 08540
(800) 221-4792