**Easterseals Louisiana
Accessibility Plan**

2020-2021

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2020 - 2021

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

The objective of Easterseals Louisiana's (ESL) Accessibility Plan is to provide all ESL participants, employees and stakeholders accessible services and remove any identified accessibility barriers. As an organization, ESL complies with the American Disabilities Act of 1990 and believes that services should be readily accessible to all persons. The organization continuously works towards increasing accessibility by identifying and removing all architectural, environmental, attitudinal, financial, communication, transportation, and any other barriers not listed that might limit or prevent access to services.

ESL's Accessibility Plan describes the organizations commitment to accessibility, such that all persons can have the opportunity to live independently in a barrier free environment. ESL has and continues to remove barriers for persons served. This plan identifies actions that have been taken to remove barriers and action items to be completed during 2020/2021 fiscal year.

Monitoring Process

The ESL Safety Committee will review the plan throughout the year and ensure that any barriers to accessing services are identified, addressed, and documented as an action item with assigned timelines. Documentation on status and changes of identified barriers will be updated and monitored on an ongoing basis.

Communication of the Plan

Copies of the Accessibility Plan will be made available to the management team, Board of Directors and upon request to participants, staff, visitors, and the community. This plan will also be available on ESL's website.

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Objective I. Continuous assessment, planning and improvement of architectural and environmental accessibility.			
ACTION STEPS	**RESPONSIBILITY**	**START DATE**	**STATUS**
1) Conduct annual walk down of each location/facility with staff and develop action plan for improvement.	Program Manager	Semi-Annually	Ongoing
▪ Implement facility inspection for walk downs of office locations.			
2) Assess each office and its evacuation procedure for persons with disabilities.	Safety Committee	Annually	Ongoing
▪ Review/revise evacuation postings in Regional offices to include persons with disabilities evacuation procedures. Include location of fire extinguishers, first aid kits, safe zones, etc.			
▪ Incorporate persons with disabilities evacuation training into annual office staff training.	Safety Committee	Annually	Ongoing
3) Accommodate staff work areas for accessibility and ergonomics.	HR/Mgt	As requested	Ongoing
▪ ESL assigns employees with physical disabilities caseloads in territories where the homes are easily accessible to them.			
▪ Office locations have designated accessible parking.			
▪ Upon request, ESL provides reasonable accommodations to employees.			
▪ When hiring, we consider language barriers and make sure interpreters are available either on staff or by referral.			
▪ Facilities are easily accessible to public transportation (where available).			
4) Staff attends safety meetings and participates in OSHA-related training.	QE/Training Director	Quarterly; Annually	Ongoing
5) Review the results of funder facility walkthroughs.	Safety Committee	Semi-Annually	Ongoing

Objective II. Assess social and attitudinal barriers which impact access to services.			
ACTION STEPS	**RESPONSIBILITY**	**START DATE**	**STATUS**
1) Business and Community	Mgt		Ongoing
▪ ESL has formed alliances with other non-profits and social service organizations to promote acceptance and awareness.	Mgt		Ongoing
▪ ESL has developed relationships with business owners and landlords and has been able to place many clients in typical community settings.	Mgt		Ongoing
2) ESL executives and program managers have active roles in organizations to provide improved access to services, advocacy, leadership, and support.	Mgt		Ongoing
▪ Homeless Coalition			Ongoing

	▪ Continuum of Care– Voting Member			Ongoing
	▪ Regional Advisory Council for Office of Behavioral Health			Ongoing
	▪ Hope for the Homeless			Ongoing
	○ Employer Membership			Ongoing
	▪ Partnerships with local advocacy organizations			Ongoing
3)	Provide all staff with training in Person-First Language	Mgt		Ongoing
	▪ ESL provides Person-First Language training to all employees annually as well as during new hire orientation.			

4)	Incorporate Cultural Diversity In-services for all Staff	HR/Mgt	Annually	Ongoing
	▪ Implemented Cultural Diversity training as part of employee new hire and annual training. (see ESL Cultural Diversity Plan)	QE/Training	Ongoing	Annually

5)	Utilizing Technology to Remove Attitudinal Barriers	Marketing/ Development	Ongoing	Ongoing
	▪ ESL website features 'Making Life Accessible' section containing valuable resources related to accessibility. 　○ ESL provides on its website Health FAQs that promotes removing cultural misnomers associated with disability. 　○ ESL regularly shares information to reduce attitudinal barriers on its social media sites (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram). 　○ Easter Seals (ES) partners with Freddie Mac are helping people with disabilities obtain affordable housing through renting or buying a home. 　○ ES provides information on inclusive, barrier-free camps and recreation programs across the country allow adults and children with disabilities experience adventure and make new friends. 　○ ES assists an estimated 70,000 people annually in bridging the employment gap in the disability community through our employment and training program.			

▪ ESL trains all staff on the effective use of communicative technologies so they can effectively conduct meetings with participants. o Through this gained knowledge, ESL staff can assist participants in the use of technological devices to attend virtual visits with services agencies and health providers,	QE Director/ Program Manager/ Supervisor		
6) Review/revise and disseminate program brochure to local OBH units and other community stakeholders.	BH Mgt	Ongoing	Annually
7) Distribute Participant and Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey and review results annually.	QA Committee		Ongoing

Objective III. Promote Economic Opportunities and Reduce Financial Barriers to receiving services and accessing the community.			
ACTION STEPS	**RESPONSIBILITY**	**START DATE**	**STATUS**
1) Assists participants and/or their families in accessing resources needed to ensure participants are involved in their communities.	Mgt		Ongoing
o Campership - continue partnership with Camp ASCCA in Alabama and Camp ABLE in Louisiana. Assist with costs of sending participants to camp.		As requested and approved	Ongoing
2) Diversifying funding resources to enable access to more participants.	Mgt		Ongoing

Objective IV. Assess and Implement Action Plans to Reduce Communication Barriers to Receiving Services			
ACTION STEPS	**RESPONSIBILITY**	**START DATE**	**STATUS**
1) Communication Action Plan	Program Managers	Annually	Ongoing
▪ Ensure Client Rights, Responsibilities, and Grievance Procedures will be printed in layman's terms and posted in common areas and are reviewed annually.			Ongoing
▪ Provide interpreters and translators for participants as needed via staff or referral		As requested	Ongoing

2)	Distribute monthly Tech Talk newsletter	Mgt	Monthly	Ongoing
	▪ Provide information and education to staff regarding accessibility tools for the Google Suite, Microsoft Windows applications and virtual meeting platforms.			Ongoing

Objective V. Assess and Implement Action Plans to Reduce Transportation Barriers to Receiving Services.				
ACTION STEPS		**RESPONSIBILITY**	**START DATE**	**STATUS**
1)	ESL facilities are readily accessible.	Mgt		Ongoing
	▪ Offices are located near local transportation stop (in locations where public transportation is available).			Ongoing
	▪ Arrangements with local transportation to provide transportation to participants.		As-needed	Ongoing
	▪ Residential participants are provided with regional transit bus passes.			Ongoing

Objective VI. Assess and Implement Action Plans to Reduce Employment Barriers for persons served.				
ACTION STEPS		**RESPONSIBILITY**	**START DATE**	**STATUS**
1)	ESL will collaborate with other agencies to assist participants with transitioning into the workforce.	Program Managers	Ongoing	Ongoing
	▪ OCDD - Employment First initiative ▪ BH – Community linkages	Mgt; Program Managers		Ongoing
2)	Members of ESL's Executive Team, Program Managers and Supervisors are completing employment training so that the organization can better assist participants in obtaining competitive employment.	ESL's Executive Team, Program Managers and Supervisors		