



NOBLES COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES CIVIL RIGHTS PLAN

**Nobles County Community Services
318 9th Street PO box 189
Worthington MN 56187
Phone: 507-372-5213
Fax 507-372-5094
TTY/TDD (800)627-3529**

**Civil Rights Contact:
Stacie Golombiecki at 507-295-5213
Isis Broeckel at 507-295-5248**

**LEP/ADA Contact:
Isis Broeckel at 507-295-5248**

This plan is posted in the display case in the lobby.

This publication can be made available in other formats upon request.

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Purpose:

As a recipient of federal financial assistance, Nobles County Community Service Agency (NCCSA) is responsible for providing core services to assist and support Minnesota's most vulnerable individuals and families so they can meet their basic needs and be treated with respect and dignity. NCCSA has a civil rights plan to ensure that all eligible individuals receive equal access to program services and information. Its programs are operated in a nondiscriminatory way, without regard to race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, religion, political beliefs, creed and public assistance status. In medical programs, sex includes sex stereotypes and gender identity under any health program or activity receiving federal funds. The civil rights plan also serves as a source of information for county agency staff and the general public. The plan sets out the agency's civil rights administrative policies and procedures, identifying key contacts within the agency and linking the reader to applicable state and federal civil rights laws and resources.

Legal Authorities:

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Section 508 Amendment of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act 1990; State and local government services
- Age Discrimination Act of 1975
- Community Service Assurance Provisions of the Hill-Burton Act
- Section 1557 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act
- Nondiscrimination Provisions of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981.
 - Community Services Block Grant (Remaining Block grants)
 - Social Services Block Grant
 - Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant
 - Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homeless Block Grant
 - Preventative Health and Health Services Block Grant
 - Community Mental Health Services Block Grant
 - Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant

- Title IX of the Education Amendments
- Family Violence Prevention and Services Act
- Food Stamp Act of 1977 (as amended through PL 108-269, 2004)
- Nondiscrimination Compliance Requirements in the Food Stamp Program, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- Bilingual Requirements in the Food Stamp Program, Food and Nutrition Service, US Department of Agriculture.

- FNS Instruction 113-1, Civil Rights Compliance and Enforcement Nutrition Programs and Activities– Nutrition Service, US Department of Agriculture.
- Equal Opportunity for Religious Organizations in USDA Regulation
- Minnesota Human Rights Act, Chapter 363A

Civil Rights Plan Contact Information:

Stacie Golombiecki, Director
Nobles County Community Services
Civil Rights Contact
Phone: 507-295-5228
Fax: 507-372-5094
TTY/TDD 800-627-3529

**Nobles County Community Services
Equal Opportunity Policies and Procedures
Including Equal Access for People with Disabilities**

Nobles County Community Services Agency (NCCSA) has designated Isis Broeckel as the ADA coordinator.

Isis Broeckel, Administrative Services Supervisor
Nobles County Community Services
318 9th Street
PO Box 189
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Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 protects qualified individuals with disabilities from discrimination based on their disability in federally funded programs and services. Title II of the ADA protects qualified individuals with disabilities from discrimination on the basis of disability in the services, program, or activities of all state and local governments. Additionally, the ADA extends the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of disability, established by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, to all activities of state and local governments, including those that do not receive federal financial assistance.

NCCSA posts DHS Document 4133 (Do you have a disability?) in the main lobby of NCCSA for public accessibility. This brochure provides required disability rights information. This brochure explains the rights that people with disabilities have and the kind of help that is available to them. This brochure (DHS-4133) is distributed in all Agency rights & responsibilities packets. For public access to this brochure over the internet, the web address is: <http://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Legacy/DHS-4133-ENG>

Equal Opportunity Policy

It is the policy of NCCSA to make sure that program benefits and services are available to everyone and provided to all eligible individuals without discrimination, in compliance with civil rights laws.

NCCSA Employees, services, programs, benefits and policies will not discriminate against applicants, clients or members of the public because of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, creed, religion, political beliefs, disability or public assistance status. “Sex includes sex stereotypes and gender identity under any medical or health program receiving federal financial assistance, such as Medical Assistance, CHIP programs, health clinics, insurance companies and state health insurance exchanges.

This policy covers the NCCSA full range of services, programs, and benefits, including, but not limited to, access to information about services, eligibility determinations and intake, admission procedures and treatment. The policy applies to the agencies and providers receiving federal and state funds under contracts, licenses and other arrangements with Nobles County Community Services. The Minnesota Human Rights Act also applies to the work of NCCSA and those agencies carrying out work of Nobles County Community Services.

Program Accessibility Policy for People with Disabilities

NCCSA and all of its services, programs and benefits, are accessible to and usable by people with disabilities, including people with hearing loss, low vision, and other sensory disabilities.

To avoid disability discrimination, NCCSA will:

- Notify the public about the rights and protections for people with disabilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Designate an ADA Coordinator and maintain a complaint procedure.
- Make sure that its buildings are physically accessible for people with disabilities.
- Assist individuals with disabilities to apply and qualify for benefits based on their eligibility.
- Provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services, including accessible formats, to ensure effective communication with people with disabilities.
- Provide services, programs and benefits that are accessible to and usable by qualified people with disabilities.

Physical Access includes:

- Curb cuts and ramps and between parking areas and Nobles County Community Services.
- Level access into the first floor of NCCSA with elevator access to all other floors.
- Fully accessible offices, meeting rooms, bathrooms, and waiting areas.

Reasonable Modifications to Policies, Procedures, or Practices

NCCSA will make reasonable modifications to its policies, procedures or practices when necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless NCCSA can demonstrate that making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the services, programs, or benefits.

Effective Communication and Auxiliary Aids and Services

NCCSA will take appropriate steps to ensure that communications with people with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. To ensure effective communications, NCCSA will provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services, including accessible formats, so that people with disabilities can receive services, programs and benefits and participate in them in the same way as people without disabilities. Auxiliary aids and services include qualified readers, writers, and interpreters who convey information effectively, accurately and impartially using any necessary specialized vocabulary.

To determine what type of auxiliary aids or services are necessary, NCCSA will give primary consideration to the requests of people with disabilities. NCCSA will honor the choice of the person requesting the auxiliary aid or services unless it would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program or benefit or cause an undue administrative or financial burden. If this happens, NCCSA will find another equally effective auxiliary aid or service.

Request for auxiliary aids and services should be made to the ADA Coordinator 48 hours prior to the schedule appointment.

Nobles County Community Services Civil Rights Complaints Procedure

All applicants, clients or members of the public trying to gain access to human service or public health program information or benefits have a right to equal access to services. Nobles County Community Services has a civil rights complaint procedure that provides prompt and thorough resolution of civil rights complaints.

Civil rights complaints allege discrimination. You have a right to file a civil rights complaint if you believe you have been discriminated against because of your race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, creed, religion, political beliefs, disability or public assistance status. Sex includes sex stereotypes and gender identity discrimination that occurs in medical or health programs and clinics receiving federal financial assistance, such as Medical Assistance, MNCare, CHIP programs and insurance companies and state health insurance exchanges.

It is against the law for anyone who works for NCCSA to retaliate against a person who files a complaint or who cooperates in the investigation of a civil rights complaint.

To file a complaint, ask for the agency's civil rights complaint packet which includes: its equal opportunity policy, complaint resolution procedure, and complaint form. Use the contact information below to file a complaint. You can also review the law and regulations that outlaw discrimination in the Nobles County Community Services Office.

Stacie Golombiecki, Director
Nobles County Community Services
318 9th Street
PO Box 189
Worthington MN 56187
Phone: 507-295-5228
FAX: 507-372-5094
TTY/TDD 800-627-3529
sgolombiecki@co.nobles.mn.us

Procedure:

1. Civil Rights complaints must be filed at least 90 days from the date the alleged discrimination occurred.
2. The complaint must be in writing and contain the name and address of the person filing it. Other important contact information that should be included is telephone number, relay number and email address. The complaint must state the problem or action alleged and the relief desired. If assistance is needed with filing your complaint, the Civil Rights Contact will help you.

3. NCCSA must conduct an investigation of the complaint, if it is a true civil rights complaint. The investigation may be informal, but it must be thorough and timely. People who have an interest in the complaint must have an opportunity to submit relevant evidence about the complaint. The county agency will issue a written decision on the complaint within 120 days after its filing. The county will maintain the complaint records and files for three years. Complaints about program rules are not civil rights complaints and will be resolved through a separate complaint process.
4. The person filing the complaint may appeal the decision by writing to the Director within 15 days of receiving the written decision. The Director must issue a written decision in response to the appeal, no later than 30 days after the appeal is filed. This decision is final. The appeal process is not the same as filing a fair hearings appeal with the DHS Appeals and Regulations Division.
5. The person filing the complaint must be informed that he/she can file a discrimination complaint directly with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Civil Rights or the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for the SNAP or WIC Program.
 - a. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office for Civil Rights prohibits discrimination in its programs because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex and religion. Sex includes sex stereotypes and gender identity discrimination that occurs in medical or health programs and clinics receiving federal financial assistance; these are programs, such as Medicaid, CHIP programs and insurance companies and state health insurance exchanges under Title I of the Affordable Care Act. Contact the federal agency directly:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Office for Civil Rights

Region V

233 N. Michigan Avenue

Suite 204

Chicago, IL 60601

312-886-2359 (voice)

800-368-1019 (toll free)

800-537-7697 (TTY)

- b. In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, religious

creed, disability, age, political beliefs, reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by the USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or Local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact the USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800)877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866)632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

1. Mail: US Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
2. Fax: (202) 690-7442; or
3. Email: program.intake@usda.gov

6. Filing Complaints with State Agencies:

The person filing the complaint must also be informed that he/she can file a discrimination complaint directly with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights and the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

- a. The Minnesota Department of Human Rights prohibits discrimination in public services programs because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or public assistance status. Contact the Minnesota Department of Human Rights directly:

Minnesota Department of Human Rights
Freeman Building, 625 North Robert Street
St Paul, MN 55155
651-539-1100 (voice) 800-657-3704 (toll free) 711 or 800-627-3529 (MN Relay)

- b. The Minnesota Department of Human Services prohibits discrimination in its programs because of race, color, national origin, creed, religion, sexual orientation, public assistance status, age, disability, or sex, including sex stereotypes and gender identity discrimination that occurs in health programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance, such as Medical Assistance, MNCare, CHIP programs and insurance companies and state health insurance exchanges. Contact the Equal Opportunity and Access Division directly only if you have a discrimination complaint:

Minnesota Department of Human Services
Equal Opportunity Access Division
P.O. Box 64997
St. Paul, MN 55164-0997
651-431-3040 (voice) or use your preferred relay service.

- c. County agencies are not permitted to investigate civil rights complaints in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) because counties directly administer SNAP benefits. County agencies must refer SNAP civil rights complaints to DHS or the USDA regional office in Chicago. The USDA regional address is:

Civil Rights Director
Midwest Regional Office
USDA/Food and Nutrition Services
77 W. Jackson BLVD., 20th Floor
Chicago, IL 60604-3591
312-353-6657 (voice) or use your preferred relay service.

7. Arrangement for People with Disabilities

NCCSA will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that people with disabilities are provided reasonable modifications or effective communications, if needed, to participate in the complaint process. Reasonable modifications or effective communications include, but are not limited to, providing interpreters for people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing; providing taped cassettes and accessible formats for people who are blind or have low vision; and assuring a physically accessible location for complaint proceedings. The Civil Rights Contact (or designee) is responsible for working with people who file complaints to make appropriate arrangements.

Nobles County Community Services Complaint Form Discrimination in Service Delivery

Client/Complainant Information

| | | |
|-------------|--------------|-----|
| Client Name | Phone Number | |
| Address | | |
| City | State | Zip |

Name, address, and telephone number of someone who will know how to reach you (optional)

Information about discriminating agency and/or parties

| | | |
|-------------|--------------|-----|
| Client Name | Phone Number | |
| Address | | |
| City | State | Zip |

Information about discrimination (check all that apply)

- Race Color National Origin Sex Creed Religion Political Beliefs Age
- Disability Public Assistance Status Sexual Orientation

If you filed this charge with any other agency, please give the name, address, and telephone number of the agency and the name of the investigator assigned to the case.

Details of discrimination (what happened, why you believed you were treated differently, how you were treated differently, the date of the incident, the name of the person(s) directly involved, and witnesses if any.)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

This information is available and accessible in formats for individuals with disabilities by calling 507-295-5213 or by using your preferred relay service. For information on disability rights and protections, contact the Agency's ADA coordinator.

**NOBLES COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICE AGENCY
COMPLAINT NOTIFICATION FORM TO DHS
FOR COMPLAINTS ALLEGING
DISCRIMINATION IN SERVICE DELIVERY**

AUTHORITY: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service Instruction 113-1.

REQUIREMENT: County human service agencies must notify the DHS Civil Rights Coordinator within 90 days of all service delivery discrimination complaints (i.e., civil rights complaints) filed against them (see bottom of Page 2 for contact information).

ACTION REQUIRED:

Complete this form and send it to the DHS Civil Rights Coordinator within 90 days of the date the complaint was filed. For SNAP complaints please refer them as soon as possible after the complaint has been received.

1. Name, address, telephone number of complainant:

2. Name and address of county agency delivering the benefits, including names of any employees accused of wrong doing.

3. Type of discrimination alleged:

4. Describe the alleged discrimination including the dates it happened. Give names and contact information of any witness:

5. Give a summary of the investigation findings, including any corrective action ordered:

Contact Information:

DHS Civil Rights Coordinator
Minnesota Department of Human Services
Equal Opportunity and Access Division
PO Box 64997
St Paul MN 55164-0097
651-431-3034 (voice) or use your preferred relay service
651-431-7444
Joann.daSilva@state.mn.us



Limited English Proficiency Plan

If you need further assistance reading this notice, please inform the receptionist staff.

Nobles County Community Services
318 9th Street
PO Box 189
Worthington, MN 56187

CommunityServices@co.nobles.mn.us
Phone 507-295-5213
Fax 507-372-5094

Purpose

The Purpose of this plan is to ensure that clients of Nobles County Community Services Agency have meaningful access to program information and services although they may be limited in their English language proficiency.

NCCSA is committed to this plan as a response to meeting client needs. All agencies that receive federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) must take steps to ensure that persons with limited English proficiency receive the language assistance necessary to allow them meaningful access to services, free of charge. This plan is consistent with all federal requirements.

Authorities and Definitions

Federal Authorities

- **Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964:**
42 U.S.C. §2000 et seq.; 45 CFR §80, Nondiscrimination Under Programs Receiving Federal Financial Assistance through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Effectuation of Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- **Office for Civil Rights Policy Guidance**
Guidance to Federal Financial Assistance Recipients Regarding Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient Persons, 68FR 47311 (2003).
<http://www.hhs.gov/civil-rights/for-individuals/special-topics/limited-english-proficiency/index.html>
- **Department of Justice Regulations**
28 CFR §42.405 (d) (1), Department of Justice, Coordination of Enforcement of Non-discrimination in Federally Assisted Programs, Requirements for Translation
- **Bilingual requirements in the Food Stamp Program**
7CFR §272.4 U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Service

Definitions of Terms

- **Effective Communication**
Effective communication occurs when agency staff members have taken the necessary steps to ensure that a person with limited English proficiency is given adequate information to understand the services and benefits available and receives the services and benefits that they are eligible for. Effective communication also means that a person with limited English proficiency is able to communicate the relevant circumstances of their situation to the agency staff.
- **Interpretation**
Interpretation means the oral or spoken transfer of information from one language to another.
- **Limited English Proficiency**
A person with limited English proficiency or “LEP: is not able to speak, read, write, or understand the English language well enough to allow them to interact effectively.
- **Meaningful Access**
Meaningful access to programs and services is the standard of access required of federally funded entities to comply with Title IV’s language access requirements. To ensure meaningful access for people with limited English proficiency, service providers must make available to applicants or recipients free language assistance that results in accurate and effective communication.
- **Office for Civil Rights (OCR)**
The office for Civil Rights is the civil rights enforcement agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, OCR Region V is the regional office that enforces Title IV in Minnesota for health and human services agencies/providers.

- **Primary Languages**
Primary Languages are the languages other than English that are most commonly spoken by clients of Nobles County Community Services. NCCSA has identified the following as the primary languages spoken in Nobles County: Spanish, Lao, Vietnamese, Afrikaans, Tigrinya, Oromo, Anuak, Amharic, Nuer, Sudanese, Arabic, Thai, Burmese, and Karen.
- **Translation**
Translation means the written transfer of information from one language to another.

Meaningful Access Policy

Persons covered by this policy

This policy was developed to serve Nobles County Community Services clients, prospective clients, their family members, or other interested members of the public (hereafter referred to as client) who do not speak, write, read, or understand English or who do so on a limited basis. A client has LEP when they are not able to speak, read, write, or understand the English language at a level that allows them to interact effectively with Nobles County Community service staff.

Sometimes LEP clients are not easily identified. Some may understand enough English to manage basic life skills but may not speak, write, read, or understand English in a meaningful way. Such as complex concepts they may encounter with health and human services staff in regards to program language and terms.

Commitment to Meaningful Access

No person will be denied access to Nobles County Community Services information or programs because they do not speak English or English is communicated on a limited basis. Nobles County Community Services will provide for effective communication between clients with LEP and Nobles County Community Services staff by making appropriate language assistance services available when clients need these services. Agency staff will provide their clients with meaningful access to programs and services in a timely manner and at no cost to the client.

Affirmative Offer of Language Assistance

Staff will initiate an offer for language assistance to clients who have difficulty communicating in English. Also, when clients ask for language assistance, staff must offer free interpretation and/or translation services in a language they understand, in a way that preserves confidentiality, and in a timely manner. Whenever possible, staff members are encouraged to follow a client's preferences.

Competency Standards for Interpreters

To provide effective services to LEP persons, Nobles County Community services will use competent interpreters. "Competency" requires that the interpreter is able to demonstrate a proficiency in both English and the intended language. Training is provided regarding confidentiality, the ethics of interpreting, and to ensure they have a fundamental knowledge of specialized terms or concepts.

Translated Documents

Nobles County Community Services will download and use DHS produced documents as the primary source of translated documents. For locally developed forms, or correspondence to LEP clients, the agency will use the DHS language block insert instructing them to contact Nobles County Community Services for assistance with translation of the document.

Use of an Interpreter

General Requirements

1. Verify client identity

Before releasing case specific information, Nobles County Community Services will verify the identity of the client. Bilingual staff or other vendors providing interpretation or translation services through agreements with Nobles County Community Services may assist staff in verifying identity.

2. Document use of Interpreter

Nobles County Community Staff will always document when an interpreter is used or when a client makes use of another form of language assistance. Accurate documentation is especially important for direct service staff.

3. Do not use minor children

Nobles County Community Services *will never use* minor children as interpreters.

4. In-person interpreter services

If an interpreter is needed in-person rather than by telephone or an electronic interpretive device, staff will make arrangements to have an interpreter available at a time and place that is convenient for both the interpreter and the client.

5. Uncommon languages

When an interpreter is needed for a language not commonly spoken in Minnesota, Nobles County Community Services will use the interpreter resources listed below.

Interpreter Resources (In order of preference)

1. Contracted Interpreters

Nobles County Community Services Agency has agreements with several interpreters in the immediate service area to cover languages identified as primary languages. Refer to Attachment A for the number of interpreters in each language available.

2. Telephone Interpretation

Staff will be given specific instructions for the use of telephone interpretation assistance companies that Nobles County Community Services has contracted with. Telephone interpretation will be used when it is not possible to use a person contracted interpreter or the electronic interpretive device. Refer to Attachment C for specific instructions on the use of a telephone interpreter.

3. Use of family or friends as interpreters

Staff should accommodate clients' wishes to have family or friends serve as interpreters whenever possible. However, staff must keep in mind issues of client confidentiality and interpreter competency. Follow these rules:

- Verify the identity of the client.

- Read and explain to the client the purpose of the consent for release of information.
- Protection of confidentiality and accuracy of interpretation should always be of highest concern, particularly if the interview concerns topics that may negatively affect eligibility for services.
- Always offer free interpreter services.
- If a client prefers to have a family member or friend serve as an interpreter, ask if the client will allow a trained interpreter to listen in to ensure accuracy of the interpretation.
- If the offers are refused, document the offers and refusals and accommodate the client's wishes.
- Minor children should never be used as interpreters.
- Contracted in person interpreters should be used in circumstances when a client is given information that may negatively impact the client's eligibility for services.
- In person contracted interpreters are preferred in situations where a client must answer complicated or detailed questions about their case.
- Prior to discussing private information concerning the client, document in the client's file, an outline of the circumstances under which information was released.

Notice of Right to Language Assistance

Nobles County Community Services staff must inform all LEP clients of their rights to free and timely interpreter services. These services must be available during Nobles County Community Services business hours. To provide notice to clients, printed aids published by the Department of Human Services (DHS) are available and will be utilized. These documents can be found at the DHS website at <http://mn.gov/dhs/general-public/publications-forms-resources/edocs/index.jsp>

- **I "speak" cards (DHS 4374)**
Staff may distribute the cards to LEP clients so they can present them with the appropriate card to signal their language and the need for assistance.
- **Language Assistance Poster (DHS 4739)**
The poster will be hung for public viewing in the glass display case directly to the left of the receptionist window. The poster will also be

placed in the reception area of Nobles County Community Service.

- **The Catalogue of Languages (DHS 4059)**
A printed copy of the Catalogue of Languages will be available for use in the receptionist area of Nobles County Community Services. It will also be available for download by agency staff from the DHS edocs website.

Information Privacy Protection

Nobles County Community Services employees and contracted interpretive services may on occasion, as part of job-related responsibilities, obtain, use, or disclose private or confidential data, including, protected health information (referred to below, collectively, as “protected information”).

- **Duty to ensure proper handling of data**
Nobles County Community Services employees are responsible for training employees who are authorized to access and use the data collected under the terms and for the purposes specified in the contract. This responsibility includes ensuring that staff members are properly trained regarding:
 - The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), 45 C.F.R. Parts 160, 162, and 164.
 - The Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (MGDPA) Minn. Stat. §13.46
 - The Minnesota Medical Records Act. Minn. Stat. §144.335
 - Federal law and regulations that govern the use and disclosure of substance abuse treatment records, 42 USCS §290dd-2 and 42 CFR §2.1 to §2.67
 - Any other applicable state and federal statutes, rules, and regulations affecting the collection, storage, use and dissemination of private or confidential information
- **Minimum necessary access to data**
Nobles County Community Services and contracted organizations and interpreters shall comply with the “minimum necessary” access and disclosure standards set forth in the Data Practices Act. The dissemination of protected information is limited to “that necessary for the administration and management of programs specifically authorized by the legislature or local

governing body or mandated by the federal government.” See Minn. Stat. §13.05, subd. 3.

Nobles County Community Services staff will:

- Not use or further disclose the information other than as permitted or required by law
- Use appropriate safeguards to prevent improper use or disclosure of the information by its employees and contractors.
- Appropriately respond to any known improper use or disclosure of protected information.
- Ensure that the organizations and interpreters that we are contracted with agree to be bound by the same restrictions and conditions that apply to them with respect to such information.
- Upon termination of any contract, extend the protections of the contract to the information collected during the course of the contract

Emergency Situations

Information privacy protection regulations permit Nobles County Community Services employees and agents to release private information concerning a client to third parties, including family members or friends, in emergency situations without the client’s written consent. It is an emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health and safety of the client or other persons. Staff should consult with their supervisor or the LEP Manager when determining if it is an emergency. If an emergency does arise the following steps will be taken:

- Use an interpretive method to verify the identity of the client.
- If the client is not available or refuses to give consent inform them of their right to an interpreter and give or send them a copy of the consent for release of information.
- Ask if the client desires to have a family member or friend serve as an interpreter. Give them the option to refuse consent.
- Explain the purpose for the consent for release of information, and document the reason for the release and the circumstances surrounding it.
- Make services available within the required time allowed.
-

Plan Administration

In order to provide meaningful access to programs and services, it is essential that Nobles County Community Services is able to identify the language needs of the individuals and the communities that it serves.

Needs Assessment

Nobles County Community Services staff will continue to monitor and document the language needs of its clients. Every effort will be made to contract with interpreters as additional languages become identified as a primary language in Nobles County. In the same respect as languages become obsolete those interpretive services will be discontinued.

Monitoring

Nobles County Community Services staff will evaluate the LEP plan through the following activities:

- Assessing current language needs of clients with LEP and determination of whether an interpreter or translated document is necessary to communicate effectively.
- Update client files with current language needs and confirm with clients information in regards to their language preference at recertification for programs.
- Determine if the current interpretive services continue to meet the needs of their clients.
- Ensure that staff members understand the LEP policies and procedures and how to implement them.
- Continue to seek feedback from staff, interpreters, and clients about the effectiveness of the LEP plan.

Staff training

Nobles County Community Service LEP Manager will distribute the updated LEP annually to all staff.

- Annual LEP training will be provided to all staff.
- LEP information will provided with new employee orientation.
- LEP training will include the following information:
 - Policies and procedures for accessing language assistance services.
 - Tips on working with interpreters.

- Proper documentation about client's language needs.
- Legal obligation to provide interpretive services to LEP clients.

Plan Distribution

Immediately upon approval the plan will be:

- Distributed to all staff
- Accessible in electronic form by all staff.
- Posted for public view in the glass case to the left of the receptionist area in the lobby. Though the plan will be in English DHS 4739 will be posted directly to the right of the document indicating that the receptionist should be made aware of the request for an interpreter, who will read the plan to the client upon request.

Complaints

The LEP Manager is designated to provide technical assistance and respond to inquiries and complaints from the public. Nobles County Community Services has a complaint resolution procedure to resolve civil rights and LEP related disputes and complaints. The LEP Manager is:

Isis Broeckel
Administrative Services Supervisor
Nobles County Community Services Agency
318 9th Street
PO BOX 189
Worthington MN 56187
(507) 295-5248

**County Community Services Complaint Notification Form
Discrimination in Service Delivery**

Client/Complainant Information

Client Name _____ Phone Number _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Name, address, and telephone number of someone who will know how to reach you (optional)

Information about discriminating agency and/or parties

Client Name _____ Phone Number _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Information about discrimination (check all that apply)

- Race Color National Origin Sex Creed Religion Political Beliefs Age
 Disability Public Assistance Status Sexual Orientation

If you filed this charge with any other agency, please give the name, address, and telephone number of the agency and the name of the investigator assigned to the case.

Details of discrimination (what happened, why you believed you were treated differently, how you were treated differently, the date of the incident, the name of the person(s) directly involved, and witnesses if any.)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

This information is available and accessible in formats for individuals with disabilities by calling 507-295-5213 or by using your preferred relay service. For information on disability rights and protections, contact the Agency's ADA coordinator.

Civil Rights Training Plan

Nobles County Community Services will distribute the NCCSA Civil Rights Training plan to staff. Periodic training will be provided to all NCCSA staff so staff with ongoing client contact understands their responsibilities and obligations under the civil rights laws and regulations. Training will also be provided as a part of new employee orientation.

In addition to the all staff training civil rights training provided; the USDA requires that all county agencies conduct SNAP civil rights training on an annual basis to all staff who administer the SNAP program, as well as staff who come in direct contact with the public, such as support staff, supervisors, and managers. The annual SNAP training will be presented using the DHS PowerPoint Presentation.

Training logs will be maintained to ensure that all employees have taken the required civil rights training.

Civil Right Plan Administration

Access

NCCSA will post the civil rights plan in two locations where it is available for all applicants, clients, members of the public, employees, volunteers, and contractors. The civil rights plan, including the equal opportunity policy, the complaint resolution procedures, disability policies and procedures, affirmative action plan, and the Limited English Proficiency policies will all be posted in the glass case in the reception area and also on the employee bulletin board. The DHS brochure “Do you have a disability?” will also be posted in our agency lobby where members of the public can see and read it. It will also be included in all packets as well as client rights and responsibilities. Notice will also be provided that if they would like the information that the civil rights plan is available upon request and in alternative formats if necessary.

The Civil Rights plan will also be posted on the NCCSA website.

Training

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