



Policy and Procedure – Inclusion/ Exclusion

PURPOSE:

The primary purpose of the VIA LINK Database is to develop, manage, and maintain one consistent, comprehensive and accurate collection of social service resources providing assistance to residents of SELA. Segments of this database may be regularly published electronically or in print format for public access.

Types of providers listed

Inclusion in our resource database is free to eligible providers.

Included in our resource database are the following:

- 1) Non-profit agencies providing services to the residents of Southeast Louisiana.
- 2) Federal, State, Parish or Local governmental entities that may provide information or services to the community.
- 3) Organizations (such as churches or social clubs) which offer a service to the community at large—not just their own members.
- 4) Private companies which provide a community service either free or with a sliding scale of fees (see Eligibility Notes below).
- 5) Hospitals, health clinics, and personal and intermediate care homes.
- 6) Organizations outside of our geographic parameters which provide a service not available locally, but available to residents of Southeast Louisiana.
- 7) Professional organizations (especially those organizations in the social service field).
- 8) Advocacy groups.
- 9) Toll free lines, if they can be accessed by residents in our catchment area, and if they offer some sort of social or community service (e.g., FEMA tele-registration).

Eligibility

Included entities must:

- 1) be operating legally, with both facilities and staff that are licensed and credentialed to provide the services offered,
- 2) have been in operation under a set of written documents of governance (policies, procedures, etc.) for at least one year,
- 3) offer social services that are available to the general public of Southeast Louisiana and are not limited to members of specific groups or organizations,
- 4) be legally organized as a 501(c)(3) organization, a government provider (federal, state or local), or a for-profit entity (LLC or Inc.) that offers a unique social service with a documented policy of offering that service at a significantly reduced fee for those who would otherwise be unable to afford that service. Supporting documentation must be provided to VIA LINK.

Eligibility notes:

- The listed service must generally be affordable. Accessibility implies a sliding fee scale (negotiable to \$0) ensuring that services can be obtained by people who cannot afford private sector services.
- Organizations which provide services in health, welfare, support, recreation, education or advocacy and are not-for-profit corporations (with Internal Revenue Service 501(c)(3) status), or do not charge fees for service are welcome additions to VIA LINK's resource database.
- Government agencies (federal, state, parish, city) which provide services in the areas of health, welfare, recreation, or education may also be included. No attempt will be made to list all governmental agencies or departments.
- For-profit organizations are considered on an individual basis. Inclusion is based upon affordability, uniqueness of service, lack of comparable services available through not-for-profit agencies or groups, and the degree of need for the service.
- VIA LINK reserves the right to edit resource data to meet format, AIRS guidelines, and space requirements (see Appendix B).
- Agencies or organizations that have been in existence for a minimum of one year and are expected to continue operation may be considered for the VIA LINK resource database.
- Grounds for exclusion may include, but are not limited to: service non-delivery, fraud, misrepresentation, discrimination, violation of federal, state, or local laws or regulations, or criminal activities.
- VIA LINK reserves the right to refuse or discontinue listings for organizations that have had serious complaints lodged against them with any regulatory body or with VIA LINK staff.
- Entities who do not respond to requests from VIA LINK for annual verification or updates of profile data will be excluded from publicly accessible data products.

Inclusion of an agency or organization does not imply endorsement by VIA LINK

Profile Additions

Entities eligible for inclusion must apply electronically or complete a paper application (Appendix A). Exceptions to the application process are government entities. An application is necessary to document profile information accurately and completely, to establish a foundation for assigning appropriate AIRS Taxonomy, and to encourage a culture of partnership which is one of the foundations of a successful database maintenance protocol.

Shortly, electronic application may be accomplished through a web interface. Instructions will be provided through the web site and written instructions may be requested by e-mail, post, or fax. Eligibility criteria are published on the web interface. New applications are assessed and added or rejected based on the eligibility criteria listed above. Requested changes to existing profiles are assessed and added or rejected based on suitability and consistency with overall database goals.

Application may also be made by completing a paper application form. These can be requested and sent out by e-mail, post, or fax. Completed forms are returned by e-mail, post, or fax. New applications are assessed and added or rejected based upon the eligibility criteria listed above. Requested changes to existing profiles are assessed and added or rejected based on suitability and consistency with overall database goals.

Follow up is done on incomplete applications.