

# Residential Service Guidelines

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The Division of Developmental Disabilities wants people who receive residential services to experience these benefits:

- Health and Safety
- Personal Power and Choice
- Status, Personal Value and Positive Recognition By Self and Others
- A Range of Experiences Which Help People Participate in the Physical and Social life of Their Communities
- Good Relationships with Friends and Relatives
- Competence to Manage Daily Activities and Pursue Personal Goals

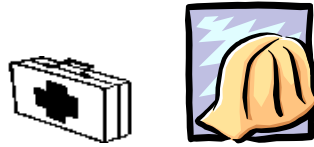
The benefits characterize good quality life for all people and people with developmental disabilities should not be deprived of them because they need specific services to meet their special needs.

Effective residential service providers learn to offer necessary assistance with housing and daily living in ways that increase people's experience of these benefits. Since each person has unique preferences for realizing these benefits and makes unique decisions when facing conflicts among them, this learning process will challenge every program's capacity to offer individualized service. Because current regulations governing residential services focus on different requirements, implementing these guidelines may require planned changes in the organization of a program's resources.

This document contains a statement of each benefit, a narrative description of the important elements in each benefit, the criteria which will determine the accomplishment of the benefit and a statement relating to how each criteria will be measured.

# Health and Safety

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People should live safely in environments common to other citizens with reasonable supports offered to simultaneously protect their health and safety while promoting community inclusion.

Many people with developmental disabilities rely on residential services for assistance in safe and healthy daily living. Some people are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse; some need substantial assistance to promote their health.

Residential services show due regard for health and safety when they:

- Meet or exceed applicable federal, state and local fire, health and safety regulations, policies and procedures
- Carefully consider each person's health status and regularly review the effectiveness of staff efforts to assist the person to maintain good health
- Carefully consider each person's vulnerability to abuse, neglect or exploitation and regularly review the effectiveness of staff efforts to offer appropriate protection
- Recognize the importance of the other benefits— relationships, choice, valued roles, integrative activities and increased competence— to safety and health and develop creative ways to meet health and safety needs while increasing the experience of the other benefits



## Power and Choice

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People should experience power, control and ownership of their personal affairs. Expression of personal power and choice are essential elements in the lives of people. Such expressions help people gain autonomy, become self-governing and pursue their own interests and goals.

People grow and develop by expressing their own unique preferences, by choosing and trying for their own important objectives, regardless of whether or not they succeed in getting them. People also learn by being able to say what they want and figuring out how to obtain other people's cooperation.

Some people with developmental disabilities rely on residential services for support and encouragement to grow and develop, to gain autonomy, become self-governing and pursue their own interests and goals. Residential programs should take positive actions to protect and promote the dignity, privacy, legal rights, autonomy and individuality of each person who receives services.

In order to respond effectively residential programs and their staff must listen carefully to what each individual expresses in terms of desires, plans and preferences. By listening carefully, programs and staff will also be able to discern how each person expresses those choices.



## Status

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Status is valued perception by self and others. Such positive recognition is important to all people and is influenced by factors such as roles, activities, personal appearance and residence.

Some people with developmental disabilities rely on residential services for assistance in participating as a community member, managing daily activities, maintaining personal appearance, managing money, making purchases, creating opportunities to make friends, maintaining personal relationships, pursuing personal interests and locating, furnishing and keeping up their homes. Some people live in homes owned by the program from which they receive support.

The ways a program offers such assistance affect people's status or positive recognition by influencing the way they are seen or perceived by themselves and by others. Programs should offer assistance to participants in ways which promote people's status and credibility. Programs should seek to offer assistance in ways that are appropriate to the age of the person, typical to other members of the community and contribute to the person's feelings of self worth and positive regard by others.

People should be encouraged to take positive roles in the settings and activities they select. In providing assistance and encouragement programs should pay attention to the culture and ethnic background of participants. The greater the difference in culture and background between staff who are giving assistance and the people receiving support, the more carefully and respectfully staff must listen to the person and the person's allies.

# Integration

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People should be present and actively participate in the community using the same resources and doing the same activities as other citizens.

Some people with disabilities rely on residential programs for connections to and support for their participation in the everyday life of their community.

Residential programs promote integration when they:

- Assist people to locate their homes in residential areas which are convenient to a range of places to shop, bank, eat, worship, learn, make friends and otherwise participate in community life
- Assist people to use available transportation to get where they need and want to go
- Encourage people to participate in a variety of activities and to try new places and activities outside their homes and service settings
- Encourage people to meet other people, participate with other members of the community (not solely other participants in their program or staff who are paid to be with them) in shared activities and join associations of interest that offer membership



## Relationships

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Friends and family offer people essential support and protection. They lend continuity and meaning through life and open the way to new opportunities and experiences.

Many people with developmental disabilities rely on residential services for assistance in maintaining relationships with family and friends. Help may also be needed to meet new people and make new friends.

An effective residential service protects existing relationships and supports new ones. An effective program creates opportunities to assist people to meet and make friends with neighbors, co-workers and other community members.

Residential programs support relationships when they:

- Identify the people who are important to each person with a disability and provide the person with necessary assistance to re-establish or maintain contact with them
- Recognize that family members are very important to some people and work to negotiate any conflicts that arise between the program and family members in ways that protect relationships
- Structure staff roles to promote and celebrate their ability to build bridges to friendship for people with disabilities
- Encourage people to reach out to other people they want to get to know. Some people who have been socially isolated may need guidance and coaching to assist them in making friends
- Encourage people with handicaps to discover what they have in common with people with developmental disabilities
- Welcome the people a person with a disability chooses as friends. Occasionally the person's choice of a friend may conflict with the person's health and safety interests. Respectfully negotiating these situations tests the quality of staff relationships with the people they serve



## Competence

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Competence is the capacity to do what you need and want to do. There are two ways to be competent. You may be self-reliant and able to do things for yourself or you have the power to identify and obtain the help you need from others.

Some people with developmental disabilities need assistance to do what they need and want to do. Sometimes people will be able to learn the things they need to know to be self-reliant. Sometimes they will need assistance to get the help they need to get things done. Sometimes people will be able to direct their learning or direct the support they need. Sometimes people will need assistance to decide what to learn and how to direct their support system.

Persons who receive residential services should have opportunities to be as self-reliant as possible and to determine the level, type and provider of support that they need. Effective programs ensure that lack of skills or lack of ability to direct supports needed are not barriers to choice, positive status, integration and relationships.

Residential programs build competence when they:

- Offer people functional, age-appropriate opportunities to learn relevant skills in which they have indicated an interest or a need to know
- Help people define skills they would like to learn and assess the feasibility of mastering the skills in a reasonable period of time
- Assist people by doing activities or adapting activities in environments that are important to the person and relevant to the activities
- Provide direct assistance when a person needs it, including back-up help when a person tries to be self-reliant and fails
- Offer people opportunities to use the skills they have, including skills of defining, negotiating and directing the help they need
- Offer people opportunities to learn to define, negotiate and direct the help they need
- Structure staff roles to fit the needs of the people served including being able to teach and give direct assistance