

Policy 8.5 Abuse of an Individual Accessing Support

Abuse of an individual accessing support is a violation of the rights, dignity and worth of the individual and is not acceptable. Any allegation of abuse is dealt with in a manner consistent with established government protocols and/or legislation, ensuring that a fair investigation is conducted which protects the rights of both individuals accessing support and employees.

Abuse Prevention Procedures

LINX is proactive in working toward abuse prevention by:

1. Providing training and /or current information on abuse of individuals with developmental disabilities to employees, including information on how to recognize and prevent abuse (e.g. In-service presentations, individual sessions, provision of written materials);
2. Ensuring that all employees attend in-service training in Abuse Prevention as a required part of their orientation process. Employees, subcontractors, and volunteers will attend this training within the first 90 days of commencing their position with LINX. Information about abuse protocol has been given to all existing clients and guardians/monitors of service. It is currently added to intake packages for all new clients;
3. Providing clients and their guardians/monitors of services with copies of the “Charter of Client (Citizen) Rights”;
4. Encouraging and assisting the clients to be involved in the community as well as to form natural supports;
5. Ensuring employees are trained every three years in Abuse Prevention and Response Protocol;
6. Ensuring that the individuals accessing supports are provided with information on personal safety and abuse: how to prevent it; what abuse is; what to do if it should happen to them or someone they know. This information may be presented in a number of different ways to help ensure the individuals’ understanding of the subject;
7. Ensuring the individual is provided with the necessary support should they be abused. This support may include acting as an advocate for them; help them to access counselling, etc.

Abuse Response Procedures

With any allegation of abuse, the client accessing service will immediately be protected from any further possibility of abuse. This may mean moving the client or it may mean moving the staff the allegation is against. An investigation will occur to determine the outcome. An action plan will be developed to prevent similar situations from arising in the future.

1. If the physical or sexual abuse has just occurred, apply emergency first aid as required. Do not throw out anything that may be evidence. Encourage the client to not shower and keep all clothing worn. Contact the Police. Contact the supervising manager, or if they are not available the Executive Director. If required, go to the hospital or call an ambulance.

2. An staff has an ethical obligation to report any and all allegations of abuse, whether witnessed or told to them. When the client's disclosure is complete and they are safe, the allegation will immediately and initially be presented verbally to the supervising manager, or if they are not available the Executive Director. The staff will then complete an incident report on Sharevision within 72 hours, or within 24 hours if the abuse is sexual or physical. An automated notification will be sent to all the managers and the Executive Director.

Note: if the Executive Director is indicated in the abuse, the abuse will immediately and initially be verbally presented to the Board of Directors, who will report it to PDD (Persons With Developmental Disabilities) and PPC (Protection of Persons in Care).

3. Once the supervising manager, or if they are not available the Executive Director has been informed of an allegation of abuse, they will report it to PDD and PPC within twenty-four (24) hours
4. The supervising manager, or if they are not available the Executive Director will ensure the guardian/monitor of service is informed within 24 hours and the client's safety is ensured.
5. As much information as possible will be given verbally to the supervising manager, or if they are not available the Executive Director. This will then be completed in writing with the Disclosure Report on Sharevision.

The staff is not to discuss the incident with any other person.

- If the allegation is founded, disciplinary action, up to and including termination will be taken against the identified staff. This also applies to any staff whom the agency discovers has previously founded accusations of abuse against them.
- Any prospective staff may not be hired if they have founded accusations against them.
- LINX will promptly review the situation to determine any changes or training that may be provided to prevent this from occurring in the future .

The Investigation

1. Upon receipt of the allegation of abuse the supervising manager, or if they are not available the Executive Director will compile the information received and contact PDD (in writing using their requested form) and PPC (by phone) within the next working day. The Police will be contacted if the allegation is criminal in nature or the client or guardian/monitor of service has requested it.
2. If PPC determines they want to do an investigation, PDD and LINX will defer to them. If PPC does not choose to do an investigation, PDD will determine if they would like to do an investigation. If PDD does not choose to do an investigation, LINX will complete an investigation.

3. If the investigation is internal (ie conducted by LINX) within thirty days upon completion of the investigation, the supervising manager, or if they are not available the Executive Director will forward a written report to PDD using their requested form.
4. The supervising manager, or if they are not available the Executive Director will keep the guardian/monitor of service and client (as applicable) informed of the results of the investigation. Staff will be advised that the investigation is being managed, but may not be given details.
5. If the client or guardian/monitor of service is not satisfied with the decision, they may follow Policy 8.3-Client Grievances.

The Abuse Prevention and Response Protocol is a PDD Policy that addresses both the prevention of abuse and the response to any form of mistreatment toward a client supported by PDD.

Board Revised and Approval: October 16, 2019