



AUXILIARY AID SERVICE PLAN AND PROCEDURES

Fiscal Year: 2024-2025

AUXILIARY AID PLAN

1. Suncoast Center will provide Auxiliary Aids/Interpreter Services for clients and companions who are deaf/hard-of-hearing and/or communicate in a language other than English at no-cost to the client.
2. Auxiliary Aids are available during all hours of agency and program operation via on-demand remote video and assistive listening devices as needed.
3. Children will not serve as the primary interpreter for parents or other family members as clients/customers or as companions.
4. Suncoast Center will not deny services to any client or companion who is deaf/hard-of-hearing.
5. The Corporate Compliance Officer or staff designated by the President & CEO will serve as the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) and the ADA Coordinator for Auxiliary Aid Service for the Deaf/hard-of-Hearing. The Manager of Central Intake serves as the back-up SPOC.
6. All Suncoast Center employees are required to complete training in ADA Compliance and the provision of Auxiliary Aid/Free Interpreter Service to Clients/Companions who are Deaf/Hard-Of-Hearing within the first 60 days of the 90 day provisional period of employment and annually thereafter.
7. Suncoast Center will retain a signed Attestation of the employees understanding of the ADA Compliance Laws and SPOC in the personnel record.
8. Suncoast Center will monitor employee compliance with the training requirement via the employee's electronic training transcript retained by the agency learning management system.
9. All Suncoast Center locations will maintain reception area, Department of Children & Families posting of the following:
 - a. Interpreter Services for the Hearing Impaired
 - b. DCF Non-discrimination Policy



c. Services to Clients with Limited English Proficiency

10. All interpreter service vendors are required to submit evidence of certification/credentials of the qualified interpreters. Verification will be retained by the SPOC.
11. All agency groups, meetings, and conferences will assure accessibility to clients/companions who have disabilities or require an auxiliary aid.
12. All postings, brochures, and advertising of services will document the accessibility including the use of 711 Relay.
13. All staff call clients who are deaf or hard of hearing through 711 Relay using the phone number provided by the client serviced by Sorenson Video Service.
14. Upon approval by the Management Team, the Auxiliary Aid Plan is posted on the Agency website as required by DCF/HHS.
15. Upon request, the plan is made available in alternative forms and languages.
16. All clients and companions who are Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing will be provided with an auxiliary aid at no cost in order to file and complete an Agency Grievance if needed.



AUXILIARY AID PROCEDURES

1. At Screening/Enrollment/Admission, staff with first client contact will screen the caller/client and document in the record if the client or client companion
 - a. Is deaf/hard-of-hearing
 - b. Communicates in a language other than English
 - c. Utilizes 711 Relay or Sorenson Video Services
 - d. Preferred method of communication (ASL, Certified Interpreter, other auxiliary aid or assistive listening services)
 - e. Is blind/has visual limitations
 - f. Requires ambulatory assistance
2. Staff will notify client/client companion/client referral source of the availability of no-cost interpreter services for primary languages and auxiliary aids for the deaf/hard-of-hearing and other required accommodations.
3. Screening and enrollment staff will screen for the client's current abilities to communicate and will document the abilities and accommodations in the EMR Call Intake Disposition.
4. The communication abilities of the Deaf/HOH clients are documented in the *Customer/Companion Communication Assessment & Auxiliary Aid/Service Record*.
5. The record is forwarded to the Enrollment Specialists so the record will be available at the first admissions appointment with the Enrollment Department.
6. At Screening, clients who require an Auxiliary Aid, will have a pre-scheduled Intake Appointment and staff will add the required aid in the appt comments.
7. The screening staff will also add the required aid in the Avatar Admission Screens and Special Accommodation field so the required assistance is visible to all staff on the Avatar Home screen widgets and alerts.
8. At enrollment, the client/companion signs the *Customer/Companion Waiver for Free Interpreter Service and the Customer/Companion Communication Assessment & Auxiliary Aid/Service Record*.
9. Staff will document the client/companion's preferred auxiliary aid service in the Call Intake/Enrollment or Progress Note bundle.
10. If the client/companion is deaf/hard-of-hearing, Central Intake/Enrollment/ or Program



Staff with first client contact by phone will:

- a. Document in the client record, a message that includes as needed:
 - i. *Use Propio Video Remote Interpreter*
 - ii. *“Reserve an Assistive Listening device via Front Office”*
 - iii. *Schedule CART (Captioning in Real Time) services or Video Relay*
 - iv. *Notify Customer Service Assistants for escort to check-in desk if needed.*
 - v. *Schedule Access Office for wheelchair assistance/accommodation.*
 - vi. *Client has a service animal for ADA accommodations.*
- b. Contact the approved Suncoast Center Interpreter vendor directly using any agency telephonic or computer equipment.
 - i. *Propio Interpreter Services* Video Remote Interpreters on-demand are the first option for deaf/hard-of-hearing services for those who require a Certified Sign Language Interpreter. All agency staff may access the live interpreter 24/7 at no cost and with no need for preauthorization.
 - ii. Assistive Listening Devices are available at the front desk of all Suncoast Center main locations for immediate access. Devices may be reserved in advance or signed out for immediate need. The Front Office Operations Manager or location designee is available if there are questions regarding the Assistive Listening device.
- c. Copy the agency SPOC (Single-Point of Contact) and back-up SPOC to schedule
 - i. CART Services for court appearance or group settings through Realtime Communication Services Inc. 813-843-6279
 - ii. translator for clients who do not understand ASL (American Sign Language) through Propio Interpreter Service
 - iii. Use of Video Relay

11. All signed DCF *Customer/Companion Waiver for Free Interpreter Service and the Customer/Companion Communication Assessment & Auxiliary Aid/Service Record.*

- a. Are retained with the SPOC available in Avatar.
- b. Schedule the date and time of the service as a two-hour time block to allow extra time for interpreting.
- c. Do not place clients requiring a live interpreter in the Open Access Intake Schedule.

12. Customer Ambassadors and direct service staff will

- a. Provide the Customer Companion Feedback Form for all face to face services.



- b. When providing Telehealth services, clients will be directed to the agency website for a form or a form can be mailed out upon request.

13. During the first face-to-face contact, program staff will

- a. Complete the full DCF *Customer/Companion Communication Assessment & Auxiliary Aid/Service Record* form/screens in the client record. (See Attachments.)
- b. Complete and obtain client or companion signature on the DCF *Customer/Companion Waiver for Free Interpreter Service or Auxiliary Aid*
- c. Schedule the date and time of future service as a two-hour time block upon request by provider to allow extra time for interpreting.
- d. Contact the approved Suncoast Center Interpreter vendor directly.
 - i. Propio services will be the first option for all languages other than English. Access is available to all employees and clients through the desk phone, the computer, laptop, or agency cell phone and APP for live remote interpreters.
 - ii. Assistive Listening Devices are available at the front desk of all Suncoast Center main locations for immediate access. Devices may be reserved in advance or signed out for immediate need. The Front Office Operations Manager or the Customer Service Assistant Coordinator is available by agency cell phone if there are questions regarding the Assistive Listening device.
 - 1. For urgent, same-day, in-person services, contact the vendor by telephone and follow-up with the electronic request. (See attachments.)
 - 2. For non-urgent, future/scheduled appointments the vendor can be scheduled electronically using the approved vendor request form. (See attachments.)
- e. Schedule the appointment upon confirmation from the vendor that the interpreter is available.
- f. Copy the agency SPOC on
 - i. All Interpreter Service Vendor Requests and confirmations
 - ii. All signed DCF *Customer/Companion Waiver for Free Interpreter Service* Forms.



14. Walk-Ins:

- a. Interpreter services or Auxiliary Aid are provided for all walk-in clients through the Front Desk for those
 - i. who are Deaf/Hard-Of Hearing within 2 hours of walking into the agency.
 - ii. clients who communicate in a language other than English.

15. Suncoast Center staff is required to contact the agency SPOC or the back-up

- a. In the event the staff is unfamiliar with the requested auxiliary aid or service.
- b. In the event a client presents for services and an auxiliary aid is not timely.
- c. No client is to be turned away due to lack of an auxiliary aid. The SPOC is required to make all efforts to obtain the appropriate auxiliary aid by contacting the DCF Single-Point of Contact documented in the filed training Attestation.
- d. In the event that the auxiliary aid is not effective
- e. In the event the auxiliary aid is denied.

16. Clients/client companions will be provided with a Customer Feedback form on the auxiliary/interpreter services after use of the auxiliary aid service to determine effectiveness and satisfaction with the service.

- a. Clients receiving telehealth may download the form from the agency website or request a form to be mailed.
- b. Assistance in completing the form will be provided as requested by the client/client companion.
- c. All completed Auxiliary Aid forms are to be forwarded to the agency SPOC through inter-office mail or email for the client record.
- d. All customer feedback forms are retained by the client for mailing.

17. Requests for change of auxiliary services/interpreter service will be accepted and provided as needed.

18. A copy of the completed Auxiliary Aid Assessment/Service Record must be maintained by the Agency SPOC via the electronic medical record of the client.

19. Customers or clients who would like to file a grievance may contact the Suncoast Center Compliance Officer at (727) 327-7656 or the resources listed below.



20. The agency will not cancel any clients who are prescheduled because of a Staff Call Out. The staff supervisor will determine which credentialed provider will provide the service.

Resources

Department of Children and Families (DCF)
Office of Civil Rights
1317 Winewood Boulevard, Building 1, Room 110
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0700
(850) 487-1901; or TDD (850) 922-9220; or Fax (850) 921-8470

United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Attention: Office for Civil Rights
Atlanta Federal Center, Suite 3B70
61 Forsyth Street, SW
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-8909
(404) 562-7888; TDD/TTY (404) 331-2867; or Fax (404) 562-7881