



## DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING

Promoting the wise use of land – Helping to build great communities

### Section 504 Policy

#### County of San Luis Obispo – May 2015

In accordance with the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC 794) and with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development regulations that implement Section 504 (24 CFR 8.4, 8.6, 8.51, 8.53 & 8.54), the County of San Luis Obispo does not discriminate against qualified, disabled individuals in its programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance. This applies to any housing, aid, benefit or service in a federally funded program or activity of the County.

**Equal treatment for individuals with handicaps in federally funded programs and activities (24 CFR 8.4).** The County, when providing housing, aid, benefit, and services through a program or activity that receives Federal financial Assistance from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (“HUD”) **may not**, solely on the basis of handicap:

- Deny or limit a qualified individual with handicap(s) from receiving or benefiting from the housing, aid, benefit, or services that are provided to other individuals. Such housing, aid, benefit, or services that are provided to qualified, disabled individuals shall be equal, equivalent and as effective as those provided to other individuals.
- Utilize criteria or methods that would: 1) subject qualified, disabled individuals to discrimination on the basis of their handicap(s), or that would: 2) defeat or impair the objective or delivery of the County’s federally assisted program or activity to qualified disabled individuals.
- Knowingly use a site or location that defeats or impairs the objective or delivery of the federally funded program or activity with respect to qualified individuals with handicaps.
- Equal treatment for disabled individuals applies to any housing, aid, benefit, or service that is provided in or through a facility that has been constructed, altered, leased or rented, or acquired, in whole or in part, with Federal financial assistance from HUD.
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**Employment:** The County of San Luis Obispo does not discriminate on the basis of disability in its hiring or employment practices.

**Effective Communications:** The County of San Luis Obispo will generally, upon request, provide appropriate aids and services leading to effective communication of disabled individual so they can participate equally in the County’s federally funded programs, services, and activities. Appropriate aids may include providing listening devices in the County hearing chambers, documents in Braille, and other ways of making information and communications accessible to people who have speech, hearing, or vision impairments.

**Modifications to Policies and Procedures:** The County of San Luis Obispo will make all reasonable modifications to policies and programs to ensure that people with disabilities have an equal opportunity to enjoy all of its federally funded programs, services, and activities. For example, individuals with bona fide service animals are welcomed in County offices, even where pets are generally prohibited.

**Continuous Notice:** The County of San Luis Obispo shall provide continuous notice to the public that it does not discriminate on the basis of handicap when implementing the programs and activities that receive Federal funding assistance. Such noticing may take the form of Notices posted in public areas, and by means of non-discrimination statements contained within applications for federal funds and within newspaper notices.

**Section 504 Grievance Procedure:** Complaints that a federally funded program or activity of the County is not accessible to persons with disabilities should be directed to the Section 504 Coordinator in the County's Department of Planning & Building. The Section 504 Coordinator maintains a Grievance Procedure that incorporates appropriate due process standards and that provides for a prompt, equitable resolution of Section 504 grievances / complaints. Please note: Pursuant to 24 CFR 8.53(b), the Section 504 Grievance Procedure is not required to address complaints from applicants for employment or from applicants for admission to housing covered by Section 504.

**Section 504 Training & Implementation:** The County of San Luis Obispo will take all reasonable measures to ensure that: 1) its Section 504 coordinator receives the available training on the Coordinator's roles and duties, and that: 2) when applicable, its Section 504 coordinator will be involved with Section 504 requirements at the policy and program levels.

Anyone who requires an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures in order to participate in a federally funded program, service, or activity of the County of San Luis Obispo, should contact the Department of Planning & Building, Section 504 Coordinator. With regards to meetings, public hearings or events, any requests to the Section 504 Coordinator should be submitted at least five (5) working days before a scheduled meeting or event whenever possible.

Section 504 does not require the County of San Luis Obispo to take any action that would fundamentally alter the nature of its programs or services, or impose an undue financial or administrative burden.

The County of San Luis Obispo will not place a surcharge on a particular individual with a disability or on any group of individuals with disabilities to cover the cost of providing auxiliary aids/services or reasonable modifications of its policies.