



**Easterseals Louisiana  
Accessibility Plan**

**2016-2017**

1010 Common Street, Suite 2440  
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Accessibility Plan  
2016 - 2017**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Easterseals Louisiana (ESL) is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization whose mission is to assist children and adults with physical and intellectual disabilities achieve independence. 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 any and all architectural, environmental, attitudinal, financial, communication, transportation, and any other barriers not listed that might limit or prevent access to services.

The objective of this plan is to describe ESL's 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 2016/2017 fiscal year.

### **Monitoring Process**

The ESL Safety Committee will review the plan quarterly 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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<b>Objective I. Continuous assessment, planning and improvement of architectural and environmental accessibility.</b>				
<b>ACTION STEPS</b>		<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>START DATE</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
1)	Conduct annual walk down of each location facilities with staff and develop action plan for improvement.	Program Manager	Annually	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Implement facility inspection for walk downs of office locations.</li> </ul>			
2)	Assess each office and its evacuation procedure for persons with disabilities.	Safety Committee	Annually	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Revise evacuation postings in Regional offices to include persons with disabilities evacuation procedures. Include location of fire extinguishers, first aid kits, tornado safe zone, etc.</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Incorporate persons with disabilities evacuation training into annual office staff</li> </ul>	Safety Committee	Annually	Ongoing
3)	Accommodate staff work areas for accessibility and ergonomics.	HR/Mgt	As requested	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ESL assigns employees with physical disabilities caseloads in territories where the homes are easily accessible to them.</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Office locations have designated accessible parking.</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Upon request, ESL provides reasonable accommodations to employees.</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ When hiring, we consider language barriers and make sure interpreters are available either on staff or by referral.</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Facility is easily accessible to public transportation.</li> </ul>			
4)	Staff attends safety meetings and participates in OSHA training.	QE/Training Director	Quarterly; Annually	Ongoing
5)	Review the results of funder facility walkthroughs.	Safety Committee	Quarterly	Ongoing

<b>Objective II. Assess social and attitudinal barriers which impact access to services.</b>				
<b>ACTION STEPS</b>		<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>START DATE</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
1)	Business and Community	Mgt		Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ESL has formed alliances with other non-profits and social service organizations to promote acceptance and awareness.</li> </ul>	Mgt		Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ESL has developed relationships with business owners and landlords and has been able to place many clients in typical community settings.</li> </ul>	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
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Homeless Coalition</li> </ul>			Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continuum of Care– Voting Member</li> </ul>			Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Regional Advisory Council for Office of Behavioral Health</li> </ul>	DB		Ongoing

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hope for the Homeless               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Employer Membership</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	DC		Ongoing
				Ongoing
3)	Incorporate Cultural Diversity In-services for all Staff	HR/Mgt	04/13/2013	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Implemented Cultural Diversity Training as part of employee new hire and annual training.</li> </ul>	QE/Training	10/15/2013	Annually
4)	Utilizing Technology to Remove Attitudinal Barriers	Marketing	April 2013	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ESL website and Blog features “No More Stigma” which contain mental Health FAQs that promotes removing cultural misnomers associated with disability.</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ESL website features ‘Making Life Accessible’ section containing valuable resources related to accessibility.</li> </ul>			
5)	Review/revise and disseminate program brochure to local OBH units and other community stakeholders.	BH Mgt	June 2013	Annually
6)	Distribute Participant Satisfaction Survey and review results annually.	QA Committee		Ongoing

<b>Objective III. Promote Economic Opportunities and Reduce Financial Barriers to receiving services and accessing the community.</b>				
	<b>ACTION STEPS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>START DATE</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
1)	Being a Healthy Louisiana provider allows accessibility of our program to service more clients.	Mgt		Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ESL has developed a “Specific Assistance” Program to provide to provide financial support and resources to individuals on a case by case basis based upon need.</li> </ul>	Specific Assistance Committee		Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Wheelchairs, walkers, bath benches, accessible commodes, handrails, etc.</li> </ul>		As requested and approved	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Accessible ramps</li> </ul>		As requested and approved	Ongoing
2.	Diversifying funding resources to enable access to more participants.		2011	Ongoing

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<b>Objective IV. Assess and Implement Action Plans to Reduce Communication Barriers to Receiving Services</b>			
<b>ACTION STEPS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>START DATE</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
1) Communication Action Plan	Program Managers	May 2013	Complete/ Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure Client Rights, Responsibilities, and Grievance Procedures will be printed in layman's terms and posted in common areas and are reviewed annually.</li> </ul>			Complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide interpreters and translators for clients as needed via staff or referral source.</li> </ul>		As requested	Ongoing

<b>Objective V. Assess and Implement Action Plans to Reduce Transportation Barriers to Receiving Services.</b>			
<b>ACTION STEPS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>START DATE</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
1) Easterseals facilities are readily accessible.	Mgt		Complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Offices are located near local transportation stop.</li> </ul>			Complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Arrangements with local transportation to provide transportation to participants.</li> </ul>		As-needed	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Residential participants are provided with regional transit bus passes.</li> </ul>			Ongoing

<b>Objective VI. Assess and Implement Action Plans to Reduce Employment Barriers for persons served.</b>			
<b>ACTION STEPS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>START DATE</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
1) ESL will work with other agencies to assist participants with transitioning into the workforce.	Program Managers		Ongoing