

ABILITIES, LLC

Community Services
Department Handbook

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Welcome

This handbook governs operational policies for Abilities, LLC's Community Services programs: Personal Assistant (PA), Community Networking (CN), and Individualized Skill Development (ISD). It establishes standards for service delivery, scheduling, documentation, training, and professional conduct for Community Support Professionals and the Community Program Manager.

This handbook works alongside the Abilities, LLC Employee Handbook. Universal policies covering attendance, PTO, code of conduct, HIPAA, background checks, and corrective action apply to all employees and are not repeated here. Read both documents.

This handbook is a living document. Abilities, LLC reserves the right to update, revise, or replace policies at any time. When policies change, you will be notified and asked to acknowledge the update. Employment at Abilities, LLC is at-will. This handbook is not a contract of employment.

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CHAPTER

1

Community Services Overview

► Community Services and Tiered Supports

Missouri DMH's Tiered Supports framework shapes how the Community Services Department approaches community participation for every individual we serve.

- **Tier 1: Universal Community Access.** Community participation is a right for every individual Abilities, LLC supports. All individuals have access to community activities, relationships, and valued roles as a foundation of good service. Every Community Support Professional delivers services with the expectation that community inclusion is the standard, not the exception.
- **Tier 2: Additional Planning for Individuals with Access Barriers.** Some individuals face barriers to community participation due to communication needs, transportation, behavioral risk factors, health considerations, or limited social supports. At Tier 2, the Community Program Manager and PCSP team develop additional individualized planning to address those barriers.
- **Tier 3: Intensive Support for Complex Community Needs.** Individuals with the most complex support needs in community settings receive Tier 3 community services. This may involve coordination with the Behavior Services Department on BSP-guided community protocols, dedicated one-on-one support during community activities, and close monitoring of community outcomes through documentation and PCSP review.

Regardless of tier, the goal of every Community Services visit is the same: to support each individual in living a full, meaningful life in their community on their own terms.

CHAPTER

2

Staff Qualifications and Training

This section establishes the qualifications required before a CSP may begin work and the training required to continue delivering services. These requirements apply to all Community Support Professionals regardless of which service type they deliver. PA, Community Networking, and ISD all require the same qualifications and the same training.

► Staff Qualifications

- 18 years of age or older.
- High school diploma or GED.
- Valid driver's license. A lapsed or suspended license is grounds for immediate removal from the schedule until reinstated.
- Level 2 DSP credential (Relias only) within one year from the date of first working with any individual. AKA "Certified DSP."

► Documentation Required at Hire

All CSPs must provide the following before beginning work. No CSP may start their first shift until all items are on file with Human Resources.

- Valid driver's license.
- Social Security card.

- Proof of education: high school diploma or GED.
- Proof of current, valid personal vehicle insurance. Abilities, LLC conducts spot checks to verify ongoing validity. A lapsed policy may result in immediate removal from the schedule or termination.

► Required Training for All CSPs

| Training | Completion Timeline | Renewal |
|--|---|---------------------------------|
| Bloodborne Pathogens (BBP) | Within 2 weeks of hire | Annually |
| CPR and First Aid | Within 30 days of hire | Every 2 years |
| Tools of Choice (Online) | Within 30 days of hire | None; one-time completion |
| Tools of Choice (In-Person) | Within 60 days of hire | Annually |
| Individual Rights and HCBS Final Rule | Within 2 business days of hire | Annually |
| HIPAA and Confidentiality | Within 2 business days of hire | Annually |
| Abuse, Neglect, and Mandated Reporting | Within 2 business days of hire | Annually |
| Person-Centered Service Plan (PCSP) | Prior to working with each individual | When updated; at least annually |
| Agency Policy Handbook | At hire | Annually |
| Level 2 DSP Credential (Relias only) | Within 1 year of first working with an individual | One time |

► Level 2 DSP Credential and Level 2 DSP Requirement

All CSPs must complete the Relias Level 2 DSP credential (Systematic Instruction Strategies) within one year from the date they first work with any individual. This credential satisfies the Level 2 DSP requirement under Missouri DMH standards. The Level 2 DSP credential and the Level 2 DSP requirement are the same thing. Abilities, LLC accepts only the Relias platform for this credential.

This requirement applies to all CSPs regardless of which service type they deliver. A CSP who only provides PA or Community Networking must still complete the Level 2 DSP credential within the required timeline.

► LIMA Certification

LIMA (Level I Medication Aide) certification is not universally required. It is required for any CSP who touches medication in any capacity during service delivery, including assisting another person with medication administration. If a PA individual requires any medication support whatsoever, the assigned CSP must hold a current LIMA certification before providing that support.

► MANDT

MANDT training is not required for Community Services employees unless the BCBA or Community Program Manager identifies it as necessary for the safety of staff or the individual, or it is required in the individual's PCSP.

► Training Record Retention

All CSP training records are maintained in BambooHR and must be retained for a minimum of seven years from the date of training completion or from the date of separation, whichever is later. The QAP tracks all training renewals and schedules renewal training for every employee.

CHAPTER

3

Scheduling

Community Services scheduling is fundamentally different from residential scheduling. It is built around the individual's life, not a fixed shift structure. The Community Program Manager coordinates all scheduling in alignment with each individual's authorized PCSP hours.

► Personal Assistant Scheduling

PA scheduling tends to be the most predictable. It is often set on recurring days and times tied to the individual's routine, such as four hours every Tuesday and Thursday. CSPs supporting PA individuals can generally expect consistency from week to week.

► Community Networking Scheduling

Community Networking scheduling is fluid and activity-driven. It is built around what the individual wants to do and when those opportunities exist. A CSP might support someone at a movie on Friday and at church on Sunday. The schedule follows the individual's community life, not a predetermined pattern.

► ISD Scheduling

ISD scheduling can be structured or fluid depending on the individual's goals and what the PCSP calls for. Some ISD goals are practiced on specific days at specific times. Others are woven into everyday activities as opportunities arise.

► Who Community Services Is Right For

Community Services roles are well-suited for people seeking part-time or highly flexible work, including college students and others who need a schedule that adapts week to week. Full-time hours are possible and can be fulfilled with a single individual if their authorized hours support it, but more commonly full-time CSPs build their hours across a few different people receiving services. This flexibility is a genuine feature of the role, not a limitation. All scheduling must align with each individual's authorized PCSP hours and cannot exceed authorized units.

► Holiday Scheduling

Three days are absolute no-schedule days for Community Services: New Year's Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day. No shifts occur on those days under any circumstance, regardless of individual plans or preferences.

For all other agency-recognized holidays, the general expectation is that CSPs are not scheduled. However, if an individual has plans, wants to work on a goal, or wants to attend a community event on one of those holidays, a CSP may work that day to support them. The individual's choice drives it. Only time actually spent with the individual is eligible for holiday pay at 1.5x the regular rate.

CHAPTER

4

Personal Assistant Services

Abilities, LLC provides Personal Assistant services in accordance with the Missouri DMH DD Waiver Manual, applicable HCBS Settings Rule requirements, and each individual's PCSP. Personal Assistant services support individuals in completing tasks related to daily living that they are unable to do independently due to their disability, enabling fuller participation in their home and community life.

► Service Description

Personal Assistant services include assistive supports for any Activity of Daily Living (ADL) or Instrumental Activity of Daily Living (IADL) that the individual is unable to do independently due to their disability. Support may take the form of hands-on assistance (performing a task for or with the individual), cueing (prompting the individual to initiate or complete a task independently), or incidental teaching (building skills while delivering support in natural everyday contexts).

Personal Assistant services may be provided in the individual's own home, family home, or community. They must always be provided in the presence of the individual and may be delivered on an episodic or continuing basis as determined by the PCSP.

► Examples of ADLs and IADLs

Personal Assistant services may assist with, but are not limited to:

- Personal hygiene, bathing, grooming, and dressing.
- Mobility and transferring.
- Meal preparation and feeding.
- Medication management (where authorized and trained per 9 CSR 45-3.070).
- Light housekeeping and home tasks.
- Transportation and community access.
- Shopping and errands.
- Managing finances and appointments.
- Communication support.

► Service Limitations

- Individuals receiving Group Home, ISL, or Shared Living may not receive Personal Assistant as a separate waiver service.
- Personal Assistant must always be provided in the presence of the individual. It may never be delivered remotely.
- Personal Assistant shall not be provided concurrently with, or as a substitute for, facility-based Day Habilitation services.
- Different types of non-residential habilitation services may not be billed during the same period of the day.

- Services are solely for the individual. Personal Assistant may not be used for household tasks that are shared responsibilities of the family unit.
- For minor children, Personal Assistant must not replace supports parents would ordinarily provide, nor duplicate educationally-related services.
- Maximum authorized units: 96 units (24 hours) per day.

PA services cannot be provided while an individual is sleeping. This service requires active assistance with ADLs and IADLs. If the individual is asleep, there is no service being delivered and time may not be billed. Staff may not sleep during any PA shift. These are active service hours. Sleeping on shift is not permitted under any circumstance.

► Billing Information

Personal Assistant services are billed in 15-minute increments using MO HealthNet procedure codes. Both the Community Program Manager and the Finance Director hold access to the billing system.

| Service | Proc. Code | Unit | Maximum |
|------------------------------------|------------|--------|------------------|
| Personal Assistant: Individual | T1019 | 15 min | 96 units per day |
| Personal Assistant Medical: Agency | T1019 SC | 15 min | 96 units per day |
| Hospital Supports (POS 21) | T1019 | 15 min | 96 units per day |

Hospital Supports: PA services delivered in a hospital or inpatient setting are billed with Place of Service code 21. This applies when an individual is admitted to a hospital and the agency continues to provide personal care supports during the admission. Documentation must clearly reflect the hospital setting and the specific ADL or IADL support provided. Hospital Supports require prior authorization and must be reflected in the individual's PCSP.

All Personal Assistant claims must be submitted to MO HealthNet within 365 days of the date of service. Claims submitted after this window will not be paid regardless of the reason for the delay.

► EVV Requirements for Personal Assistant

All Personal Assistant service visits are subject to Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) requirements under Section 12006 of the 21st Century CURES Act and Missouri Code of State Regulations 13 CSR 70-3.320. EVV electronically verifies when, where, and by whom Medicaid-funded services are delivered.

► What CSPs Must Do

- CSPs document PA visits in SetWorks using the EVV link on the home page dashboard.
- Clock in at the actual start of service delivery.
- Clock out at the actual end of service delivery.
- All data entered must reflect actual service delivered. Times must be actual, not estimated or rounded.

- Never share SetWorks login credentials with any other person.
- Never clock in or out on behalf of another employee.
- Report any system error, technical problem, or inability to complete EVV entry to the Community Program Manager immediately.
- If SetWorks is unavailable, notify the Community Program Manager. Do not attempt a manual entry.

► Required EVV Data Elements

For every Personal Assistant visit, the following six data elements must be accurately documented in SetWorks at the time of service:

- Type of service performed (procedure code and applicable modifiers).
- Identity of the individual receiving services.
- Identity of the CSP providing services, including Family Care Safety Registrant (FCSR) number. The FCSR number is entered into each CSP's SetWorks profile by Human Resources at the time of hire.
- Date of service.
- Service start time.
- Service end time.

The location where services began and ended must also be captured per 13 CSR 70-3.320. SetWorks collects this via GPS or approved location technology at the time of clock-in and clock-out.

► Community Program Manager EVV Responsibilities

- Ensure SetWorks is configured to transmit visit data to Sandata/EAS at least once daily.
- Log in to EAS at minimum once weekly to verify that visit data is present, accurate, and in verified status.
- Investigate and resolve any missing, unverified, or flagged visits promptly.
- Confirm all Personal Assistant visits are visible and verified in EAS before submitting corresponding MO HealthNet claims.
- Manual visit entries may only be made by the Community Program Manager or a designated supervisor, never by the CSP who performed the visit.
- Monitor CSP EVV compliance on an ongoing basis and address patterns through coaching and corrective action.
- Report any suspected falsification of EVV data to MMAC within two business days of discovery.

Claims Validation: As of January 7, 2026, MO HealthNet validates all Personal Assistant claims against EAS visit data before payment. Hard edits are in effect: any Personal Assistant claim submitted without a matching verified visit in EAS will be denied. The Community Program Manager must confirm every visit is visible and verified in EAS before submitting any corresponding claim.

► Manual Visit Entry

Manual entries are only permitted when EVV is unavailable or when documented circumstances make real-time entry impossible. Only the Community Program Manager or a designated supervisor may create a manual entry. The CSP must notify the Community Program Manager as soon as possible. The

entry must include the date and time of the manual entry, the reason, and the name of the person creating it. Repeated manual entries by the same CSP are subject to audit and corrective action.

► Falsification Prohibition

Falsification of EVV data, including knowingly entering inaccurate times, locations, service types, or identity information, or clocking in or out on behalf of another employee, is strictly prohibited under 13 CSR 70-3.320 and constitutes Medicaid fraud. Any suspected falsification must be reported to MMAC within two business days of discovery at MMAC.EVV@dss.mo.gov.

► Service Delivery Standards

Every Personal Assistant visit must reflect each individual's PCSP goals, preferences, and assessed needs; support the individual's autonomy, dignity, and right to make choices; be delivered in the most integrated, least restrictive setting appropriate; comply with all HCBS Settings Rule requirements; and not duplicate any other authorized service billed concurrently. Where the individual has documented goals, outcomes, or an implementation strategy in their PCSP, every visit must reflect them. Think of every visit as an opportunity to support not just the task at hand, but the whole person.

CHAPTER

5

Community Networking

Abilities, LLC provides Community Networking services in accordance with the Missouri DMH DD Waiver Manual, applicable HCBS Settings Rule requirements, and each individual's PCSP. Community Networking services support valued, active, and meaningful participation in integrated community life, building on each person's interests, strengths, and goals for community connection and belonging.

► Service Description

Community Networking coordinates and provides support for valued and active participation in integrated community activities that build on the individual's interests, preferences, gifts, and strengths. Services are designed to increase community connection, develop flexible and sustainable community resources and relationships, introduce individuals to community resources in their area, and support individuals in building skills that facilitate community integration.

The expectation is that paid supports are gradually decreased as the individual develops lasting community connections. The pace is always driven by the individual's goals.

► What Community Networking Looks Like in Practice

Community Networking is not a structured activity. It looks different for every person because it is built around their life. Examples include:

- Supporting someone to attend their church's Sunday service or a religious event that matters to them.
- Taking an individual to a community theater production, concert, or sporting event they chose.
- Helping someone develop and maintain a hobby, such as painting classes, fishing, gardening groups, or photography clubs.
- Supporting an individual to attend a civic event, community meeting, or volunteer opportunity.
- Helping someone build a social connection, such as meeting a friend for lunch or attending a club or organization they are interested in joining.

- Supporting an individual to attend a political rally, community event, or public gathering of their choosing.

The CSP's role in Community Networking is to facilitate connection, not to direct the activity. The individual decides where they go and what they do.

► How to Document a Community Networking Visit

Your narrative must be specific, person-centered, and visit-specific. Never copy and paste from a prior entry. Good documentation tells the story of what actually happened.

Example narrative (strong): “Michael attended a photography club meeting at the Warrensburg Public Library. Staff provided transportation and accompanied Michael inside. Michael showed his photos from the prior month to the group and received feedback from other members. Staff remained present and available but did not participate in the group discussion. Michael scheduled his next meeting independently using his phone calendar with one verbal prompt from staff.”

Example narrative (weak, not acceptable): “Client attended a community event. Staff provided support. Client had a good time.” This tells an auditor nothing. It does not describe the specific activity, the individual's participation, or what support was actually provided.

► Service Limitations

- Individuals receiving Group Home, ISL, or Shared Living may not receive Community Networking as a separate waiver service. Community integration is already a component of those residential services.
- Community Networking is not intended for use in employment settings.
- Personal Assistant services may be a component of Community Networking when necessary for participation but may not comprise the entirety of the service.
- Group Community Networking may not exceed four individuals per staff member.
- Transportation costs related to Community Networking are included in the service rate.
- Maximum authorized units: 432 units per month (108 hours).

► Billing Information

Both the Community Program Manager and the Finance Director hold access to the MO HealthNet billing system. Access is limited to these two roles and any staff specifically authorized in writing by the Executive Director.

| Service | Proc. Code | Unit | Maximum |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|--------|---------------------------|
| Community Networking: Individual | T2021 SE | 15 min | 432 units (108 hrs/month) |
| Community Networking: Group (max 4:1) | T2021 HQ SE | 15 min | 432 units (108 hrs/month) |

All Community Networking claims must be submitted to MO HealthNet within 365 days of the date of service. Claims submitted after this window will not be paid regardless of the reason for the delay.

► Service Delivery Standards

Community Networking services must reflect each individual's PCSP goals, take place in integrated community settings, support the individual's choice and autonomy, and comply with all HCBS Settings Rule requirements. The CSP's role is to facilitate connection, not to direct the activity.

CHAPTER

6

Individualized Skill Development (ISD)

Abilities, LLC provides Individualized Skill Development (ISD) services in accordance with the Missouri DMH DD Waiver Manual, applicable HCBS Settings Rule requirements, and each individual's PCSP. ISD services support individuals in acquiring, building, or maintaining the complex skills needed to maximize their personal independence.

► Service Description

ISD services are individualized supports delivered in a personalized manner to support individuals in acquiring, building, or maintaining complex skills necessary to maximize personal independence. Teaching methods are individualized to what each person wants to accomplish, based on goals developed through person-centered planning and provided in accordance with the PCSP.

Complex skills addressed through ISD may include, but are not limited to: domestic and home maintenance skills; budgeting and money management; using public transportation; meal planning and preparation; health and wellness management; and community access and navigation.

ISD is episodic support of a clearly identified skill developed through person-centered planning. Each skill area must be specifically authorized in the individual's PCSP.

► What ISD Looks Like in Practice

ISD is structured teaching built around the individual's specific goals. Every session has a purpose tied directly to the PCSP. Examples include:

- Working with an individual on a budgeting goal: reviewing their monthly expenses together, practicing distinguishing wants from needs, and creating a simple spending plan using their preferred tools.
- Teaching someone to use the city bus system: planning the route together in advance, practicing reading the schedule, riding the route with staff present, gradually reducing the level of prompting over time.
- Supporting a meal preparation goal: working through a recipe step by step, teaching safe knife handling, practicing reading a nutrition label, cooking a full meal with decreasing staff assistance each session.
- Building health management skills: helping someone track their medications, understand what each one is for, and practice communicating their health needs to a doctor at an appointment.
- Home maintenance skills: teaching an individual to do their own laundry, clean their bathroom, or organize their living space, with step-by-step instruction and gradual independence.

Every ISD session should leave the individual one step closer to doing things on their own. The goal is always independence, not continued dependence on staff support.

► How to Document an ISD Visit

ISD documentation must reflect the specific skill being taught, the teaching method used, and the individual's progress. It is not enough to say a skill was practiced. Show what happened.

Example narrative (strong): “Today's session focused on Tony's budgeting goal. Staff reviewed Tony's bank statement with him from the prior month. Tony independently identified three recurring expenses and categorized them as needs. Staff provided modeling for categorizing two additional expenses Tony was unsure about. Tony completed a one-week spending tracker template with minimal verbal prompting. Progress toward goal: 3 of 5 steps completed with moderate support.”

Example narrative (weak, not acceptable): “Client worked on budgeting skills with staff support. Client did well.” This provides no useful information about what was taught, how the individual responded, or what progress was made.

► Service Limitations

- Individuals receiving Group Home, ISL, or Shared Living may not receive ISD as a separate waiver service. Skill development is already incorporated into those residential services.
- ISD may not be provided by a family member or guardian.
- Group ISD may not have more than four individuals per group.
- For minor children, ISD must not replace supports parents would ordinarily provide.
- Transportation costs related to ISD are included in the service rate.
- Maximum authorized units: 348 units per month (87 hours).

► Billing Information

Both the Community Program Manager and the Finance Director hold access to the MO HealthNet billing system.

| Service | Proc. Code | Unit | Maximum |
|----------------------|------------|--------|--------------------------|
| ISD: Individual | S5108 | 15 min | 348 units (87 hrs/month) |
| ISD: Group (max 4:1) | S5108 HQ | 15 min | 348 units (87 hrs/month) |

All ISD claims must be submitted to MO HealthNet within 365 days of the date of service.

► Implementation Strategies

For each ISD goal in the individual's PCSP, the Community Program Manager ensures a Goal-Outcome Implementation Strategy is developed. The strategy describes the specific teaching approach, environment, prompting methods, success criteria, and documentation method. Staff must follow the Implementation Strategy exactly as written. Changes to the strategy may only come from a written update by the CPM.

PTO accrual rates and attendance expectations specific to Community Services employees are established in this section. Universal PTO rules, including how to submit requests, patterned absence standards, cash-out eligibility, and payout at separation, are governed by the Employee Handbook Chapter 2. Refer to the Employee Handbook for those policies.

► **Who This Applies To**

All benefit-eligible, hourly Community Services employees. PRN employees averaging 15 hours or fewer per week are not eligible for PTO or benefits.

► **PTO Accrual Rates**

All PTO accrues weekly beginning on Day 1 of employment. PTO becomes available for use on Day 61.

| Role | Hours/Week | Hours/Year |
|--|------------|------------|
| Community Support Professional (Full-Time) | 1.92 | 100 |
| Community Support Professional (Part-Time) | 0.96 | 50 |

Full-time CSPs must average a minimum of 30 hours worked per week to remain eligible for full-time PTO. Consistently falling below this threshold may result in a review of PTO level and position classification.

► **Call-In Procedures**

All call-ins must be reported to the Attendance Line at 660-225-1489 at least two hours before the start of the scheduled shift when possible. Employees are notified of attendance record entries by an email BambooHR automatically generates to their work email. Employees who believe an entry is incorrect must bring the dispute to Human Resources within 30 calendar days of notification.

► **PTO Approval**

The Community Program Manager approves and denies all PTO requests for Community Services employees via BambooHR. When a CSP is approved for time off, the Community Program Manager is responsible for arranging compliant coverage for any scheduled visits during that period.

► **Blocked Days**

Once the maximum number of staff are approved off for a given day, no additional requests will be accepted.

CHAPTER

8

Documentation

All Community Services employees must document every service visit in SetWorks. These Activity Records are the definitive source for service delivery documentation, billing validation, and compliance with Missouri DMH, HCBS, and Medicaid requirements.

► **When to Document**

Community Services employees must complete their Activity Record the same day the service was provided. Personal Assistant services follow EVV requirements and must be documented at the time of service per Chapter 4.

► Parts of an Activity Record

- **Date:** the date services were provided.
- **Service Type:** Personal Assistant, Community Networking, or Individualized Skill Development.
- **Staff Attendance:** actual start and end time the employee was providing services.
- **Individual Attendance:** actual time the individual was receiving support.
- **Comment Box:** the service narrative.
- **Goals/Outcomes:** responses to individual PCSP goal questions.
- **Plan Questions:** individual-specific questions staff answer each visit, if applicable.

► What Every Activity Record Must Include

- Accurately reflect services delivered as authorized in the individual's PCSP.
- Describe supports provided, the individual's participation, and any variations from routine.
- Be objective, person-focused, and strength-based.
- Answer all applicable goal and plan questions.
- Never copy or paste from previous entries. Content must be original and visit-specific.

► EVV Alignment

Activity Records must align with EVV data in SetWorks for Personal Assistant visits. The start time, end time, and service location must match the EVV data for that visit. Discrepancies will be flagged for supervisory review. Report any discrepancy to the Community Program Manager immediately. Do not attempt to correct EVV data without supervisory approval.

► Corrections Within the 2-Day Window

Before the Medicaid lock-out (2 calendar days): open the record in SetWorks, correct the information, and resubmit.

► Corrections After the 2-Day Lock-Out

- Complete the electronic Activity Record Exception form in BambooHR.

Corrections must be completed during regularly scheduled work hours. All corrections require Community Program Manager approval before any exception is processed.

► Responsibilities

Community Support Professionals: Complete an Activity Record for every authorized service visit on the day of service. Ensure EVV start and end times are accurately captured for PA visits. Report errors or system issues to the supervisor immediately. Never falsify, fabricate, or copy Activity Records.

Community Program Manager: Monitor Activity Records for completeness, accuracy, and EVV alignment. Identify and follow up on missing, late, or non-compliant entries. Approve all EVV corrections and Activity Record exception requests. Coordinate with the QAP on documentation compliance trends.

Quality Assurance Professional: Conduct routine audits of Community Services Activity Records in SetWorks. Track documentation deficiency patterns and escalate to leadership as needed.

► Record Retention

All Activity Records and associated documentation must be retained for a minimum of seven years from the date of service per the Missouri DD Waiver Manual and POS Contract requirements. All records are available for internal review, DMH audits, and Medicaid compliance inquiries at any time during and after the retention period.

CHAPTER

9

Communication

Google Chat, work email, and BambooHR announcements are the official communication channels for Community Services employees.

► Official Channels

- **Work email:** Issued through Google Workspace. Employees must check work email on all days worked. Official communications, policy updates, agency announcements, and payroll information are sent to work email.
- **Google Chat:** CSPs are added to a department-level Google Chat and are expected to check it during working hours. The Community Program Manager uses the Chat for scheduling updates, service information, and day-to-day operational communication.
- **BambooHR Announcements:** Used for agency-wide communications from leadership. Employees are expected to read all announcements.

► 1:1 Google Chat Messages

Use 1:1 Google Chat for direct questions to your supervisor, a quick check-in with a teammate, or anything that does not need to go to the whole team. Use the department-level Chat for scheduling, service information, and updates everyone needs to see. Communication about individuals never belongs in a 1:1 thread. If a 1:1 conversation turns to an individual we support, move it to the official record.

► Communication About Individuals

Any communication about an individual, including service updates, scheduling changes, health or behavioral concerns, or anything else related to the people we support, must go through official agency channels. Personal texts, personal email, and informal side conversations are not acceptable substitutes for documented communication in agency channels. When information about an individual is shared, it belongs in the record, not in a private thread.

CHAPTER

10

Escalation

► Standard Escalation Pathway

For operational concerns, scheduling issues, service delivery questions, and performance matters, the standard pathway is:

Step 1: Community Support Professional raises the concern with the Community Program Manager.

Step 2: If unresolved, the Community Program Manager escalates to the Director of Residential Operations.

Step 3: If unresolved, the Director of Residential Operations escalates to the Executive Director.

► Human Resources

Human Resources handles employment matters that fall outside the operational chain of command.

Contact HR for:

- Benefits questions, enrollment, or changes to coverage.
- PTO disputes or corrections to attendance records.
- Background check questions.
- Concerns about harassment, discrimination, or hostile work environment.
- Corrective action disputes or questions about your employment status.
- Anything related to hiring, onboarding paperwork, or separation.

HR can be reached at 660-747-7507, via email, or Google Chat.

► Payroll

Pay questions, paycheck issues, and wage concerns go directly to the Payroll Administrator at payroll@abilitiesllc.com.

► Documentation Questions

Documentation questions go to the Community Program Manager or the Quality Assurance Professional.

► Director of Culture and Experience

The Director of Culture and Experience oversees workplace culture, employee experience, and policy matters across all departments. Contact the Director of Culture and Experience for:

- Concerns about how the agency is living its values or treating its employees.
- Policy questions that are not clearly answered in the handbook.
- Feedback about the work environment, team dynamics, or leadership.
- Concerns that feel too broad or systemic for HR alone, such as patterns of behavior across a team.
- Questions about recognition, professional development, or career growth.
- Any situation where you feel the culture of the department or the agency is not what it should be.

► When to Go Outside the Standard Chain

- If a concern involves the Community Program Manager, CSPs may go directly to the Director of Residential Operations, the Director of Culture and Experience, or Human Resources without first raising it with the CPM.
- If a concern involves ethics, individual safety, abuse or neglect, retaliation, or harassment, employees may go directly to any level of leadership, including the Executive Director, without exhausting the chain first.
- Retaliation for good-faith reporting is grounds for termination.

The same rights that apply in residential settings apply in community settings. Being out in the community does not reduce or suspend an individual's rights. The Universal Employee Handbook covers individual rights in full. This section applies those rights specifically to Community Services work.

► Choice and Self-Direction

Individuals choose where they go, what they do, and how they spend their time during Community Services visits. The CSP supports those choices. The CSP does not direct them. If a CSP disagrees with an individual's choice, the answer is not to redirect, discourage, or override. The answer is to support the individual in what they have chosen and, if there is a legitimate safety concern, to contact the Community Program Manager.

► Privacy in the Community

Individuals have the right to privacy in the community, including the right to interact with others without the CSP hovering or interfering. When an individual is engaged in a conversation, a transaction, or an activity, the CSP's job is to be available, not to be the center of it. Step back when support is not needed. Step in when it is.

► Dignity of Risk

Individuals have the right to take reasonable risks in community settings. A CSP's personal discomfort with a choice, or concern that something might not go perfectly, is not grounds for restricting that choice. Unnecessary restriction is itself a rights violation. When in doubt about whether a situation rises to the level of a genuine safety concern, contact the Community Program Manager before acting.

► Safety Concerns in the Community

If a safety concern arises during a community outing, the CSP contacts the Community Program Manager. CSPs do not make unilateral decisions to end a visit, restrict an activity, or remove an individual from a setting without supervisor guidance. The exception is an immediate, active safety emergency, in which case the CSP acts to protect the individual and contacts the Community Program Manager as soon as it is safe to do so.

► HCBS Settings Rule in Community Settings

Community settings are integrated settings under 42 CFR 441.301. CSPs must never present individuals in ways that are segregating, stigmatizing, or that draw unnecessary attention to their disability. This includes how you speak about individuals in public, where you sit with them, how you interact during their activities, and whether your presence feels like support or supervision.

► Staff Participation in Religious, Political, and Civic Activities

Supporting an individual's participation in a religious, political, or civic activity does not mean the CSP is expected to personally participate. If an individual attends a church service, the CSP must go inside and stay with the individual but is not expected to pray, sing, take communion, or engage in any religious practice. If an individual attends a political rally or civic meeting, the CSP must accompany them and remain present but is not expected to express support for any candidate, cause, or position.

What is never acceptable is using personal discomfort, personal beliefs, or personal disagreement with an activity as a reason to discourage, delay, or prevent the individual from going. Personal objection to an individual's religious, political, or civic choices is not a safety concern and is not grounds for interference.

CHAPTER

12

Ethics in Community Services

CSPs work independently and often without direct supervision in the field. The ethical standards do not change because no supervisor is present. Abilities, LLC's three core values, Integrity, Community, and Empathy, are not just posted on a wall. They are what you are expected to bring to every shift, every visit, and every interaction.

► Integrity

Integrity means acting honestly, ethically, and responsibly at all times, especially when no one is watching. In community services work, this looks like:

- Billing only the hours you actually worked and documenting only the services you actually delivered. Falsifying EVV data or Activity Records is not a documentation error. It is Medicaid fraud, a federal offense.
- Being honest when something goes wrong. If you make a mistake, report it and correct it through the proper channel. Concealment is always worse than the mistake itself.
- Never using an individual's resources, money, or belongings for your own benefit.
- Never accepting gifts, money, or personal favors from individuals or their families.

► Community

Community means promoting inclusion, participation, and belonging. In community services, you are not just supporting a task. You are supporting a person's right to be a full participant in community life. This looks like:

- Supporting individuals in accessing the places, activities, and relationships that matter to them, not just the ones that are convenient or comfortable for you.
- Never presenting individuals in ways that are segregating, stigmatizing, or that draw unnecessary attention to their disability.
- Helping individuals build real connections in their community, not just accompanying them to activities while staying in the background.
- Respecting that your role is to support community membership, and that success means the individual needs you less over time, not more.

► Empathy

Empathy means approaching every interaction with compassion, patience, and understanding. In community services, this looks like:

- Respecting an individual's choices even when you personally disagree with them. Your discomfort is not grounds for interference.
- Never mocking, dismissing, or talking over an individual in public or in private.
- Being present and attentive during visits, not distracted or going through the motions.
- Remembering that every individual you support is a whole person with a life, preferences, relationships, and goals that extend far beyond your shifts with them.

► Professional Boundaries

The CSP role is a professional support relationship. Maintaining clear boundaries protects both you and the individuals you support.

- Personal friendships, romantic relationships, or financial entanglements with individuals served are prohibited.
- Do not enter into personal or financial relationships with individuals' families, guardians, or other members of their support team outside of the professional role.

► Social Media

CSPs may not post photos, videos, or any identifying information about individuals they support on personal social media under any circumstances. This includes photos taken in public settings, even when the individual appears to consent. When in doubt, do not post.

CHAPTER

13

Vehicle and Driving Safety

CSPs frequently transport individuals in their personal vehicles as part of service delivery. The following standards apply any time an individual is in a CSP's vehicle.

- Seat belts must be worn by the CSP and all individuals at all times when the vehicle is in motion.
- All vehicle safety systems must be functional before transporting an individual, including working lights and brakes. If a vehicle has a known safety issue, do not transport an individual until it is resolved.
- Smoking and vaping are prohibited in any vehicle when an individual is present, including the CSP's personal vehicle. This applies regardless of whether windows are down or the vehicle is moving.
- All traffic laws must be obeyed at all times.
- Phone use while driving is prohibited. No calls, no texting, no looking at your phone for any reason while the vehicle is in motion. Pull over safely if you need to use your phone.
- Any accident involving a CSP's vehicle while an individual is present must be reported to the Community Program Manager immediately, no matter how minor. A fender bender in a parking lot is a reportable incident. Do not wait until the end of your shift.
- CSPs are responsible for ensuring their personal vehicle is properly insured and maintained at all times. Proof of insurance is required at hire and is subject to spot checks. A lapsed insurance policy may result in removal from the schedule or termination.

CHAPTER

14

Compensation Reference

This section is a reference table only. Full compensation policy rules, including merit increases, certification bumps, and performance evaluations, are in Policy 3.5 of the Employee Handbook.

Acronym Guide

Acronyms used throughout this handbook and by Missouri DMH, Medicaid, and the agency.

| Acronym | Meaning |
|---------|--|
| ADL | Activity of Daily Living |
| ABA | Applied Behavior Analysis |
| BBP | Bloodborne Pathogens |
| BCBA | Board Certified Behavior Analyst |
| BSP | Behavior Support Plan |
| CN | Community Networking |
| CPM | Community Program Manager |
| CPR | Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation |
| CSP | Community Support Professional |
| DD | Developmental Disabilities |
| DDD | Division of Developmental Disabilities (Missouri DMH subdivision) |
| DMH | Department of Mental Health (Missouri) |
| DRO | Director of Residential Operations |
| EAS | EVV Aggregator Solution (Missouri state system hosted by Sandata Technologies) |
| EVV | Electronic Visit Verification |
| FCSR | Family Care Safety Registrant |
| FLSA | Fair Labor Standards Act |
| HCBS | Home and Community-Based Services |
| HIPAA | Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act |
| HR | Human Resources |
| IADL | Instrumental Activity of Daily Living |
| ISD | Individualized Skill Development |
| LIMA | Level I Medication Aide |
| MANDT | Crisis prevention and intervention training system (MANDT System, Inc.) |

| Acronym | Meaning |
|---------|---|
| MMAC | Missouri Medicaid Audit and Compliance Unit |
| PA | Personal Assistant |
| PCSP | Person-Centered Service Plan |
| PHI | Protected Health Information |
| POS | Place of Service (also: Physician's Order Sheet in residential context) |
| PRN | Pro Re Nata (as needed; also refers to on-call employment status) |
| PTO | Paid Time Off |
| QAP | Quality Assurance Professional |
| RSMo | Revised Statutes of Missouri |

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OUR MISSION

Abilities, LLC partners with individuals, families, and the community to provide safe, respectful, and high-quality supports that promote independence, dignity, and an improved quality of life for people with developmental disabilities. Our mission is not simply to provide services. It is to support people in living meaningful lives within their communities.