



CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

NUMBER: 94-02	DATE: 11/3/94
REVISIONS: 3-9-10	
ISSUED BY: City Manager	SIGNED: <i>Gregory C. Sundstrom</i>

SUBJECT: ALTERNATE COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH QUALIFIED VISUAL AND AUDIBLE DISABILITIES

PURPOSE: To establish uniform guidelines and procedures for providing qualified individuals with visual and audible disabilities appropriate communication accommodations. Communication devices include (but are not limited to): readers, interpreters for the deaf, assistive listening devices, large print and Braille media.

POLICY:

It is the policy of the City of Grand Rapids, upon timely receipt of a request for accommodation, to provide individuals with visual or audible disabilities alternate communication media in order to assure equal access to City documents, information, meetings, and correspondence.

I. Administration

The Diversity and Inclusion Office has overall responsibility for compliance with this policy and is responsible for procedure implementation and compliance.

II. Definitions:

- A. Assistive Listening Device: An electronic system which functions in conjunction with public address systems. An Assistive Listening Device emits signals that are transmitted through individual hearing aids or through specialized receivers. Assistive Listening Devices are designed to screen out background noise interference and allow individuals with hearing impairments to access information and activities in general meetings, concerts, and other types of audible entertainment.

- B. Reader: An individual assigned to provide reading services to a visually impaired individual.
- C. Large Print Media: Written documents which are provided to visually impaired individuals in which the typeface is larger than 14 point.
- D. Braille: A system of writing for the blind which uses characters made up of raised dots.
- E. Qualified Individual with a Disability: An individual:
 - 1) Who has a determinable physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity.
 - 2) Who has a record of having such an impairment.
 - 3) Is perceived or regarded as having such an impairment.
- F. Qualified Interpreter: An interpreter who is able to interpret effectively, accurately and impartially both receptively and expressively using any necessary specialized vocabulary.

III. Citizens' Alternate Communications Accommodation Requests

- A. Citizens may request an alternate communications accommodation either orally or in writing.
- B. Citizens should notify the department which the service, program, or information is provided to request their accommodation.
- C. The Department Director will review and respond to the request for alternative communication accommodations as soon as possible, but not later than five (5) working days from the date the request for accommodations is received.
- D. If the Department Director is unable to accomplish the accommodation requested or requires technical assistance in making the accommodation, the request is forwarded to the Diversity and Inclusion Office for immediate review and action.
- E. The Diversity and Inclusion Office, in conjunction with the affected Department Director (and when required, City Manager or his/her designee and the City Attorney) will evaluate the request for accommodation to determine compliance alternatives.
- F. The City of Grand Rapids is committed to complying with these requirements and to ensuring that all citizens have access to public documents as expeditiously as possible. However, some requests, such as requests for audiotape and braille copies of large or substantive documents may require additional time for compliance. The City must utilize external sources in these processes and, therefore, has limited control over the timelines.