

NATURAL AND COMMUNITY SUPPORTS POLICY

PURPOSE

To provide a framework for the encouragement, development and use of natural supports to enhance the quality of life for the people we support.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all support services provided by LADD.

POLICY

It is the policy of LADD to promote independence, choice and inclusion for the person supported as they interact in their community and build a network of friends, supports, neighbors and groups of people with similar interests; while simultaneously encouraging the involvement of parents, families, friends and legal guardians in the lives of the people supported.

STANDARDS AND DEFINITIONS

LADD recognizes the benefit of being connected to community and as such is dedicated to the endeavor of facilitating, assisting and ultimately increasing meaningful relationships by unpaid supports for all people.

This may be accomplished in multiple ways by employees of LADD assisting the person supported to participate:

- In informal opportunities that can arise from an established routine such as frequenting the same businesses repeatedly, engaging employees of the business or other customers thereby building connections and shared experiences.
- In volunteer opportunities at community events and for service groups, schools, churches and non-profits.
- In working at a job within their community.
- In events within their community such as attendance at school or recreation department sporting events, open houses, plays, local parades and festivals.
- In formal, structured opportunities defined by the Person-Centered Planning (PCP) process as a means to connect people with families, friends, neighbors and community members. Such opportunities may consist of attending classes at a local library, clubs, classes sponsored by businesses or non-profit organizations. These areas may involve fees and take place on a structured schedule.

Person Centered Planning Process - The Person-Centered Planning (PCP) process often results in a variety of personal goals for the person supported that are not necessarily funded by the responsible Contract Agency or another contract entity. The written plan developed through the PCP process should be utilized to organize and describe all the services and supports that will be necessary to assist the person to achieve those goals, whether those supports are paid or unpaid. The written plan should specify what services are to be provided through various resources including natural supports to meet the goals written in the plan, agreed to by the person supported and the non-paid supports. With the permission of the person, the written plan should be discussed with family/friends/caregivers and legal guardian chosen by the person so that they fully understand it and their role.

Contract Agency or other contract entity - The entity responsible for contracting for support services for the person supported and completing the written plan developed through the PCP process that establishes the services to be provided. Support services are to be identified through the PCP process, which is arranged through the contract entity with assistance from LADD.

Natural Supports - Supports that occur naturally in the community, at work or in a social situation that enables the person supported to accomplish their goals in life without the use of paid supports. The use of natural and community supports involves assisting an individual to develop a sense of social belonging, dignity and self-esteem resulting in increased positive relationships and personal growth. Examples of Natural and Community

Supports: Friends, Family, Neighbors, Acquaintances, Co-workers, Peers, Church members and business owners and their employees.

Natural Support Authorization form - Form completed by the person supported or their guardian acknowledging their agreement and acceptance of assistance in forming a network of natural supports.

HIPAA Log - A resource book kept at locations where staffing supports are provided to assist in ensuring visitors to the location are aware of their responsibilities regarding the interactions they may have with the people supported.

HIPAA Guidelines - Document located in the HIPAA Log that explains the standards for protected health information.

Overnight Event Natural Support form - This form is part of the packet of information that is completed when a person supported participates in an overnight event away from their home and staff have agreed to accompany them and provide a portion of their support as a natural support.

Medication Instruction for Community Outing and Overnight Visit form - This form is completed in order to provide details to the natural support regarding medications the person supported will need to have administered during the time they are to be together. Completion of this form, preparing the medications for travel and reviewing the instructions with the natural support takes advance planning and must be fully completed prior to the event.

PROCEDURE

I. Communication

On a routine basis, Management will encourage, advocate for and facilitate regular contact with the parents, family, friends and guardians of the individuals we support. Management will make the connection and communication by assisting the person as needed with:

1. Telephone calls/Text messages.
2. Skype/Face Time, or other Technology based ways of communicating for long distance relationships.
3. Letters/email.
4. Cards for special occasions
5. Invitations to events within the home and the company events.
6. Visits in the community, in the person's home or any location the person and parent, family, friend or legal guardian wishes
7. Management will make every effort to assist, if parents, family, legal guardian or friends would like to visit with their relative/friend and have them come stay at their home or visit with the person supported in their home. Management will coordinate transportation with the parent, family member or friend so they can go for the visit or activity.
8. Management will assist in transportation coordination with the person we support to the family's home so that they can visit.
9. Privacy is available for visiting.
10. There are no restrictions on visitors, Individuals living together agree to treat each other with dignity and respect and have a pleasant and positive attitude towards each other and appreciate each other's differences. Individuals will respect other people's rights, their property and their privacy.

II. Network Building

In order to promote choice, independence and inclusion it is important to assist the person with identifying and establishing their personal goals for the written plan. To assist the person in this process the following may occur:

1. Management and staff will review each person's need/desire for natural supports during the PCP Pre-Process, in meetings with the person and legal guardian if applicable/family and at the PCP meeting.

2. Management will seek and identify opportunities for the people supported to form meaningful relationships and natural supports.
3. *Natural Supports Authorization* will be obtained on an individual basis with advance planning and coordination when possible and will be signed by the person and legal guardian if applicable. This Authorization will list the people authorized to provide Natural Supports. The signed authorization must be reviewed by the RD and the DOD to ensure all required steps have been taken prior to utilizing the Natural Support.
 - a. All approved or denied natural supports will be documented on the Personal Profile- All About Me.
 - b. All requested natural supports will be listed on the My Person -Centered Pre-Planning document.
 - c. Management is to verify Authorization for Natural Supports is present along with a specific HIPAA Disclosure Release of Confidential Information and updated on the Personal Profile-All About Me, where appropriate, prior to beginning a Natural Support. Support staff uses these documents to guide them when a Natural Support visits/sets up activities.
 - d. If the Natural Support is also an employee and/or part of an Overnight Event the Regional Director will coordinate the completion of the required Overnight Event documentation. All employees must also sign the *Overnight Event Natural Support form*.
4. Any individual providing a Natural Support must read the *HIPAA Guidelines* and sign the *HIPAA Log*.
5. The *Medication Instruction for Community Outing and Overnight Visit form* is completed if medications are needed to be administered during the visit/activity with a natural support.
6. People who are providing Natural Supports are not employees or acting as employees and may not drive any LADD company vehicle.
7. If an individual is identified to provide natural supports is an employee or affiliated/related to any employee and approved by the Guardian then the following steps will occur:
 - a. The Regional Director will work with the Human Resources Department to approve any employee or person who is affiliated/related to an employee that is going to provide natural supports.
 - b. Natural supports provided by employees or persons affiliated/relatives will be addressed as follows:
 - c. All employees or persons affiliated/relatives must sign the *Overnight Event Natural Support form*.
 - d. Since relatives/affiliates of employees visiting may constitute a violation of policy, any employee's relatives/affiliates acting as a natural support must receive approval from Regional Director via the *Overnight Event Natural Support form*.
 - e. Any minor authorized to provide a natural support must have parent/legal guardian signature in place of the minor's signature as legal guardian on the *Overnight Event Natural Support form*.
8. Natural supports that occur will be documented in the *HIPAA Log*.
9. Any person providing natural supports are expected to follow the Mission, Vision and Values of L.A.D.D, Inc. or Management reserves the right to recommend to the person and legal guardian dismissal of the natural support.

If Management and/or staff have concerns, regarding the natural support, LADD reserves the right to restrict premises contact where other people are receiving services, if deemed necessary. The Regional Director must be immediately notified of these concerns.

III. Person Centered Planning

The written plan that is developed through the PCP process draws on information from several sources to establish the person's goals. The PCP process is a collaboration with the responsible Contract Agency, LADD and the person's support network. LADD Management is available to assist per request as follows; additional information is in the Person-Centered Planning Policy and Instructions for the Person-Centered Planning process:

1. Management may contact parents, legal guardians, family member or friends prior to the PCP meeting date to ensure the people the person has requested to attend receive notification.

2. Management may assist the person supported and parents, legal guardians, family members and friends to arrange a safe, comfortable place for the meeting to take place. Privacy must be considered since the meeting may have some discussions that involve protected health information or sensitive subjects.
3. Management may assist with collecting information from parents, guardians, family members and friends so they are involved in the pre-planning process.
4. Management may assist with arrangements for parents, family members, legal guardians and friends to attend meetings.

