

**INTERNAL  
COMMUNICATION FORM  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

Suspense

Subject: Director's Memorandum No. 21-01

Originator: G. Watts/x64955  
HR/CRCS

To: SODAs, EDs, Commissions

From: DIR

Date: 01/12/21

Memo No. 1

The following update serves as a reminder of the Department of Human Services' (DHS) commitment to ensure that access to services, programs, activities, and employment is available and provided to all eligible individuals, as well as to the prevention of discriminatory and retaliatory practices in employment and services.

Access to Employment and Services

DHS will provide access to employment and in the provision of programs, services, and activities in DHS occupied state-owned and leased facilities. State and federally funded programs must be administered such that they do not have the effect of denying or delaying services, facilities access, or employment to any protected person or group.

We reaffirm our commitment to assuring that program benefits and services are made available and provided to all eligible individuals without delay. This commitment is consistent with federal and state statutes that prohibit discrimination in the provision of services by recipients of federal and state funds.

Respect

All DHS employees, service providers, contractors, and vendors (sub-recipients of federal or state funds through the department) are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is respectful and courteous to others as well as refrain from hostile and harassing behavior that might be considered offensive, discriminatory, or retaliatory.

Civility

Workplace and service areas must be free from any discriminatory and offensive practices, including but not limited to, use of tobacco products, sprays, fragrances, or other substances to which individuals could have allergic reactions. Use of bias-free language is expected. Offensive gestures, emails, texts, photographs, screen savers, downloads, calendars, and other graphics are not appropriate in the workplace. Civility and respect for others is expected.

Equal Opportunity in Employment and Services

To ensure that all persons are provided with an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from our programs, services, and activities, we must eliminate barriers that may prevent access for otherwise qualified individuals who have special needs.

Effective auxiliary aids will be provided to clients and applicants for services and reasonable accommodations will be provided to employees and applicants for employment to ensure access to programs, services, activities, and employment. Service providers will provide auxiliary aids and reasonable accommodations accordingly.

Agendas, brochures, applications, and websites will be made available to all individuals in accordance with 2018 provisions of the Rehabilitation Act and State of Hawaii directives.

We will ensure, to the extent possible, that all renovations and modifications to state-owned and leased buildings will comply with the 2010 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards for Accessible Design.

Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation

Discrimination, harassment, and retaliation will not be tolerated by the department or our service providers, contractors, and vendors. We have an opportunity and obligation to provide services through processes that are free of discriminatory practices. DHS employees and our service providers, contractors, and vendors who engage in discriminatory conduct shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the applicable rules and regulations, collective bargaining agreements, and/or contractual agreements. All employees – particularly managers and supervisors – and service providers, contractors, and vendors (sub-recipients), are responsible for creating and maintaining a work environment that is free of all discriminatory practices including harassment, bullying, and/or retaliation for having filed a complaint. Employees who engage in discriminatory conduct shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with an appropriate collective bargaining agreement or policy. DHS prohibits retaliation against anyone who files a complaint or participates in the discrimination complaint process.

Guidelines

In keeping with DHS Policies and Procedures, numbers 4.10.1 through 4.10.4, as well as the Department of Human Resources Development's Policies, numbers 601.001 and 601.002, and to meet our obligations under federal and state laws as well as to benefit from the ideas and efforts of individuals we serve, the department will continue following the guidelines below relative to notices, public meetings, data collection, and accessibility. These guidelines apply to all DHS divisions, staff offices, attached agencies, commissions, service providers, contractors, and vendors who are sub-recipients of federal and state funding through the department.

Notices

Required notices must be placed in all public waiting areas annually and be visible at eye level to seated individuals. All notices require the following statement, "Should you need this or any notice in an alternate format, please e-mail [DHSCivilRightsBox@dhs.hawaii.gov](mailto:DHSCivilRightsBox@dhs.hawaii.gov). The Hawaii Relay Service 711 is available to hearing impaired and deaf individuals as needed as are video phones where required."

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Copies of notices are available at <http://humanservices.hawaii.gov> in the Civil Rights Corner and on the DHS portal at <http://portal.statehub.hawaii.gov>.

**Public Meetings**

Public meeting announcements and agendas must provide contact information for providing alternative formats of agendas and handouts. All public meeting notices and agendas must contain the same statement that is listed under Notices above.

**Data Collection**

Each division, agency, commission, and sub-recipient of federal or state funding must collect and report data relative to language access needs. Contact the LEP Project Manager/Coordinator, Cari Uesugi, at (808) 586-4898 or [cuesugi@dhs.hawaii.gov](mailto:cuesugi@dhs.hawaii.gov) for more information about language access data collection and reporting. Data collection reports for interpreter/translator services are to be submitted to the LEP Project Manager/Coordinator.

**Websites**

To ensure appropriate website accessibility to all, DHS will strive to adhere to the 2018 revisions of the Rehabilitation Act and supporting State of Hawaii guidelines which must appear on all DHS websites. Office 365 has an accessibility feature which might be helpful to some in creating accessible website material.

Please give your immediate attention to reviewing and updating mandatory notices and to making sure that all public meetings and mandatory notices contain contact information for alternate format availability and are accessible to all.

This ICF should be disseminated to all DHS employees, service providers, contractors, and vendors.

This ICF replaces Director's Memorandum, number 20-01. All previous years should be removed from posting by March 31, 2021.



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