

AUXILIARY AIDS AND SERVICES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

POLICY:

The Community Foundation for the Alleghenies (“Community Foundation”) will take appropriate steps to ensure that persons with disabilities, including persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, or blind, have an equal opportunity to the Community Foundation’s programs and activities. The procedures outlined below are intended to ensure effective communication with individuals wishing to file a grievance. The procedures also apply to, among other types of communication, communication of information contained in important documents. All necessary auxiliary aids and services shall be provided without cost to the individual being served.

All staff will be provided written notice of this policy and procedure, and staff that may have direct contact with individuals with disabilities will be trained in effective communication techniques, including the effective use of interpreters.

PROCEDURES:

1. Identification and assessment of need:

The Community Foundation provides notice of the availability of and procedure for requesting auxiliary aids and services through notices in our information concerning services and through notices posted at the Community Foundation’s office. When an individual self-identifies as a person with a disability that affects the ability to communicate or to access or manipulate written materials or requests an auxiliary aid or service, staff will consult with the individual to determine what aids or services are necessary to provide effective communication in particular situations.

2. Provision of Auxiliary Aids and Services:

The Community Foundation shall provide the following services or aids to achieve effective communication with persons with disabilities:

A. For Persons Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

(i) For persons who are deaf/hard of hearing and who use sign language as their primary means of communication, the Community Foundation will be responsible for providing effective interpretation or arranging for a qualified interpreter when needed.

In the event that an interpreter is needed, the Community Foundation will be responsible for:

Contacting the appropriate interpreter on staff to interpret, if one is available and qualified to interpret; or

Obtaining an outside interpreter if a qualified interpreter on staff is not available.

(ii) Communicating by Telephone with Persons Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Community Foundation will utilize a Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TDD) for external communication.

(iii) For the following auxiliary aids and services, the Community Foundation is responsible to provide the aids and services in a timely manner:

Note-takers; computer-aided transcription services; telephone handset amplifiers; written copies of oral announcements; assistive listening devices; assistive listening systems; telephones compatible with hearing aids; closed caption decoders; open and closed captioning; telecommunications devices for deaf persons (TDDs); videotext displays; or other effective methods that help make aurally delivered materials available to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.

(iv) Some persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may prefer or request to use a family member or friend as an interpreter. However, family members or friends of the person will not be used as interpreters unless specifically requested by that individual and *after* an offer of an interpreter at no charge to the person has been made by the Community Foundation. Such an offer and the response will be documented in the person's file. If the person chooses to use a family member or friend as an interpreter, issues of competency of interpretation, confidentiality, privacy and conflict of interest will be considered. If the family member or friend is not competent or appropriate for any of these reasons, competent interpreter services will be provided.

Other clients of the Community Foundation will *not* be used to interpret, in order to ensure confidentiality of information and accurate communication.

B. For Persons Who are Blind or Who Have Low Vision

(i) Staff will communicate information contained in written materials by reading out loud and explaining these forms to persons who are blind or who have low vision.

The following types of large print, taped, Braille, and electronically formatted materials are available upon request.

(ii) For the following auxiliary aids and services, the Community Foundation is responsible to provide the aids and services in a timely manner:

Qualified readers; reformatting into large print; taping or recording of print materials not available in alternate format; or other effective methods that help make visually delivered materials available to individuals who are blind or who have low vision. In addition, staff are available to assist persons who are blind or who have low vision in filling out forms and in otherwise providing information in a written format.