STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

RODERICK L. BREMBY
Commissioner

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AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT
POLICY STATEMENT FOR APPLICANTS / RECIPIENTS

The Department of Social Services (DSS) shall fully comply with the non-discrimination requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the U.S. Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and relevant state statutes that prohibit discrimination in services for individuals with disabilities. This Department does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the administration of or access to its programs, services or activities. The Department is committed to equal access to its programs and services for people with disabilities or persons legally authorized to act on their behalf.

We recognize the fact that identical treatment may be discriminatory treatment for individuals with disabilities. Therefore, this Department will take the positive actions necessary to ensure that qualified individuals with disabilities, or persons legally authorized to act on their behalf, have access to all programs, services or activities. We will provide reasonable accommodation to enable access to services, unless doing so causes undue hardship.

Under the ADA, a person with a disability is defined as an individual who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such impairment, or is regarded as having such impairment. Major life activities include but is not limited to functions such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working.

Applicants/recipients, or persons legally authorized to act on their behalf, with disabilities may request a reasonable accommodation in order to access programs and services. This request does not have to be in writing, but may be a verbal request to the caseworker. Such accommodations may include but are not limited to: documents provided in alternative

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formats such as Braille, tape or large print, the use of TTY or TDD services for communication, exploring alternatives to the traditional interviewing format if the applicant/recipient 's disability precludes an office visit, or other accommodations which may be deemed necessary and reasonable in order to facilitate access to services and programs.

Caseworkers should be alert to situations where it appears that applicants/recipients may be having difficulty with a certain requirement, e.g., obtaining verification, completing an application, attending appointments or understanding instructions. The caseworker will inform the applicant/recipient of the ADA policy and the obligation of the DSS to accommodate an individual's disability. If the applicant/recipient communicates to the caseworker that he or she may have a disability, the individual may be requesting an accommodation and it should be treated as a request.

The Department will provide these accommodations at no cost to the applicant/recipient for services or persons legally authorized to act on their behalf. Appropriate reasonable accommodations shall be determined through an interactive process that includes the individual with the disability and an affirmative action staff person.

I have designated the Affirmative Action Division to coordinate compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Affirmative Action staff is available to counsel the Department's applicants/recipients and the persons legally authorized to act on their behalf regarding disability rights issues and to receive complaints alleging discrimination on the basis of disability under the ADA Applicant/ Recipient Procedure.

Roderick L. Bremby
Commissioner
March 31, 2014

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APPLICANT/RECIPIENT ADA PROCEDURE

An applicant/recipient, with a disability or persons legally authorized to act on their behalf may make a verbal request to his or her caseworker for a reasonable accommodation. The caseworker will then forward the request to the Affirmative Action Division. If an applicant/recipient is reluctant to share this information with his/her caseworker, requests may be made directly to the Department's Affirmative Action Division at (860) 424-5040.

The Affirmative Action Division will review and respond to all requests for Reasonable Accommodation. Other participants in the decision making process may include, but are not limited to the applicant/recipient's caseworker and the applicant/recipient's medical provider.

All requests will be acknowledged and approved or denied in writing within twenty (20) working days of receipt, unless medical or technical evaluation is necessary.

Appeal Process

If an applicant/recipient's request for reasonable accommodation is not approved by the Affirmative Action Division, an appeal may be filed by the client or persons legally authorized to act on his/her behalf with the Deputy Commissioner for Programs. The address for filing an appeal is:

Deputy Commissioner, Programs
Department of Social Services
25 Sigourney Street
Hartford, CT 06106

Appeals must be in writing, and filed within fifteen (15) days from the date of disapproval. If assistance is needed in filing the appeal, the applicant/recipient may request assistance from the Affirmative Action Division by calling (860) 424-5040.