

Topic: Abuse Prevention	Department: All programs and services
Original effective date: 7/2019	Last revision date: 7/19/22
Owner: Incident Manager	Frequency of reviews: As needed
Internal/Regulatory Reference(s) (all that apply): OPWDD Regulation-Part 624, NYS JC Code of Conduct, Arc of Monroe Employee Handbook, Arc of Monroe Incident Management Policy / Procedure	
Related documents/Links: Arc of Monroe Employee Handbook, NYS JC Code of Conduct, Arc of Monroe Incident Management Policy / Procedure	

Policy

People are free from abuse and neglect.

Additional Information

Arc of Monroe is committed to providing safe and respectful environments that support the health and well-being of all People Supported. The agency seeks to institute guidelines and resources for staff which empower People Supported to lead self-directed, meaningful lives and which enforces zero tolerance for those actions which may jeopardize the health, safety or welfare of any Person Supported. Such commitment is fostered through Human Resources screening and hiring procedures, program structural guidelines, staff member and People Supported annual and on-going training opportunities, as well as staff conduct expectations.

Screening and Hiring Procedures: Human Resources screening and hiring procedures provide safeguards to strive to eliminate from consideration any candidate who demonstrates behavior that indicates a high risk for violating this policy. Screening and background information required to comply with New York State law depend on the position and its level of involvement with people receiving services (see related HR policy / procedures surrounding JC, such as SEL, CBC, MHL, etc.). All information collected about any candidate is reviewed to determine if the candidate is appropriate for the respective position. If hired, all information collected during the hiring process is maintained by Human Resources.

Structural Guidelines: Programs are designed to encourage safe interactions between staff and People Supported. Guidelines and plans are developed to maintain effective safeguards while upholding the dignity of the Person Supported, and respecting their ability to direct their own life. Such guidelines and plans (both general and person-specific) include (but are not limited to) staffing minimums, support plans, program planning, emergency procedures, etc.

Training: Abuse prevention training is provided to ensure that staff members understand what constitutes abuse, signs and symptoms of abuse, their responsibilities to protect People Supported from abuse and neglect (as defined above per OPWDD part 624, NYS Justice Center and related Incident Management policy/procedure) and notification regarding the accessibility of related agency policy and procedures. The training includes guidance on how to immediately step in and stop an incident, as well as safeguard the Person Supported. Training also includes review of the NYS Justice Center’s reporting requirements and Code of Conduct. Staff members receive such training during new hire orientation, as well as on an annual and as needed basis at the discretion of the supervising program.

Staff member training on topics including professional boundaries, stress management and conflict resolution are provided as necessary based on the needs of each program. Program training needs are identified through team discussion, supervision, at the discretion of the supervising program and via incident management recommendations.

Staff members receive training on support plans that delineate how to interact with People Supported based on their support needs.

People Supported receive abuse prevention information and/or training during intake, on an annual and as needed basis. Training curriculum and frequency is specific to the program and Person Supported at the respective site. All People Supported are notified during training of their entitlement to view and/or access related agency policy and procedures.

Staff Interactions and Conduct: Agency culture modeled by all levels of management reinforces the expectations for staff members that are relayed through training and via review/acknowledgment of the Arc of Monroe Employee Handbook and NYS JC Code of Conduct.

The Arc of Monroe Employee Handbook has been written to help employees understand professional expectations at The Arc of Monroe. This includes, but is not limited to; programs, opportunities, benefits, practices, requirements and policies that affect employment. Information described in the handbook reflects current human resources-related policies, as well as expectations surrounding the guiding principles, core values and overall mission of Arc of Monroe (see Employee Handbook). As it relates to the overall wellbeing and treatment of People Supported; the Arc of Monroe Employee Handbook reinforces the expectation of staff members to provide a respectful, safe, nurturing and growing environment.

The JC Code of Conduct outlines expectations for staff members to exercise safe, responsible and respectful behavior in their interactions with People Supported. Respectful Interactions imply that staff members treat People Supported fairly and with respect and safety consideration. It is expected that staff members will not participate in or allow others to engage in any potentially unsafe and/or abusive interaction with and/or around a Person Supported. It is expected that staff members will identify when circumstances are beyond their capacity to address in a productive manner, and request support from peers or a supervisor to manage any risk of abusing or neglecting a Person Supported. It is expected that staff members will immediately intervene and provide support when they observe co-workers exhibiting a loss of ability to safely and effectively interact with a Person Supported, or upon immediate discovery of any potentially abusive interaction (as defined above per OPWDD part 624, NYS Justice Center and related Incident Management policy/procedure). It is expected that staff members will immediately report any concerning / potentially abusive interaction with a Person Supported (as detailed above and as defined above per OPWDD part 624, NYS Justice Center and related Incident Management policy/procedure) to their supervisor and Justice Center (when applicable).

Per the Arc of Monroe Employee Handbook, any staff member deviation from the expectations outlined above will be addressed through Performance Management.

Document revision record:

Revision Date	Release Date	Reason for change	Approver
8/9/19	8/9/19	Per agency review standards, included reference to the accessibility of Incident Management policy and procedures.	Peter Dancer / Deanna Crosser
9/6/19	9/6/19	Typo correction under "Training".	Deanna Crosser
7/19/22	7/19/22	Removed SCR reference.	Deanna Crosser