

The City of Homestead

The Americans with Disabilities Act

Interim Compliance Status Report



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The City of Homestead is committed to the principals of the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 as amended, and the provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. We are currently in the process of completing a full self-evaluation and transition plan as required by these regulations. However, from its inception, City staff has attempted to conform its practices to the requirement of these laws as best we could given the City financial challenges.

Below is a brief status of our accomplishment to date. We are continuing to expand on these, not waiting for the self-evaluation to be completed.

City Hall

The City Hall complex is connected by a series of accessible ramps and doorways throughout the complex in an effort to provide easy access to all. The City Hall complex provides easily accessible parking locations for customers needing assistance, as well as user friendly service counters.

Parks & Recreation

The City currently has 9 parks. The City has made great strides in retrofitting these facilities where possible to accommodate persons with disabilities. All buildings and park facilities are handicapped accessible with designated parking. However, in many of these facilities, it is physically and financially impossible to bring them into full compliance. Over the next five to six years, however, it is the City's intention to ensure full ADA compliance in its facilities that will be renovated, from ball fields and walking paths to restrooms.

Other City Buildings and Facilities

The City has made great strides in retrofitting these facilities where possible to accommodate persons with disabilities. All buildings are now accessible with designated parking. However, in many of these facilities, it is physically and financially impossible to bring them into full compliance.

Over the next five to six years, every facility will be surveyed and assessments made as to necessary renovations to ensure accessibility to all of its public buildings. Renovations will include full ADA compliance.

At this date, the City's program offerings are also available to persons with disabilities. It is expected that the self-evaluation lead to additional improvements.

Personnel/ Human Resources

Employee Handbook: The City of Homestead does not tolerate any form of harassment or discrimination and is committed to equal opportunity employment. These issues are all clearly addressed in City's Employee Handbook which outlines what is considered harassment and those groups, including the disabled who are protected under City's policy. The handbook is discussed with, and a copy given to, each new employee and is the cornerstone of our personnel policy.

The main areas of City's Human Resources Guide that relate to people with disabilities are listed below:

1. OUR POLICY ON COMPLIANCE WITH THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT AND REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS
2. OUR POLICY ON UNLAWFUL DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT
3. OUR POLICY ON EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Employee Reasonable Accommodation Requests: Reasonable accommodation requests are handled with the utmost respect and confidentiality. Human Resources Staff maintains separate files on a variety of areas including: personnel, payroll, benefits and medical/reasonable accommodation requests, if necessary.

Training: In addition to providing an environment that does not tolerate discrimination, the City requires that its employees are aware of issues facing people with disabilities. Human Resources is committed to providing regular training including the following areas:

-Sexual Harassment Awareness

-Requirement of ADA and Section 504

In addition to group trainings, employees are also encouraged to take classes in areas that impact their individual positions.

Recruiting and Training: The City actively recruits residents for employment. We do this by advertising in local newspapers and by posting job openings in community spaces at City Hall and on our website. We provide training opportunities through the development of special job classes of “trainees” for particular job classifications. This provides on-the-job training for individuals needing experience to meet the minimum of a particular job classification.

Communications/ Notices

Advertisements and Marketing: The two key areas of City programs that require advertising/marketing are meeting notices and advertisements for employment:

Meeting Notices

The City has been publishing its notices of meetings in local newspapers: The Miami Herald and the Miami Business Review. In particular, the City Council Agenda has been published with the required ADA notice of assistance available. Employment ads have also carries an antidiscrimination notice.

Job Postings

Employment opportunities are posted in a variety of publications and announcements are posted at City Hall and on the City’s website. All announcements state that the City of Homestead is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer through the standard, accepted notation: “EOE

M/F/D/V; Drug-Free Workplace.” Job information including job descriptions, employment applications and other forms can be downloaded from City’s website, <http://ci.homestead.fl.com>

On-Site Notices and Signage: Located at every City facility is an ADA Notice. This posting clearly outlines the City’s non-discrimination policy. It has the name, phone number and address for City’s ADA coordinator to call in case a person feels that he or she has been discriminated against. It also lists the TTY number to call. This notice may be printed upon request in 24 font and on a 11x17 inch sign.

City’s Website: A number of forms, lists and other vital information can be found on City’s website, <http://ci.homestead.fl.com>. These include: job openings, applications for employment, information about City’s different departments, key phone numbers, and the City’s ADA-related policies. The City is currently working on updating its website to ensure that most items on the website can be viewed by person’s with vision impairments.

TTY/ Interpretation Services: The City has arrangements with several private services for interpretations services. Requests for such services in connection with City business can be made with 48 hours notice through the Office of the City Clerk.

Policies/ Procedures/ Forms

Forms: The City of Homestead offers forms in a variety of formats to accommodate a variety of disabilities though we believe that the self-evaluation will provide additional guidance in this area. We freely mail forms to Residents and Applicants who are unable to obtain them at one of our offices. We offer forms in an enlarged font for those who have a visual disability upon request and make many of the forms available on the City’s website. Council meetings are available in audio format upon request. The City’s Staff is always available to help resident fill out forms.

Grievance Procedure and Complaint Process

Grievance Procedure: The City’s Grievance Process is outlined on this website provides a timeline for the grievance process. It describes the procedures to obtain a hearing and the procedures governing a hearing.

ADA Complaint/Resolution Forms*: This is used when a resident wishes to file a complaint against staff. It requires the City to respond to the resident/customer within 45 working days. It gives options for a meeting in person. After the complaint has been filed, the City will follow up with a Response stating the position of the City and offer options for substantive resolution of the grievance. It allows the client to appeal to a higher level if they desire. This form is also available on this web site.

* Both the Grievance and Complaint Resolution forms are optional and residents can file a complaint in person or over the telephone with the City's ADA Coordinator. If a resident wants to fill out a form and is unable to, then the appropriate staff person will assist them.

Use of Contracts

In order to provide opportunities to disadvantaged businesses, the City created the standard language in all of its contracts to ensure that the contractor is familiar with City policies regarding discrimination and its effort to expand opportunities for small and disadvantaged businesses. It requires that contractors also utilize these affirmative efforts to increase participation in such contracts.

Bidding and Request for Proposal (RFP) Process: The City maintains a list of registered vendors to whom it distributes any RFP or bidding opportunities, both in-house, on the website and through DemandStar and Aursi, on-line bidding services open to all bidders. The City publishes RFPs and request for bids in the following newspapers: The Miami Herald, DemandStar.com, Aursi.com.