

COMMUNITY ACCESS POLICY

PURPOSE

To ensure the people we serve have full access to the benefits of community living and the opportunity to be involved in their local community.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all the people we provide support services to.

POLICY

It is the policy of LADD that each person supported will have opportunities for growth and community integration. Each person will have community access and integration opportunities, at a minimum of two meaningful community activities per week. The community access must meet the minimum standard set for the program and maximize opportunities for individuals through choice in services.

STANDARDS AND DEFINITIONS

Community access opportunities should enhance the individual's life as well as develop skills to help them become more independent in areas such as health and safety, skill building and positive social interactions. The person supported will be assisted in enhancing their support network through natural supports in positive relationships. Each service location must provide community opportunities based on the following:

- Inclusion of family and friends, religious practices, and other person-directed interests of the individuals we serve.
- When possible, advance planning should take place. Each person's interests and abilities should be given priority. Each person should be an integral part of the planning process.
- Regular access to meaningful activities is to occur no less than twice weekly.
- The Person-Centered Plan and/or other assessment documents should be utilized to assist with identifying interests, abilities, level of support, and essential elements if the person is unable to communicate their interest when planning community activities.
- Include sensitivity to the needs of everyone. For example, someone who is afraid of dogs should not go to the local animal shelter, or pet store.
- Include sensitivity to the needs of individuals as it relates to health and weather. For example, temperature extremes may be detrimental for certain individuals.
- Individuals can move around inside and outside of their home with or without staffing supports as indicated in their Person-Centered Plan and Personal Profile Assessment.
- LADD does not put any barriers in place to restrict free movement. People are able to come and go from their home with or without staffing supports when they choose, as indicated in their Person-Centered Plan. Any modifications are noted in the PCP.
- If several people go out together, staffing support will be adequate, and all staff will be prepared to handle situations as they arise.
- The people will be assisted to project a positive image. i.e., hair is combed, has good hygiene, and is dressed appropriately for the season and activity.
- The following are some community integration opportunities: voting, religious and cultural activities, shopping, local festivals and community events, movies, dinners at restaurants, bowling, picnics in the park, dances, coffeehouse, holiday parties, employment, and volunteering activities.

Personal Planner - The method chosen by the person supported to keep track of their appointments and activities. This could consist of an individual desk calendar, wall calendar, notebook, planner, etc. This is an individual choice and should represent the system that works best for the person. Multiple methods can be used or tried before settling on the preferred method.

Location Calendar - At each location, this calendar may take on the name given by the people supported. The important detail is not the name of the calendar but that it accurately coordinates the multiple needs of the people who live at this location and the shared resources of the vehicle and staffing supports.

PROCEDURE

1. On a routine basis, the person supported and support staff will meet to update and complete the **person's Personal Planner**. This should occur on a schedule that is convenient to the person. It is important to make sure the meeting is constructive and arranged to provide the person with the amount of detail that is meaningful to them for planning purposes. At this meeting:
 - a. Support staff should assist the person with scheduling all appointments followed by activities or events they want to attend.
 - b. Support staff should assist the person to utilize their budget to establish available funds. Estimated costs of events and activities should be listed on the person's planning document.
 - c. Support staff should assist the person to transfer the information from the planning document to their Personal Planner.
2. On a routine basis, the people living at the location and support staff will meet to complete a **location calendar** that is utilized to coordinate **everyone's** needs, priorities, and preferences. This meeting should occur on a schedule that is agreed upon by the majority of the people and will consider the resources, transportation and budget of the location. At this meeting:
 - a. Support staff will assist the people to have their planning document and/or their Personal Planner available to be used to complete the location calendar by taking turns and sharing their appointments and events.
 - b. Each person will have the opportunity to include their activities/appointments on the location calendar.
 - c. Flexibility and planning are key to meeting the needs of multiple people. Medical appointments are a priority when creating a location calendar to ensure the health and safety of everyone.
 - d. At any time, if there is a conflict with staffing or transportation availability that creates a barrier to activities/appointments that the manager is unable to coordinate, contact the Supervisor for additional resources.
 - e. Employees should assist individuals in using public transportation when possible and according to their Person-Centered Plan.
 - f. A natural support release signed by the guardian must be in place before a person leaves the home with a natural support. Support staff must make sure the natural support release is signed before the person leaves home with a natural support.
 - g. Whenever possible, time should be set aside for all people to engage in impromptu and informal activities like taking a walk around the neighborhood, a trip to the park, or running to the store for a drink or other special item.

WE MAKE THE DIFFERENCE