

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

REACH for Tomorrow

RC-205A

TITLE: Stakeholders Accessibility & Barrier Identification Policy

EFFECTIVE DATE: 2/28/25

AUTHORIZED BY: Board of Trustees

Policy Purpose

To establish an ongoing and inclusive process for identifying and removing barriers to accessibility for persons served, personnel, and other stakeholders, in alignment with **CARF Standard 1.L. Accessibility** and **OHMAS requirements**.

Scope

This policy applies to all services, locations, programs, employees, contractors, and interns at REACH For Tomorrow, as well as visitors, volunteers, and members of the communities we serve.

Policy Statement

REACH For Tomorrow is committed to promoting accessibility and equitable participation by identifying and reducing barriers across all organizational domains. The organization actively seeks input from persons served, personnel, and stakeholders to guide barrier identification and removal efforts. Barriers may include physical, attitudinal, environmental, economic, linguistic, or technological factors.

Accessibility Focus Areas

Barriers are assessed and addressed in the following areas:

1. **Architecture** – Physical accessibility of buildings, entrances, restrooms, and pathways.
2. **Environment** – Safety, sensory impact, noise levels, and layout of service areas.
3. **Attitudes** – Staff perceptions, stigma, and cultural biases impacting service access or inclusion.

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4. **Finances** – Cost of participation, availability of financial assistance, or eligibility limitations.
 5. **Employment** – Inclusive recruitment, accommodations, and workplace accessibility.
 6. **Communication** – Language access, interpreter services, reading level of materials, and sensory accommodations.
 7. **Technology** – Digital platforms, client portals, EHR access, telehealth services, and assistive technologies.
 8. **Transportation** – Availability of transportation to/from services and referrals to transportation resources.
 9. **Community Integration** – Opportunities for persons served to access education, work, housing, and recreation.
 10. **Other Barriers** – Any additional barriers identified through stakeholder engagement, surveys, or feedback.
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Procedures

1. Ongoing Barrier Identification Process

- Accessibility assessments are conducted annually and as part of new site development or major renovations.
- Input is solicited through:
 - Client satisfaction and experience surveys
 - Stakeholder meetings and advisory councils
 - Staff feedback and supervision sessions
 - Accessibility audits and incident reports
- A centralized **Accessibility Log** is maintained to track reported or observed barriers and status of resolutions.

2. Stakeholder Engagement

- Persons served, employees, interns, contractors, and external partners are invited to provide feedback on accessibility.
- The organization provides multilingual materials, plain-language documents, and interpreter access as needed.
- Cultural and socioeconomic factors are considered when evaluating access to services and community resources.

3. Review and Prioritization of Barriers

- The Accessibility Committee, led by the Compliance Officer, reviews barriers quarterly.
- Prioritization is based on:
 - Impact on safety and service delivery

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- Frequency of barrier reports
- Feasibility of resolution and funding availability

4. Remediation and Response

- Corrective actions may include:
 - Facility modifications
 - Policy changes
 - Additional staff training
 - Technology upgrades
 - Referral partnerships (e.g., transportation or financial assistance programs)
- A timeline and responsible party is assigned for each corrective action.

5. Integration with Strategic and Risk Plans

- Barrier identification and response data are reviewed during annual updates to the Strategic Plan and Risk Management Plan.
- Accessibility is embedded in workforce development, technology planning, and performance improvement activities.

6. Documentation and Reporting

- All identified barriers, actions taken, and outcomes are logged in the Accessibility Log.
- Annual Accessibility Reports are presented to the Executive Team and Board of Directors.
- Data trends are used to drive continuous improvement and policy updates.

Monitoring and Review

- The Compliance Officer is responsible for implementing and monitoring this policy.
- Accessibility procedures are reviewed annually and updated based on stakeholder feedback, legal requirements, and best practices.

References

- CARF Standards Manual – Section 1.L. Accessibility
- OHMAS Certification Standards
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
- REACH For Tomorrow Strategic Plan
- REACH For Tomorrow Risk Management Plan

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