

Royston Housing Authority

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION POLICY

Adopted: June 18, 2012

Effective: June 18, 2012

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

RHA, 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 RHA.

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 RHA will provide an opportunity for an individual with a disability to request the auxiliary aid or service of his or her choice. The RHA will give primary consideration to the choice expressed by the individual. "Primary consideration" means that the RHA 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 RHA official designated below. All requests shall be dated and time stamped upon receipt by the appropriate RHA official.

Within forty-eight (48) hours of receipt of the individual's request, the designated RHA 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 RHA official will provide the requesting individual with a written notification of the proposed auxiliary aid or service to be provided.

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

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

- The RHA Executive Director
- The RHA Office Manager
- The RHA Resident Services Coordinator

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 RHA'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. The grievance may be communicated orally or in writing. However, all oral grievances must be reduced to writing and maintained in the RHA's files. In addition, the RHA 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 Executive Director of the RHA will respond to the individual's grievance.

The Executive Director of the RHA 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 Executive Director of the RHA determination, the individual may pursue remedies under the RHA's HUD-FHEO-approved Grievance Procedures.