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County of Sacramento

Disability Advisory Commission

to the Board of Supervisors

 *EuGENE Lozano Jr., Chair Randy Hicks, Vice-Chair*

Recommendations for the Wellness Crisis Call Center & Response Plan

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Sacramento County Mental Health Board Special Meeting

December 15, 2021

The Sacramento County Disability Advisory Commission’s (DAC) mission and purpose is to advise the County on compliance with federal and state disability civil rights laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as well as the needs and perspective of people with all types of disabilities. We appreciate the opportunity to have input on this important and groundbreaking program.

The following recommendations were prepared by the DAC’s Wellness Crisis Call Center and Response Team Task Force, including the commission’s Chair, subsequent to the Wellness Crisis Call Center and Response Team Community Report-Back on December 13, 2021 by Behavioral Health Services. They were presented and ratified at the January 4, 2022 DAC meeting for resubmission for inclusion into the Wellness Crisis Call Center and Response Team plan.

Recommendations

1. Community Marketing and Advertising
	1. Ensure that web pages and other online communications are accessible and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 as amended, Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines WCAG2.1, so that all electronic communication is accessible to and usable by people with disabilities.
	2. Ensure that there is not reliance only on websites and electronic formats for communicating with members of the community. Affirmative and equitable steps need to be taken to ensure equal and effective communications are provided to all members of the community, including those with disabilities, who do not or cannot now make use of high technology solutions, such as smartphones, iPads, computers, etc.
	3. Create and provide materials in alternative formats (braille, large print, audio, and electronic versions) for people who are blind or have low vision.
	4. Provide language translation and interpretation, including oral interpretation, American Sign Language (ASL) and other Sign Languages, as needed or requested. All webinars, Zoom meetings, videos, and other multimedia communications are to have captioning and audio description, complying with Title II of the ADA, 28 CFR Part 35, Section 35.160.
	5. Perform targeted and sustained outreach to members of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community, where mental health issues are very prevalent. Many people who are deaf have low literacy and sign language is their primary form of communication.

Consider making a video with ASL, captioning, and audio description. Resources for making videos accessible for people who are deaf and those who also have a vision loss, can be obtained by contacting such organization as: NorCal Services for Deaf & Hard of Hearing Center (they have done this with Voter Registration and Elections), American Council of the Blind Audio Description Project, National Captioning Institute, and WGBH Media Access.

Recruit in advance ASL interpreters who have certification from the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) to ensure prompt response from qualified interpreters who are prepared for the scenarios they might encounter. Provide appropriate education for the certified interpreters such as de-escalation training.

1. Training
	1. Provide training to staff and participants regarding the County’s general ADA Title II responsibilities, including:
		1. Equivalent effective communication as required by the ADA (28 CFR Part 35, Section 35.160).
		2. Sensitive, safe and respectful interaction with people with all manners of disabilities.
		3. Cultural awareness of differences in the disability community, and intersectionality of disability, race, ethnicity, religion, sex/gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, medical condition, national origin, age, and other socioeconomic factors.
		4. Understanding that most people with disabilities have multiple disability-related functional limitations and conditions with unique support needs.
	2. Confirm de-escalation training includes working with people with disabilities, such as intellectual, learning, mental, physical, blind, low vision, deaf-blind, Deaf, hard of hearing.
2. Implementation
	1. Provide linkages to accessible and affordable disability resources to include a list of community-based organizations, such as Resources for Independent Living, Alta California Regional Center, NorCal Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Center, Society for the Blind, and the Sacramento County Disability Compliance Office, which can provide guidance and peer support.
	2. Safety - Provide training for participants regarding safe, respectful, and effective interactions with people with disabilities who may or may not be users of adaptive technologies, mobility devices, service animals, communication supports, or other auxiliary aids.
	3. Ensure in advance the location where the client will be transported to has fully accessible parking, path of travel into the facility, restrooms, signage, etc.
	4. Accessible transportation – identify and contract with accessible transportation providers that can be timely in response.
	5. Ensure the call center is accessible to:
		1. People who are deaf or hard of hearing needing to communicate with the Call Center through the use of TTY/text telephones, Video Relay, and text messages.
		2. Employees with physical disabilities who need wheelchair accessible/adjustable workstations.
		3. Employees with vision disabilities needing the use of adaptive equipment and software to perform the duties of a dispatcher and other job classifications.
		4. Employees with disabilities who need a relieving area for their service animals.
		5. Train call center staff on working with 711 relay operators.
3. Evaluation
	1. Include people with disabilities and organizations that advocate for or support people with disabilities, when seeking input to evaluate program delivery.
4. Advisory Committee
	1. Ensure the selection panel for the Advisory Committee includes representation of people with disabilities (other than mental health).
	2. Provide the Advisory Committee with sufficient staff support to achieve its objectives.
5. Community Resources
	1. People with disabilities often need specific supports such as:
		* 1. alternative formats (braille, large print, audio, and electronic versions) of documents for people who are blind or have low vision;
			2. language interpretation, whether in-person or electronically (Video Remote Interpreting), real-time and video captioning;
			3. a quiet or calm environment to process information;
			4. sensitivity to people with disabilities who have, but are not limited to: multiple chemical sensitivity, communication needs/experiences, traumatic brain injury, Autism, intellectual, learning, etc.;
			5. wheelchair accessible transportation if not by an accessible ambulance;
			6. if transport by ambulance, the vehicle must be wheelchair accessible. People with disabilities are not to be separated from their mobility devices, adaptive equipment, and/or service animal when being transported.
			7. Accessible housing, temporary shelter and treatment facilities must be fully accessible, complying with the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design, Fair Housing Act Design and Construction Requirements, and California Building Code, CCR, Title 24, Part 2, Chapter 11B.

We will be happy to provide further information throughout the process toward the establishment of the Wellness Crisis Call Center & Response Plan.

Sincerely,

 

Angela Talent

Chair, DAC Wellness Crisis Call Center and Response Team Task Force



Eugene Lozano Jr.

Chair, Sacramento County Disability Advisory Commission