

## **ADA PAGING GUIDELINES**

### **Minnesota Department of Corrections**

The Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC) ensures that incarcerated persons/residents who are deaf or hard of hearing have access to an effective paging system to notify them of oral announcements made over the public address system in their assigned living units, particularly with respect to scheduled activities and movements for meals, recreation, appointments, and programming.

Incarcerated persons/residents who are deaf or hard of hearing and who have been approved to use a pager must be sent a preprogrammed or customized message notifying them of every general announcement made over the public address system in their living units, including those related to security counts and large group movements or mass movements for meals, recreation, pill window, canteen, programming assignments, lockdown, tornado warning, etc. Except in emergencies, pages for general announcements must be made immediately after the general announcement is made over the public address system. A pager message must also be sent for any individual appointments they have that require movement (for example, medical appointments, legal calls, or visits). The sergeant/officer in charge (OIC) of the living unit or program area is responsible for ensuring that required pages are sent.

#### **A. Access to ADA Paging**

1. If an incarcerated person/resident is identified as deaf or hard of hearing during a medical assessment upon initial intake or transfer from another facility, the facility ADA coordinator must determine whether the individual has an immediate need for access to an ADA pager to enable them to receive oral announcements in their living unit and to follow required movements.
  - a) If the need is immediate, the facility ADA coordinator must approve the individual for access to the ADA pager and notify the unit sergeant/OIC and the unit lieutenant.
  - b) If the need is not immediate, pager access must await approval by the facility ADA committee.
2. If an incarcerated person/resident self-identifies as deaf or hard of hearing and wishes to have access to the ADA paging system, they may submit a Request for Modification in accordance with Policy 203.250, Modifications for Incarcerated Persons/Residents with Disabilities.
3. Upon receipt of a request for modification, the facility ADA coordinator must assess the need for access to the ADA paging system in accordance with the procedures set forth in Policy 203.250.
4. When an incarcerated person/resident has been approved to access the paging system by the facility ADA coordinator or committee, the living unit OIC or designee must provide them with a pager and charging cord, have them complete a Pager Equipment Agreement, and assign them a pager number and groups in the paging system so they can begin receiving messages regarding announcements and movements (e.g., meals, recreation, medical appointments). Information is documented in COMS under the ADA tab for the equipment.
5. Living unit staff must send pages for every general announcement made over the public address system in the unit, including such examples as announcements regarding counts; mass movements for meals, recreation, pill window, canteen, and linen switch out; lockdown; tornado warning; and programming assignments. Except in emergencies, pages for general announcements must be made immediately after the general announcement is made over the public address system.
6. Announcements or customized messages for an individual who has been approved to use a pager must also be sent over the pager system to that specific individual.

**B. Unit and Facility Transfers**

When an incarcerated person/resident who has been approved to use the ADA paging system moves from one living unit to another within the facility or transfers from the facility to another facility, the OIC, designee, or transfer coordinator is responsible for contacting the receiving unit or the receiving facility's facility administrator to communicate that the individual is approved for accommodations before the transfer occurs so accommodations are readily available and implemented upon transfer.

1. For internal facility moves, the individual will keep their pager and charging cord. The facility administrator, OIC, or designee updates the pager and groups in the system.
2. For facility-to-facility transfers, the individual must return the pager and charging cord to the OIC prior to the transfer.
  - a) The OIC must return the equipment to the facility administrator and communicate to the administrator and to the transfer coordinator that the individual is moving to another facility.
  - b) The sending facility's transfer coordinator must check for accommodations and send the information to the receiving facility's transfer coordinator.
  - c) The receiving facility's OIC, facility administrator, or designee issues a pager and charging cord and has the individual sign a new Pager Equipment Agreement provided by the facility ADA coordinator. Information is documented in COMS under the ADA tab for the new equipment.

**C. Raising and Responding to Paging Issues**

1. Incarcerated people/residents who are experiencing issues with their assigned pager, including not receiving required pages, should send a kite to the unit lieutenant and facility ADA coordinator.
2. Staff who are otherwise aware of possible issues with ADA paging, including complaints about not receiving pages, must complete and submit an incident report documenting the issue, with a copy to the unit lieutenant or the facility ADA coordinator.
3. The unit lieutenant or facility ADA coordinator must follow up on any complaints, whether received by kite or incident report, that pages are not being sent when required. Such follow-up should include reviewing electronic pager records to determine whether living unit staff have or have not sent any required pages. If staff have failed to send required pages, the lieutenant or facility ADA coordinator must take steps to ensure the issue is appropriately addressed through performance management or other corrective action. This may include reporting the issue to the appointing authority per Policy 103.219, Employee Misconduct Investigation and Discipline.