

TITLE: Alternative Format Needs	
Approved by: <u>Francisco Reveles</u> <i>Francisco Reveles, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools</i>	Series: Philosophy Version: New Effective Date: 5/17/2023 Previous Policy Date: N/A Revised By: Committee Policy Number: SP 0415

Purpose

The Department of Health Care Services’ (DHCS) policy regarding the requirement for Local Educational Agencies (LEAs), Local Educational Consortiums (LECs), and school-based Local Governmental Agencies (LGAs) to provide alternative format is set forth in Policy and Procedure Letters (PPL) 21-017R and 23-004. LEAs, LECs, and LGAs must develop and implement a plan to meet alternative format request requirements as required by these PPLs.

These alternative formats may include:

- Braille.
- Audio format.
- Large print (no smaller than 20-point Arial font).
- Accessible electronic format, such as CD.
- Other auxiliary aides and services.¹

Background

Under federal and state law, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12101, et. seq.) and section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. § 794 (d)), discrimination against qualified members of the public participating in public programs based on disability is prohibited. A person is a qualified member of the public if they are an appropriate person with whom a public agency should or would communicate. The rights of persons with disabilities must be protected to ensure meaningful and equal access to public services, including but not limited to Medi-Cal and other programs that the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) oversees in whole or in part through partnerships with other entities, such as providers, facilities, managed care plans, vendors, contractors, counties, or other state agencies.

Accordingly, LEAs, LECs, LGAs, and their subcontractors must provide auxiliary aids and services to ensure that all qualified members of the public with disabilities, including Medi-Cal beneficiaries, can effectively communicate and participate in public programs, services and/or activities, which includes making program documents available in alternative formats (e.g., braille, large font, audio recording).

Auxiliary Aids and Services

The County Superintendent or designee shall ensure that YCOE provides appropriate auxiliary aids and services when necessary to afford individuals with disabilities equal opportunity to participate in or enjoy the benefits of a service, program, or activity. These aids and services may include, but are not limited to, qualified interpreters or readers, assistive listening devices, assistive technologies, or other modifications to increase accessibility to the districts and school web sites, notetakers, written materials, taped text, and Braille or large-print materials. Individuals with disabilities shall notify the Superintendent or designee if they have a disability that requires special assistance or services. Reasonable notification should be given prior to the YCOE-sponsored function, program, or meeting.

Alternative Format Requests

Opportunities for effective communication must be provided to all qualified members of the public with disabilities, including those who are simply seeking information about programs, services, or activities.

If YCOE receives a request for an alternative format from a qualified member of the public, all documents provided to the beneficiary must be provided within two months of the request. Furthermore, all subsequent documentation provided to that individual must be in the requested alternative format and encrypted, as needed. The requested alternative format should be stored to guarantee that these requirements were met with every communication.

Processing Alternative Format Requests

The County Superintendent hereby designates the following staff member as YCOE's ADA Coordinator:

Halee Pomeroy, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent
Yuba County Office of Education
1114 Yuba Street, Suite 218
Marysville, CA 95901
530-749-4853

They shall receive and address requests for accommodation submitted by individuals with disabilities and shall investigate and resolve complaints regarding their access to YCOE's programs, services, activities, or facilities. YCOE's ADA coordinator will use the preferred alternative format vendor, Akorbi when processing alternative format requests.

Additional information

For more information regarding alternative format selection requirements, refer to the Department of Health Care Services [All Plan Letter \(APL\) 22-002](#) (PDF).