

Mentally STRONG Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy

Mentally STRONG is committed to providing equal access and non-discriminatory services to all individuals, including those with disabilities, in accordance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This policy outlines the guidelines and procedures to ensure compliance with ADA regulations in the provision of our psychiatric services.

1. Definitions:

a. **Disability:** As defined by the ADA, a disability refers to a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a record of such impairment, or being regarded as having such impairment.

b. **Reasonable Accommodation:** A modification or adjustment to policies, practices, or procedures that enables individuals with disabilities to participate in the services provided by Mentally STRONG.

2. Non-Discrimination:

a. Mentally STRONG will not discriminate against any individual with a disability in the provision of services.

b. All individuals will be treated with respect and dignity, regardless of their disability status.

3. Accessibility:

a. Physical Accessibility:

i. Mentally STRONG will ensure that its facilities are accessible to individuals with disabilities.

ii. Reasonable efforts will be made to remove physical barriers and provide accessible parking, entrances, restrooms, and waiting areas.

b. Communication Accessibility:

i. Mentally STRONG will provide effective communication for individuals with disabilities.

ii. Staff members will receive training on effective communication techniques and assistive devices to ensure effective communication with clients who have sensory impairments.

iii. Alternative formats and auxiliary aids, such as sign language interpreters, will be made available upon request, through in person or technology services, in accordance with the ADA guidelines.

4. Reasonable Accommodations:

a. Mentally STRONG Outpatient Psychiatric Center will make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal access and participation in our services for individuals with disabilities, to the extent that it does not pose an undue burden on the organization.

b. Mentally STRONG will work with the client and relevant staff members to determine appropriate accommodations based on individual needs and documented disabilities. Reasonable accommodations may include, but are not limited to:

- i. Modification of policies, practices, or procedures.
- ii. Provision of auxiliary aids and services.
- iii. Adjustments to scheduling or appointment procedures.
- iv. Physical modifications or accessibility enhancements, where feasible and necessary.

5. Grievance Procedure:

a. Clients who believe they have been subjected to discrimination or denied reasonable accommodations may file a complaint by emailing questions@mentallystrong.com.

b. The complaint should be submitted in writing and include the client's contact information, a detailed description of the alleged violation, and any supporting documentation.

c. The Practice Administrator will investigate the complaint promptly, maintain confidentiality, and respond to the client within a reasonable timeframe.

d. If the resolution of the complaint is unsatisfactory, the client may file a complaint with the appropriate state or federal agency responsible for enforcing ADA regulations.

6. Staff Training and Awareness:

a. Mentally STRONG will provide training to all staff members on ADA requirements, disability awareness, effective communication strategies, and reasonable accommodations. Trainings will take place bi-annually on an ongoing basis for staff members to ensure awareness of and compliance with ADA regulations.

7. Review and Revision:

a. This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure compliance with ADA regulations and any updates or changes in the law.

8. Confidentiality:

- a. All information related to a client's disability and accommodations will be treated with the utmost confidentiality, in compliance with applicable privacy laws and regulations.
- b. Only staff members directly involved in the provision of services and accommodations will have access to such information on a need-to-know basis.
- c. Clients' consent will be obtained before disclosing any disability-related information to third parties, except as required by law or with the client's written authorization.

9. Compliance Responsibilities:

- a. All staff members, including management, are responsible for upholding this ADA Compliance Policy and ensuring its effective implementation within their respective roles and areas of responsibility.
- b. Managers and supervisors have an additional responsibility to support and facilitate reasonable accommodations for their assigned staff members who may have disabilities.
- c. Failure to comply with this policy may result in appropriate disciplinary actions, up to and including termination of employment, in accordance with the organization's disciplinary procedures.

This policy is intended to ensure compliance with ADA regulations and promote equal access and non-discrimination for individuals with disabilities seeking services at Mentally STRONG. It is the responsibility of all staff members to familiarize themselves with this policy and actively support its implementation.

SUMMARY

The Mentally STRONG Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance Policy ensures equal access and non-discrimination for individuals with disabilities seeking psychiatric services. It covers definitions, non-discrimination, accessibility, reasonable accommodations, grievance procedures, staff training, policy review, confidentiality, and compliance responsibilities. Key points include providing physical and communication accessibility, offering reasonable accommodations, addressing grievances, training staff, and maintaining confidentiality. Compliance with this policy is mandatory for all staff members to ensure inclusivity and adherence to ADA regulations.

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