

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF EASTMAN

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION POLICY

Adopted Board Action January 15, 2013

It is the policy of the Eastman Housing Authority (EHA) to ensure that communications with applicants, residents, employees, and members of the public with disabilities are as effective as communication with others

EHA, including its employees, agents, contract employees, and management companies/agents, shall furnish appropriate auxiliary aids and services, where necessary, to afford individuals with disabilities, including individuals with hearing or visual disabilities, an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy the benefits of, the programs, services and activities conducted by the EHA.

AUXILIARY AIDS AND SERVICES:

“Auxiliary aids and services” include, but are not limited to: (1) qualified sign language interpreters, note-takers, transcription services, written materials, telephone handset amplifiers, assistive listening devices, assistive listening systems, telephones compatible with hearing aids, closed caption decoders, open and closed captioning, telecommunications devices for deaf persons (TDD), videotext displays, or other effective methods of making aurally delivered materials available to individuals with hearing impairments; and, (2) qualified readers, taped texts, audio recordings, Braille materials, large print materials, or other effective methods of making visually delivered materials available to individuals with visual impairments.

REQUEST FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION:

When an auxiliary aid or service is required to ensure effective communication, the EHA will provide an opportunity for an individual with a disability to request the auxiliary aid or service of his or her choice. The EHA will give primary consideration to the choice expressed by the individual. “Primary consideration” means that the EHA will honor the choice, unless it can show that another equally effective means of communication is available; or, that use of the means chosen would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of its service, program, or activity or in an undue financial and administrative burden.

The individual will submit his/her request for auxiliary aids or services to the appropriate EHA official designated below. All requests shall be dated and time stamped upon receipt by the appropriate EHA official.

Within two (2) business days of receipt of the individual’s request, the designated EHA official will consult with the individual with the disability when the preferred type of



auxiliary aid or service is not available or not required, and the official is attempting to ascertain whether an alternative means of communication will ensure effective communication.

Within five (5) business days following receipt of the effective communication request(s), the designated EHA official will provide the requesting individual with a written notification of the proposed auxiliary aid or service to be provided.

The Executive Director will maintain copies of all requests for effective communication and the EHA's response, including final disposition, for the duration of this Agreement.

Individual requests for Effective Communication will be directed to the following EHA officials:

Resident Requests:

EHA residents requests for auxiliary aids or services should be made to the Housing Specialist at the EHA Administrative office.

Applicant Requests:

Applicants for the EHA housing should make requests for auxiliary aids and services to the EHA's Effective Communication Coordinator. The EHA's Effective Communication Coordinator shall report directly to the EHA's Executive Director.

Other Requests:

Requests from members of the public who wish to participate in programs, services and/or activities of the EHA shall submit their request(s) for auxiliary aids and services to the EHA's Effective Communication Coordinator. The EHA's Effective Communications Coordinator shall report directly to the EHA's Executive Director.

However, individuals with disabilities who request auxiliary aids or services for public events such as public hearings, Board hearings, public meetings, etc., shall make their requests no later than forty-eight (48) hours prior to the event.

GRIEVANCES PROCEDURES:

If the requesting individual with a disability is not satisfied with the EHA's response to the individual's request(s) for an auxiliary aid or service, the individual may file a formal grievance, including appropriate supporting documentation, if any, with the EHA's Executive Director. The grievance may be communicated orally or in writing. However, all oral grievances must be reduced to writing and maintained in the EHA's files. In addition, the EHA shall provide assistance to any individual who requests assistance in filing a grievance, including assistance in reducing the individual's grievance to writing. All grievances shall be dated and time stamped.



Within seventy-two (72) hours of receipt, the EHA's Executive Director will respond to the individual's grievance.

The Executive Director will provide his/her formal decision, in writing, within ten (10) business days after receipt of the grievance.

If the individual is dissatisfied with the EHA's Executive Director determination, the individual may pursue remedies under the EHA's HUD-approved Grievance Procedures.

