

**SANTA CRUZ COUNTY
Behavioral Health Services**

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

**Subject: ADA Service Accessibility for Visually,
Hearing and/or Physically Impaired**

Policy Number: 3108

Date Effective: 4/22/2019

Pages: 2

Replaces: 2/12/2018

**Responsible for Updating:
Quality Improvement Director**

Approval: 
Behavioral Health Director

4-23-19
Date

POLICY:

Santa Cruz County Behavioral Health (MHP and DMC-ODS) does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission to, access to, or operations of its programs, services, or activities. All staff and contractors shall ensure that its programs, services and activities are fully accessible to and usable by people with disabilities without cost to the individual.

PURPOSE:

To ensure that all programs provide appropriate accessibility of medically necessary services to beneficiaries who have a visual, hearing and/or physical impairment.

BACKGROUND:

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 provides civil rights protections and equal opportunities to individuals with disabilities. The ADA protects three categories of individuals from discrimination based on that disability.

1. Those who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.
2. Those who have a record of a physical or mental impairment that substantially limited one or more of the individual's major life activities, including people who have recovered from mental or emotional illness, drug addiction, heart disease, or cancer.
3. Those who are regarded as having such a disability, regardless of whether they have the disability.

PROCEDURES:

1. Service Access for the Hearing Impaired:
 - a) Behavioral Health will use 711 for relay service as well as AT&T Language Line.
 - b) The Behavioral Health website provides information about mental health services and DMC-ODS services; and how to access them with an email address to contact the Access Team for persons with hearing impairments.

- c) For face-to-face evaluations and/or ongoing services for a beneficiary with a hearing impairment, those services shall be provided by a staff member fluent in ASL (American Sign Language) or an interpreter from the county contract service for the hearing impaired.

2. Service Access for the Visually Impaired:

- a) Audio devices with pertinent beneficiary and provider information are available from the Access Team and other service "gates". This information is in English & Spanish. Should audio devices not be available, pertinent documents will be read out to the beneficiary in English or Spanish.
- b) Information will be provided over the phone to the visually impaired by the Access Team.
- c) Direct services for the Visually Impaired will be provided at all program sites with accommodation as necessary, such as the beneficiary being accompanied to and from the waiting area.
- d) The Medi-Cal Specialty Mental Health Services Handbook and the DMC-ODS Beneficiary Handbook are also available in large print.

3. Service Access for the Physically Impaired:

- a) Newly constructed or altered facilities shall comply with federal and state laws requiring physically accessibility; including accessible paths of travel, elevators, ramps, doors that open easily, reachable light switches, accessible bathrooms, accessible parking and signage.
- b) Building not altered since 1990 are subject to the accessibility requirements for existing buildings and shall make reasonable accommodations to ensure accessibility; such as removing architectural barriers, keeping travel paths clear of barriers, or relocating services to an accessible location.
- c) Programs shall not deny admission, services or activities due to an inaccessible treatment room or office.

PRIOR VERSIONS: February 12, 2018, July 18, 2016, December 5, 2008

REFERENCES: CCR, Title 9, Chapter 11, Sections 1810:410 & 1810.110; 42 CFR, Section 438.10 & 438.68(c)(3); MHP Contract, Exhibit A; DMC-ODS Contract with DHCS, Exhibit A, Attachment I; Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008

FORMS/ATTACHMENTS: