ENGINEERING

Florida ADA Compliance Policy

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State of Florida Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance Policy

1. Purpose

This policy affirms the State of Florida's commitment to ensuring equal opportunity for qualified individuals with disabilities in all its services, programs, and activities. The purpose of this policy is to establish clear, consistent guidelines for providing reasonable accommodations and maintaining an accessible environment, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Florida Civil Rights Act.

2. Scope

Here are a few polished versions of the provided text, each with a slightly different focus:

This version combines related ideas for a more direct and readable statement.

> This policy applies to all State of Florida government entities and their personnel, including employees, contractors, volunteers, and agents. It governs all aspects of state operations, including but not limited to:

This policy applies to all members of the public, applicants for employment, and current employees with disabilities.

3. Policy Statement

The State of Florida will not discriminate against any qualified individual with a disability. We are committed to providing equal access and reasonable accommodations to ensure that individuals with disabilities can participate in, and benefit from, our programs, services, and employment opportunities. This commitment is guided by the following principles:

General Non-Discrimination

No qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination in any program, service, or activity conducted by the State of Florida.

Reasonable Accommodations in Employment

The State of Florida will provide reasonable accommodations to qualified applicants and employees with disabilities, unless doing so would cause an undue hardship. An accommodation is any change in the work environment or in the way things are customarily done that enables an individual with a disability to enjoy equal employment opportunities. The determination of a reasonable accommodation will be made through a timely, good-faith, and interactive process between the individual and the designated state representative (e.g., supervisor, Human Resources).

Accessibility of Programs, Services, and Activities

The State of Florida will operate its services, programs, and activities so that, when viewed in their entirety, they are readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. This includes making reasonable modifications to policies, practices, and procedures where necessary to avoid discrimination, unless a modification would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity.

Effective Communication

The State of Florida will take appropriate steps to ensure that communications with applicants, employees, and members of the public with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. The state will provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services, such as qualified sign language interpreters, large print documents, or other alternate formats, free of charge and in a timely manner, to ensure effective communication for individuals with speech, hearing, or vision impairments.

Physical and Digital Accessibility

All new construction and alterations to state facilities will comply with the ADA Standards for Accessible Design. The State of Florida is also committed to ensuring the accessibility of its digital content and information technology, including websites, web applications, and electronic documents, striving for conformance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1, Level AA standard or subsequent revisions.

4. Procedures

Procedure for Requesting an Accommodation

1. **Initiate Request:** An employee, applicant, or member of the public may request an accommodation by notifying their supervisor, the hiring manager, the program administrator, or the designated ADA Coordinator. The request can be made orally or in writing.
2. **Engage in the Interactive Process (for employment):** Upon receiving a request, the relevant department will engage in a timely, good-faith interactive process with the individual to clarify their needs and identify an appropriate and effective reasonable accommodation. Medical documentation may be requested if the disability and need for accommodation are not obvious.
3. **Determine and Implement Accommodation:** The department, in consultation with the ADA Coordinator and the individual, will determine the appropriate accommodation. The approved accommodation will be implemented promptly. If a request is denied, the reason for the denial will be provided in writing.

Grievance Procedure

Individuals who believe they have been subjected to discrimination on the basis of disability may file a grievance. This procedure is designed to provide a prompt and equitable resolution of complaints.

1. **File a Grievance:** The grievance should be filed in writing with the agency's designated ADA Coordinator within 60 calendar days of the alleged violation. The grievance should contain the name and contact information of the complainant and a description of the alleged discriminatory action.
2. **Investigation:** The ADA Coordinator will conduct an investigation, which may include interviews with the complainant, relevant employees, and witnesses.
3. **Resolution:** The ADA Coordinator will issue a written response within 30 calendar days of receiving the grievance, outlining a resolution, and if applicable, options for substantive appeal.

Use of this grievance procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies, such as filing a complaint with the U.S. Department of Justice or the Florida Commission on Human Relations.

Designation of ADA Coordinator

The State of Florida designates an ADA Coordinator responsible for coordinating compliance efforts. Each state agency shall also designate an agency-level ADA Coordinator. The coordinators are responsible for overseeing compliance activities,

providing technical assistance, and managing accommodation requests and grievance procedures.

5. Compliance

Monitoring and Review

The State ADA Coordinator will work with agency coordinators to periodically review and evaluate policies, procedures, and practices to ensure ongoing compliance with the ADA. This may include self-evaluations, accessibility audits of facilities and websites, and reviewing accommodation data.

Training

All employees, especially managers, supervisors, and human resources staff, will receive periodic training on the requirements of the ADA and their responsibilities under this policy. Training will cover topics such as recognizing accommodation requests, engaging in the interactive process, and promoting a culture of accessibility and inclusion.

Enforcement

Adherence to this policy is mandatory. Any employee found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, in accordance with applicable state personnel rules and regulations.