

# SalusCare, Inc.

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## **Auxiliary Aids and Services Plan For Customers and Companions who Are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing**

Revised April 18, 2018

### **Training for Direct Service Employees**

All new direct service employees to SalusCare, Inc. are required to complete the on-line Effective Communication with our Customers who are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing training during their orientation period to the agency, well within the 60-day requirement for this training to occur.

Each employee is required to take the annual revised training, Effective Communication with our Customers who are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing, required by the Department of Children and Families (DCF). The managing entity, Central Florida for Behavioral Healthcare (CFBHN) notifies SalusCare when the training is available and requires a letter of attestation from SalusCare to evidence that staff have taken the training. SalusCare Human Resources provides oversight and tracking of employee training and the Quality Management department provides the communication to CFBHN.

If a customer or companion comes to SalusCare for services, all direct service employees and support staff have been given copies of and have access to the following forms:

- Customer and Companion Auxiliary Aids and Services Record Form
- Customer or Companion Request for Free Communication Assistance or Waiver of Free Communication Assistance Form
- Customer Feedback Form
- Communication Plan Form (for residential and continuing care customers and companions)

Instructions for completing these forms are included with the forms. In addition to these forms, the Single Point of Access maintains forms and submits the Auxiliary Aid Service Record Monthly Summary Report.

### **Public Access to the Auxiliary Aids and Service Plan**

The Auxiliary Aids and Service Plan (hereafter known as The Plan) is posted on the Agency's website. Information regarding no-cost auxiliary aids available to customers/companions who are Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing is posted in patient areas so that it is easily visible. This includes the interpreter services for the hearing-impaired poster, the DCF Non-discrimination poster, and the Limited English proficient poster. When a customer or companion requests a written copy of the plan, one will be provided by the Single Point of Contact. In addition to this plan, each employee has a copy of the Auxiliary Aids/Services Quick Sheet (please see attached).

### **Timely provision of services**

Instructions have been provided, in writing, to each direct service employee (hereafter known as employees) that all efforts are to be made to provide the services requested by the customer or companion who is deaf or hard-of-hearing (hereafter known as customer or companion) on a 24/7 basis.

For scheduled appointments, the certified interpreter must be present at the time of the appointment.

For non-scheduled aid-essential (intakes, evaluations, etc.) the certified interpreter must be present within two hours.

For non-scheduled and non-aid essential communications, the certified interpreter must be present no later than the next business day.

Employees are instructed that customers or companions make the determination of the services they need. Services are provided in a timely manner and are at no cost to the customer or companion. If for any reason the preferred method of communication is unavailable, a reasonable substitute will be available as soon as possible, but no later than two hours after the scheduled appointment. Alternative auxiliary aids, like pen and paper, can be used while waiting for the certified interpreter. However, pen and paper or lip reading cannot be used in place of calling for a certified interpreter to arrive within the time frames (i.e. if a patient is seen after hours, the employee cannot use the alternative and wait until the next morning for an interpreter. The alternative, pen and paper, can be used during the two hours waiting for the interpreter.

Deaf Services Center of Southwest Florida provides a 24/7 access number to reach them to schedule. An alternative to scheduling a certified interpreter from Deaf Services Center is to subscribe to a Video Remote Interpreting service. Accessing ASL certified interpreters in this manner requires a laptop camera, speakers and access via the internet.

### **Limited English Speakers**

SalusCare, Inc. maintains a current listing of translation providers who are on staff as employees of the company. This listing is available through the Human Resource Department, through the Quality Management Department, posted on Sharepoint with Human Resource policies, and is listed as an attachment to this plan.

### **What to do if the intervention is not effective**

If the intervention is not effective in providing needed assistance to the customer or companion, all efforts are made by the employees and supervisors to remedy the problem. If further assistance is needed, employees are to contact the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) or his/her Agency designee. If further actions are needed, the SPOC or employee is to call our 504 Coordinator.

### **Denial of Requested Service**

When employees identify the need to deny a requested service, employees are instructed to contact the Agency's Chief Executive Officer or the 504 Coordinator for authorization to so do. Employees are instructed they are not allowed under any circumstances to deny the requested service without the above authority.

### **Records Retention**

All Customer or Companion Communication Assessment and Auxiliary Aid and Service Records forms, Customer or Companion Request for Free Communication Assistance or Waiver of Free Communication Assistance forms, Communication Plan forms, and records of Auxiliary Aid Service Record Monthly Summary Reports will be retained until at least January 2020. Copies of the forms will be maintained in the patient chart as per requirement by Central Florida Behavioral Health Network. SalusCare Quality Management will maintain a record of form copies provided to QM by program staff and utilized in the monthly reports.

### **Accessibility at Other Agency Events**

All employees have been instructed that the Agency is to ensure accessibility at all meetings, conferences, and seminars to persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency or deaf or hard-of-hearing, including providing necessary aids and services for those individuals who are in attendance. The contact name and number for requesting accommodations is included on all meeting notices, flyers, and advertisements.

### **How to Obtain an American Sign Language Certified Interpreter**

Each employee is trained that the Company employs the use of only certified sign language interpreters. American Sign Language Interpreters (ASL Interpreters) are certified through the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID). Verification can be accomplished online through the RID's website: <https://www.rid.org/acct-app/index.cfm?action=search.members> . At the website, enter the interpreter's name and if they are certified, their name will appear. If they are not certified, they may not be utilized to interpret for DCF consumers.

If it is not possible to get a certified sign language interpreter immediately, or after hours, employees are trained to employ the best services available. These temporary services may include written communication, use of a Pocket Talker, or Florida Relay Services. If the requested service is not immediately available, all efforts are to be made for this service to be provided as soon as possible.

### **Auxiliary Aids Available for Customers and Companions who are deaf or hard of hearing**

Below is information on how to obtain an auxiliary aid when requested by a customer or companion:

- Pocket Talkers - Pocket talkers are available at the three Outpatient front desk areas at the Ortiz campus, Evans campus, and Cape Coral Campus. Debra Dilling, Outpatient Practice Manager 239-791-1545

- Motiva FM Systems - Order through Robin Harrison 791-1501
- Deaf Services of SWFL - (239) 461-0334 - has equipment which patients can access independently
- Deaf Services of SWFL has volume controlled phones, TTY's, access to Video phone at their center, educational outreach services to businesses

### **Service Providers**

Below are service providers who can assist with customer or companion requests for auxiliary services:

- Communication Access Realtime Transcription (CART) Michele Hordinski, RMR, CRR Court Reporter, Von Ahn Associates, Inc.
- (239) 332-7443 (office) (239)223-0463 (cell) Tmds70@gmail.com
- ASL Interpreters -Deaf Services Center of SW FL (239) 461-0334
- Deaf-Blind Services -Deaf Services Center of SW FL (239) 461-0334
- Associated Interpreters for the Deaf (AI Deaf) - Brooks (Jodie) Blecher 239.810.9554
- Cyracom VRI services <https://www.cyracom.com/services/VRI>
- Florida Video Relay Services (800) 955-8770 or 711
- Florida Division of Blind Services (850) 488-1330
- Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology (850) 487 -3278
- Florida Video Remote Interpreting (877) 709-5798
- Florida Video Telecommunications Relay (800) 222-3448
- Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (866) 602-3275

### **Documents Included in the Plan**

Our plan contains the following documents as attachments:

- CFOP 60-10 Chapter 4
- Customer and Companion Auxiliary Aids and Services Record Form
- Customer or Companion Request for Free Communication Assistance or Waiver of Free Communication Assistance Form
- Customer Feedback Form
- Communication Plans (for residential programs)
- Monthly Reporting Form for SPOC's
- SalusCare, Inc. Translation Providers

Instructions for completing these forms are included with the forms. In addition to these forms, the Single Point of Access maintains and submits the Auxiliary Aid Service Record Monthly Summary Report.

### **Agencies Customers or Companions May Call for Complaints**

All employees are trained to make all efforts possible to meet the needs of customers and companions, and to request assistance from the SPOC. If this does not resolve the situation, a

customer is encouraged and will be provided assistance in contacting one of the following parties:

- Debra Patterson, MA, LMHC  
Single Point of Contact (SPOC) and  
504 Coordinator  
SalusCare, Inc.  
3763 Evans Avenue  
Fort Myers, FL 33901  
Phone: (239) 275-3222  
Direct: (239) 791-1525  
[dpatterson@saluscareflorida.org](mailto:dpatterson@saluscareflorida.org)
  
- Maddy Naffziger, Quality Management Specialist  
SalusCare, Inc.  
3763 Evans Avenue  
Fort Myers, FL 33901  
Phone: 239-275-3222  
Direct: (239) 931-9691  
[mnaffziger@saluscareflorida.org](mailto:mnaffziger@saluscareflorida.org)
  
- Andrea Butler Fernandez, Contract Manager  
Central Florida Behavioral Health  
Phone: (813) 740-4811
  
- Romina Artaza, DCF Civil Rights Officer  
9393 N. Florida Avenue, Rm. 914  
Tampa, FL 33612  
813-337-5956


Additional contacts:

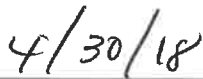
- 1) Department of Children and Families (DCF)  
Office of Civil Rights  
1317 Winewood Boulevard  
Building 1, Room 110  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0700  
(850) 487-1901  
TDD (850) 922-9220  
Fax (850) 921-8470
  
- 2) United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)  
Attention: Office for Civil Rights  
Atlanta Federal Center, Suite 3B70

61 Forsyth Street, SW  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-8909  
(404) 562-7888  
TDD/TTY (404) 331-2867  
Fax (404) 562-7881

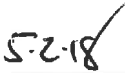
- 3) United States Department of Justice (USDOJ)  
Office for Civil Rights -Office of Justice Programs  
810 7th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20531  
(202) 307-0690  
TDD/TTY (202) 307-2027  
Fax (202) 616-9865
  
- 4) United States Department of Justice (USDOJ)  
Civil Rights Division -Disability Rights Section  
1425 New York Avenue  
Washington, DC 20530  
(800) 514-0301  
TDD/TTY (800) 514-0383
  
- 5) For information on how to file a complaint of discrimination, or to obtain information of a civil rights nature, contact the Office of Civil rights (OCR)  
Hotline: 1-800-368-1019 (Voice) 1-800-537-7697 (TDD)  
E-Mail: [ocrmail@hhs.gov](mailto:ocrmail@hhs.gov) Website: <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr>

This plan has been reviewed and approved by Central Florida Behavioral Health Network and by the DCF Civil Rights Officer.

  
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Debra M. Patterson, MA, LMHC  
Vice President of Quality Management  
SalusCare, Inc. SPOC and ADA/504 Coordinator

  
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Date

  
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Stacey Cook Hawk, MSW, LCSW  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
SalusCare, Inc.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Auxiliary Aids/Services Quick Sheet

### What is required to provide for Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing

Anyone who presents for services and identifies themselves as deaf or hard-of-hearing is provided free access to a preferred method of communication.

### Who determines the level of hearing the client or companion has?

- The client or companion

### What is a "companion"?

- The companion is the person who "speaks" (makes decisions) for the client

### What services do we have to provide for patients?

- For scheduled appointments, the certified interpreter must be present at the time of the appointment.
- For non-scheduled aid-essential (intakes, evaluations, etc.) the certified interpreter must be present within two hours. For non-scheduled and non-aid essential communications, the certified interpreter must be present no later than the next business day.
- For non-scheduled and non-aid essential communications, the certified interpreter must be present no later than the next business day. If for any reason the preferred method of communication is unavailable, a reasonable substitute will be available as soon as possible, but no later than two hours after the scheduled appointment. Alternative auxiliary aids, like pen and paper, can be used while waiting for the certified interpreter.
- If for any reason the preferred method of communication is unavailable, a reasonable substitute will be available as soon as possible, but no later than two hours after the scheduled appointment. Alternative auxiliary aids, like pen and paper, can be used while waiting for the certified interpreter.

### What services are available?

- ASL Certified interpreters from Deaf Services of SW FL; phone: 461-0334
- Pocket talker
- Written communication
- Lip reading or speech reading has only been found to be 35% effective

### How many forms do we need to fill out?

- Customer or Companion Request for Free Communication Assistance or Waiver of Free Communication Assistance
- Customer or Companion Communication Assessment and Auxiliary Aid and Service Record

### What are some helpful links?

- Communication Access Realtime Transcription (CART)  
Michele Hordinski, RMR, CRR, Court Reporter, Von Ahn Associates, Inc.; (239) 332-7443 (office); (239) 223-0463 (cell) ; [Tmds70@gmail.com](mailto:Tmds70@gmail.com)
- ASL Certified Interpreters - Deaf Services Center of SW FL (239) 461-0334
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- Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology (850) 487-3278
- Florida Video Remote Interpreting (877) 709-5798
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