



# **ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**

## **For year 2012**

Jan 2012

## Summary

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 mandates, among other things, accessibility to services, goods, facilities, privileges, advantages, and accommodations for individuals with disabilities in the United States. It is the intention of House of Freedom to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act in the provision of an accessible facility and safe environment for persons served, staff, visitors and the community.

This plan describes the measures that House of Freedom has taken to identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with or without disabilities who work, use, visit or lives in our facilities.

## Objectives

- Describe initiatives that will remove and prevent barriers for people with or without disabilities.
- Describe the process by which House of Freedom will identify, remove, and prevent barriers.
- Describe the measures to be taken in the coming year (**2012**) to identify, remove, and prevent barriers.
- Describes how this accessibility plan will be made available to the public.

## Definitions

**Barrier** - anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability - physical, architectural, information or communication, attitudinal, technological, a policy or practice.

Any condition that makes it difficult to make progress or to achieve an objective.

### Disability

a) any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness – includes diabetes, epilepsy, brain injury, amputation, lack of physical coordination, blindness or visual impairment, deafness or hearing impairment, muteness or speech impairment.

b) Mental impairment or development disability

c) Learning disability or a dysfunction in one or more process involved in understanding or using symbols of spoken language

d) Mental disorder

e) The assessment of the disability of any person served or employee will be assessed and evaluated through applications for employment and development of Psychosocial assessment. As the need arises for reasonable accommodations, this will be immediately addressed by the Director of Operations and Clinical Director. A disability may be a temporary or a permanent infirmity.

## House of Freedom is committed to:

- Consulting with people with disabilities and/or persons served and employees in the development and review of its annual accessibility plan.
- Ensuring that policies and procedures are consistent with the principles of accessibility.
- Improving access to facilities, policies, programs, treatment, and services for persons served, parents/guardians and other members of the community.

The Executive Committee will prepare the annual accessibility plans that will enable House of Freedom to meet these commitments.

## Our Mission

The *primary mission* of House of Freedom, Inc. is to provide comprehensive individualized care in a safe and compassionate environment to allow each person served the opportunity to attain and maintain their highest possible physical, psychological and spiritual well-being. This is accomplished through the core principles of **Caring, Compassion, and Commitment** in incorporating the consumer's strengths, input, abilities, preferences, unique circumstances, and specific resources throughout the treatment experience.

## Preventing New Barriers

House of Freedom is committed to creating an environment that is accessible to all people, regardless of ability. Through the annual accessibility planning process, House of Freedom's practices, policies, services and programs will be assessed to ensure continuous improvement in accessibility.

## Services

House of Freedom offers outpatient services, a less intensive level of care, targeting adults and adolescents needing anything from individual, group, and family counseling, drug and alcohol evaluation based on a researched based tool, the Addiction Severity Index, aftercare groups, case management, and drug screening services.

House of Freedom was awarded an exemplary recommendation from CARF surveyors in October 2011 for services that we have extended to families that are recovering from the effects of addiction and outpatient services for substance abusing clients in the area of Puerto Rico. In this center, we offer psycho-educational groups as well as faith-based meetings in order to increase knowledge about addiction and the hope that recovery from drugs is a possibility.

In order to increase the accessibility of services offered, House of Freedom has obtain CET (Certified E-Therapist) certifications for some of its personnel. This will allow for our services to reach a broad audience that perhaps does not have the means to physically come to our facilities. These services that House of Freedom is currently developing will be performed via telephone, e-mail, and/or video conferencing. This will allow individuals who not only are unable to come to our facilities due to lack of transportation, but also for those who might be ill, for senior citizens, for those who are afraid to be seen at the substance abuse facility, among other different situations. In addition, this program will provide support and target the needs of the person's

served family members who are located internationally and/or far away, in which cases might make it impossible for them to commute to our facility.

## **Architectural Design**

There are wheelchair accessible restrooms throughout the building as well as a wheelchair ramp allowing access to the building. House of Freedom facilities are accessible to individuals with disabilities. House of Freedom will continue to evaluate the premises, including the reception area and first floor offices to ensure needs of individuals with disabilities are met.

Our goal for 2012 is to rearrange the reception area in order to make it more accessible for persons with disability.

Our treatment facilities and offices have clear signage to direct persons in the event of an emergency situation. Our facilities have been renovated throughout the years to comply with requirements and meet the needs of our persons served. All staff members are charged with the responsibility for evaluating the accessibility needs of those we provide services to.

Our goal for 2012 is to expand doorways in men's and women's bathroom allowing them for better wheelchair access.

A barrier House of Freedom faces is not having an elevator, which would not allow wheelchair access to the second floor. For this reason, it has been decided that all treatment services be provided in the first floor.

## **Environmental**

House of Freedom is located near the entrance to Downtown Kissimmee and less than a quarter of a mile from Florida Hospital in Orange Blossom Trail, Kissimmee.

The décor of our offices and treatment center will be continually evaluated to ensure that there is comfort level for the persons served.

## **Attitudinal**

Input from persons served will be established through satisfaction surveys and a suggestion box that is located in the reception office area. The exclusionary criterion for services does not include people with disabilities. Each visitor, person served and/or staff member is to be treated with the same respect and with the same goal of increasing the quality of life for the persons served.

Staff regularly will involve themselves in courses, programs and sensitivity training related to treatment programs. This will assure an environment that respects the privacy of all persons served, regardless of any limitation.

## **Policy, Practice and Procedures**

Improvements to our policies and procedures are continuously being revised to reflect specific changes pertaining to persons served such as those with psychiatric and substance abuse disorders. Our commitment to improving lives for a healthy community focuses on the abilities of individuals, recognizes the role and support of the family, and promotes individualized choices by persons served and their families.

## **Communication**

As a Department of Children and Families licensed organization, House of Freedom is entitled to receive interpreter services for people who are deaf or hard of hearing and those who speak languages other than English.

In addition, all of our staff is bi-lingual, including counselors and those who provide direct services to persons served. House of Freedom has eliminated barriers and is working towards providing barrier-free access to communications. We strive to ensure that persons served are able to understand information presented to them - this will continually be assessed.

## **Transportation**

House of Freedom makes every effort necessary to increase the chances of success for our persons served by helping to identify and correct those transportation barriers that exist within our community. Our offices and treatment facilities are conveniently located near public bus transportation stops.

House of Freedom has available a fifteen-passenger and a 25-passenger vans to accommodate the needs of persons served.

## **Financial**

House of Freedom will continue monitoring financial growth. We will be put in place procedures to ensure that all legal issues are addressed. Certified Public Accountant services will be retained to manage financial accounting and financial audits will be completely yearly.

House of Freedom will promote activities to raise financial and awareness for support of treatment programs and the persons served.

For individuals with minor children living in the State of Florida that are requesting and needing our services and are unable to pay for the costs, TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) program is available which may cover up to 80% of the total costs for substance abuse treatment services.

For other individuals that are Florida residents, but are unable to pay for services, may also apply for funding assistance through the ATR (Access to Recovery) program, which may cover up to 30% of the total costs for substance abuse treatment services.

## Communication of the Plan

This accessibility plan will be available upon request and is posted on the organization's website. House of Freedom will explore other accessible formats and alternative communication strategies to distribute future accessibility plans.

### Barrier identification table 2011 Accessibility goals

Barrier Identified	Location	Comments
Reception area not wheelchair accessible	Front building first floor	Will rearrange and reconstruct reception entrance for wheelchair access
Bathrooms in treatment facilities not wheelchair accessible	Back building first floor	Will reconstruct doorways for wheelchair accessibility
Exit door towards back of building opening with difficulty	Front building first floor, near reception area	ADDRESSED/COMPLETED
Handicap parking not identified	Front building parking	ADDRESSED/COMPLETED

### Barrier identification table 2012 Accessibility goals

Barrier Identified	Location	Comments
Reception area not wheelchair accessible	Front building first floor	Rearrange and reconstruct reception entrance for wheelchair access
Bathrooms in treatment facilities not wheelchair accessible	Back building first floor	Expand doorways for wheelchair accessibility
Website currently in English only	Internet	Translate information and include Spanish option