



# **CODE OF CONDUCT**

**JULY 13, 2015**

## STANDARD OF CONDUCT

Community Options, Inc. is committed to the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct. The Community Options, Inc. recognizes that as employees, you expect to be informed of what is expected of you and the consequences that will result if those expectations are not met. As a result, standard common sense rules of conduct that are necessary for orderly and efficient operations have been established. The following provides examples of two types of prohibited conduct:

(1) Major work rule violations are those infractions that are considered to be so severe in nature that they would normally result in termination for a first offense.

(2) Minor work rule violations which are considered to be unacceptable behavior in the workplace that would normally result in discipline and may individually or cumulatively result in termination depending on the seriousness of the offense(s).

The rules, regulations, and policies contained in the Policy Manual and Code of Conduct apply to all employees regardless of position with the Community Options, Inc. As an employee you have certain responsibilities to Community Options, Inc., supervisor, fellow employees, and customers. The rules, regulations, and policies also apply at all times that employees are on Community Options, Inc., premises, including all buildings, grounds, vehicles, and parking areas used by Community Options, Inc., whether owned or rented, during any period of time when employees are performing duties for Community Options, Inc. and may also apply to off-duty, off premises conduct.

Anyone violating these rules of conduct may be disciplined up to and including termination. The reasons listed for discharge or discipline are examples only and are not meant to, nor does it, include all reasons for which an employee may be disciplined or discharged. The Code of Conduct may be amended from time to time.

This Code of Conduct does not create a contract between Community Options, Inc., and any Community Options, Inc., employees. No promise of any kind is made by Community Options Inc. in this Code of Conduct. Community Options, Inc. is free to change the terms of this Code of Conduct, or the terms of any employee's employment. Community Options, Inc. and the employees each continue to have the absolute authority to terminate the employment relationship "at will". The employment relationship may be terminated with or without cause, and with or without prior notice. This "at will" status can only be modified if such modification is in writing and signed by both the employee and the President of Community Options, Inc.

Employment at Community Options, Inc. is on an "at-will" basis and is for no definite period and may, regardless of the date or method of payment of wages or salary, be terminated at any time with or without cause by either party. Other than the President of Community Options, Inc., no supervisor, manager, or other person, irrespective of title or position, has authority to alter the "at-will" status of your employment or enter into any employment contract for a definite period of time with you. Any agreement with you altering your "at-will" employment status must be in writing and signed by the President of Community Options, Inc.

## **ACT WITH INTEGRITY AND HONESTY**

Community Options, Inc. expects all employees to act with integrity and honesty in all matters related to CO Inc., business. Employees may not obtain or use any property or services of Community Options, Inc., fellow employees, and customers, in a manner other than that authorized by Community Options, Inc.'s policy or by federal, state and local laws.

## **EMPLOYEE BEHAVIOR**

Employees must perform their assigned duties to the best of their ability and in the best interest of Community Options, Inc., fellow employees, and customers. Employees must not take any action that creates risk, harm or damage to oneself, another person, Community Options, Inc. or the property of Community Options, Inc. or others.

Employees must adhere to and fully comply with all Community Options Inc.'s policies and procedures, as contained in the Standard Operating Procedures, which can be found in this Code of Conduct. This contains policies not specifically outlined in the Code of Conduct.

Salaried employees and/or management staff must be conscious of the fact that as leaders of Community Options, Inc., their actions may be attributed to the company under certain circumstances, both on or off duty. Therefore, they should avoid situations that place Community Options, Inc. at risk and/or call their professionalism into question. For example, situations to be avoided are repeatedly fraternizing with hourly employees on or off the job, discussing your job responsibilities, confidential discussions, program changes, or anything that is or does not relate to the hourly employee directly or indirectly, that come from your supervisor, Human Resources or the President. Other situations that should be avoided include, but are not limited to, fraternizing in places where alcohol is served such as bars and restaurants, repeatedly having lunch, dinner or breaks with hourly employees (unless it is a Community Options, Inc. function), etc.

## **ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY**

To provide the level of service that the Community Options, Inc.'s customers expect and deserve, all employees are expected to report for work at the appropriate time, ready to perform their assigned duties and work their scheduled hours (see Employee Handbook, Section 704 – Attendance Policy).

## **CUSTOMER SERVICE**

All employees are expected to provide a consistently satisfying customer experience by anticipating and responding to customers' needs and by providing customers a total solution that meets their needs.

## **FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS**

Employees are expected to follow the directives and instructions of supervisors, unless doing so would clearly violate the law or Community Options, Inc.'s policies.

## **POSSESSION OF WEAPONS AND EXPLOSIVES**

Community Options, Inc. does not permit employees to possess or use any kind of weapon, explosive or other dangerous implement while employees are at the workplace or otherwise performing duties on behalf of the Community Options, Inc. This policy applies whether or not a weapon is armed, loaded or properly secured and whether or not it is concealed on an employee's person or contained in an employee's personal property such as a purse, briefcase or vehicle. (See Employee Handbook, Section 711 – Weapons Ban)

## **RESPECT**

Community Options, Inc. is committed to providing an environment of mutual respect, free of harassment and discrimination for all employees and customers. Employees are expected to treat fellow employees, customers and vendors with courtesy and to resolve any differences in a professional, non-abusive, non-inflammatory, and non-threatening manner. Employees are responsible for their own behavior and for understanding how others may perceive their conduct in the workplace. Employees must remember conduct that may be acceptable outside the work environment may be considered unacceptable in the workplace.

## **SAFETY POLICY**

It is important to maintain a safe work environment for employees and customers. Employees must follow Community Options, Inc.'s safety standards to ensure the safety and well-being of all customers and employees. Every employee must take personal responsibility to ensure safety principles are followed in the workplace.

All employees are required to immediately address safety issues and report unsafe conditions or behaviors to their supervisor.

## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY**

Community Options, Inc. strives to provide a safe, productive environment for its employees and customers. This includes a safe workplace, free of the problems associated with the use or abuse of prohibited substances such as drugs or alcohol. The use (including having detectable levels based on Community Options, Inc.'s testing standards), sale, distribution, possession, or transfer of alcohol or illegal drugs, or illegal use of prescription drugs when on the job, on company premises (including company parking lot and adjacent parking lots) or in company-owned or rented vehicles is strictly prohibited. Illegal substance use or abuse subjects Community Options, Inc. to unacceptable risks of workplace accidents, errors or other behaviors that would undermine the company's ability to operate safely, effectively, and efficiently. Therefore, to maintain an alcohol, drug and substance abuse free workplace, the sale, offering, possession, use of alcohol or illegal substances is prohibited, including the abuse or inappropriate use of prescription drugs.

## **WORKPLACE VIOLENCE/THREATS OF VIOLENCE**

An employee who becomes aware of a display of violence, abusive or threatening behavior, or a threat to engage in such behavior by another employee, former employee, or customer, is to report such behavior to his/her immediate supervisor or to the Human Resources department.

## **MAJOR WORK RULE VIOLATIONS**

**This section provides examples of prohibited conduct that will normally result in termination for the first offense. Other situations may also apply and supervisors should always consult the Human Resource Department before termination of any employee.**

### **DISCRIMINATION OR HARASSMENT POLICY VIOLATIONS**

- Discrimination against an employee or customer on the basis of race, color, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, national origin, disability, or any characteristic protected by applicable laws.
- Engaging in any activities that violate Community Options, Inc.'s sexual harassment or general harassment policy or other behavior prohibited by the harassment policy towards an employee or customer. Harassment or disrespectful behavior can be verbal, non-verbal or physical. Examples of conduct that could be considered harassment or disrespectful behavior include, but are not limited to:
  - Directing abusive or obscene language to fellow employees or customers;
  - Offensive jokes; or
  - Threats of termination or other willful creation of circumstances that would make the work place intolerable.
- Treating a fellow employee or customer in an abusive, threatening or inflammatory manner.
- Making intentional false reports of harassment or other false statements about employees.
- Retaliating against an employee who files a complaint of discrimination or harassment in good faith or who participates in an investigation of such complaint.

### **FAILURE TO ACT WITH INTEGRITY AND HONESTY**

- Stealing or attempting to steal the property of the company, a customer or fellow employee, whether retail or non-retail and regardless of purpose, the amount involved or the method used to remove the property from the premises; knowingly possessing any such stolen property would be included in this definition.
- Fraudulent reporting of travel or business expenses.
- Using Community Options, Inc. credit cards for unauthorized purposes.
- Falsifying a Community Options, Inc. document or a document relied upon by the company by including false information or by knowingly omitting relevant information. The following are examples:
  - Falsifying time sheets, reports, medical excuses, applications, etc.
  - Making false reports or claims.

## **EMPLOYEE BEHAVIOR/CONDUCT UNBECOMING**

- Initiating or participating in physical altercations or assault, attempted assault or offensive, aggressive and/or threatening conduct (e.g. threats of bodily harm to a person or family, etc.)
- Vandalizing company, employee or customer property or willfully attempting to cause harm, damage or injury to another person, to the property of that person or to the property of Community Options, Inc., whether or not the harm, damage or injury actually occurs.
- Disclosing confidential or proprietary information without specific authorization. Such information includes, but is not limited to, financial records, customer account information or employee information such as disciplinary actions, phone numbers, addresses, and social security numbers.
- Making statements and/or acting in a derogatory manner to the agency, its management, employees, or customers.
- Conducting oneself in a manner which is damaging to Community Options, Inc.'s reputation in the community.

## **ATTENDANCE/PUNCTUALITY**

Employees who fail to report for a scheduled shift ***without calling*** a supervisor and/or without satisfactory explanation to give notice of the absence may be subject to disciplinary action. Whenever possible, the employee must provide sufficient prior notice to their supervisor. (See Employee Handbook, Section 704 – Attendance and Punctuality)

## **FAILURE TO PROVIDE CUSTOMER SERVICE**

- Blatantly disregarding a customer's needs.
- Being flagrantly rude to a customer.
- Treating a customer in an abusive, threatening or inflammatory manner including initiating arguments with a customer.
- Disregarding safety standards that result in placing a customer at risk of serious harm.
- Disregarding safety standards that result in considerable damage to a customer's property.
- Obtaining personal or confidential information regarding a customer without authorization.
- Violating customer's rights as stated in the Community Options, Inc. policy.

## **FAILURE TO FOLLOW INSTRUCTION /INSUBORDINATION**

- Being flagrantly insubordinate.
- Refusing to perform assigned work tasks or follow direction unless doing so would clearly violate Community Options, Inc.'s policies or applicable federal, state or local laws.
- Impeding, refusing or failing to cooperate with an internal investigation.

## **VIOLATION OF SAFETY POLICY**

Every employee must take personal responsibility and ownership for safety. All employees are required to immediately address safety issues and report unsafe conditions or behaviors to their supervisor.

## **VIOLATION OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY**

- Violating the Drug and Alcohol policy (Section 702) as outlined in Community Options' Employee Handbook.
- Selling, distributing, offering, possessing, transferring, or using alcohol or illegal/controlled substances during working time or on Community Options' premises.
- Having detectable levels of alcohol, drugs or non-prescribed controlled substances as determined by a drug/alcohol test.
- Failing to produce a valid prescription when testing positive for prescription drug use.
- Refusing or failing to take a required drug and/or alcohol test within the defined period of time.
- Tampering with or adulterating a required drug or alcohol test.
- Failing to notify a supervisor before beginning work of any drug or medication taken that may inhibit or affect the employee's ability to work or to operate a moving vehicle.

## **VIOLATION OF SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT POLICY**

It is the policy of Community Options, Inc. to maintain a tobacco-free environment and to prohibit all tobacco use including smokeless tobacco in the presence of customers at all times and locations, including personal vehicles, whether on the property or premises of customers, employees, Community Options, Inc., or others.

## **POSSESSION OF WEAPONS AND EXPLOSIVES**

Possessing or using any kind of weapon, explosive or other dangerous implement while on Community Options, Inc. premises or while performing duties for Community Options, Inc., whether or not it is armed, loaded, or properly secured and whether or not it is concealed on an employee person or contained in an employee's personal property such as a purse, briefcase, or vehicle. (See Employee Handbook, Section 711 – Weapons Ban)

## **WORKPLACE VIOLENCE/THREATS OF VIOLENCE**

- Direct threats or acts of violence made by an employee against another employee, customer or vendor.
- Failure to report threats or acts of violence by an employee, former employee or customer to a supervisor or higher level.

## **MINOR WORK RULE VIOLATIONS**

Prohibited conduct will include, but are not limited to, the following examples. These violations may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### **VIOLATION OF RESPECT**

- Failing to treat employees and customers with respect or engaging in other inappropriate conduct towards others.
- Failing to notify the immediate supervisor or Human Resource Department of discrimination or harassment.

### **FAILURE TO ACT WITH INTEGRITY AND HONESTY**

- Reporting to work in an unfit condition to perform assigned work.
- Unintentionally destroying, losing or misusing property of a minor nature.
- Failure to maintain proper accounting for the customer.
- Arguing or bickering with customers.

### **FAILURE TO PROVIDE CUSTOMER SERVICE**

- Failing to engage a customer.
- Arguing or bickering with a customer.
- Disregarding a customer's needs.

### **ATTENDANCE/PUNCTUALITY**

- Failure to work as scheduled without sufficient prior notice or authorization by supervisor.
- Having unexcused absences.
- Having excessive unexcused tardiness.
- Personal Relationships: Employees must be mindful that they are hired to provide supports to customers, not to be "paid friends." The employee can, and should, encourage friendship development between the customer and people in his/her community. The employee's community is not likely to be the same as the customer's. Facilitating friendships between the customer and the employee's friends and/or family is not acceptable as these individuals are not "natural supports" within the customer's community.
- Financial Relationships: Employees shall not borrow from nor lend money or articles of value to customers. Employees are prohibited from entering into a business relationship with customers without contractual agreement and prior authorization from their supervisor.
- Employees shall not purchase services or goods (e.g., car washes, furniture or other personal property) from the customer nor provide services or goods for compensation (from the customer) outside of their employment.

- Employees shall not buy for or give gifts to customers; employees are not to receive gifts or services from customers.

#### **FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS/INSUBORDINATION**

- Failing to perform a specifically assigned work task or follow directions unless doing so would clearly violate Community Options, Inc. policy or applicable federal, state or local laws.

#### **VIOLATION OF SAFETY POLICY**

- Employee must follow Community Options' safety standards to ensure the safety and well-being of all customers and employees.

#### **WORKPLACE ACTIVITY**

- Conduct during working hours that demonstrates a significant lack of attention to assigned duties and responsibilities (example: loafing, sleeping, surfing the internet for topics not related to work, MySpace, face book, games, etc.).

The President of Community Options, Inc. reserves the right to alter, amend, modify, rescind, or otherwise change the content in this policy as permitted by law, in his sole discretion and without advance notice to any employee affected by this provision.

Employment at Community Options, Inc. is on an "at-will" basis and is for no definite period and may, regardless of the date or method of payment of wages or salary, be terminated at any time with or without cause. Other than the President of Community Options, Inc., no supervisor, manager, or other person, irrespective of title or position, has authority to alter the "at-will" status of an individual's employment or to enter into any employment contract for a definite period of time with an employee. Any agreement altering the "at-will" employment status must be in writing and signed by the President of Community Options, Inc.

## ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEES

Objective: It is the objective of Community Options, Inc. that customers will be safe and secure in their homes as well as independent and self-advocates in their communities. Employees of Community Options, Inc. assist in this objective by adhering to the Ethical Guidelines of the agency.

Policy: It is the policy of Community Options, Inc. to encourage and maintain professional relationships with customers. Specific guidelines have set forth to identify ethical behavior within the relationships. Guidelines are provided regarding the following areas:

### PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

- Employees must be mindful that they are hired to provide supports to customers, not to be “paid friends.”
- The employee can, and should, encourage friendship development between the customer and people in his/her community.
- The employee’s community is not likely to be the same as the customer’s.
- Facilitating friendships between the customer and the employee’s friends and/or family is not acceptable as these individuals are not “natural supports” within the customer’s community.

### FINANCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

- Employees shall not borrow from nor lend to customers neither shall they enter into a business relationship with customers without contractual agreement and prior authorization from your supervisor.
- Employees shall not purchase services or goods (i.e., car washes, furniture, and other personal property) from the customer nor provide services or goods for compensation (from the customer) outside of their employment. Failure to comply in these situations can be construed as customer exploitation. Discipline measures may be implemented in accordance with the Abuse/Neglect/Exploitation Policy contained in this manual.
- Employees shall not buy for or give to customers; neither shall employees receive gifts nor services from customers.

### CONFIDENTIALITY

- Employees shall discuss confidential information only with authorized personnel.
- Employees may discuss information relevant to the care and well-being of a customer they support with the customer’s support team (this includes the Guardians, if applicable, and the DD Case Manager). Information can only be conveyed to other employees outside the team if the purpose is for training and/or necessary communication for the safety and well-being of the customer (i.e., alleged abuse/neglect/exploitation, floating staff, new employees in training for the customer, or the on-call supervisor if a potential problem exists or may come into existence).
- Information that the customer or his/her guardian has not given permission to be passed on to a third party must be kept confidential. Employees can, and should, inform the customers (and Guardians) of the possible benefits &/or drawbacks to sharing the information. If a situation arises where the employee feels the information needs to be shared for the customer’s safety and well-being, the employee should discuss the situation with his/her supervisor. Examples may include but are not limited to: not divulging crucial information to medical personnel, not notifying family members of intent to leave town.

- Employees shall not share any information about a customer, including that she/he is a recipient of Community Options, Inc. services, with persons not associated with the customer or agency. Exceptions to this include the duty to warn (i.e., if the customer is threatening harm and poses a real danger) and the duty to protect (i.e., if the customer is threatening suicide).

#### USES OF CUSTOMER PROPERTY

- Employees shall respect the customer's property and act as an invited guest in his/her home.
- Employees should not enter the customer's home until the customer lets them in. The customer should be the one to answer the door or phone and open mail addressed to them.
- Employees should not use anything of the customer's without his/her permission including but not limited to: dishes, the bathroom, television/radio, refrigerator, computer, etc.
- Employees should not drive the customer's vehicle(s).
- Employees are responsible for their own meals (see the financial policy and procedures for specific information).
- Employees should ask permission to use the customer's phone and limit calls to emergencies only. The customer's phone number should NEVER be given out by the employee.

#### STAFF/CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP

- Employees shall treat customers with dignity and respect.
- Employees will be informed of the Abuse/Neglect/Exploitation procedural expectations and abide by them. Employees will report any and all incidents that are questionable.
- Sexual interactions with customers are unethical. Employees will not engage in sexual activity of any kind with customers, consensual or otherwise. Any reports of this nature should be considered exploitation and reported immediately according to the Abuse/Neglect/Exploitation policy.
- Employees should respect the integrity and promote the welfare of customers at all times. They should serve as role models in the community to facilitate the acceptance of the customer by others. They should stay alert and awake to provide for the protection and oversight of customers.
- Employees should be respectful of the customer's culture and religious preferences and support participation and interest in activities which enhance the customer's appreciation for his/her culture.
- Employees should not take advantage of customers by using their paid time to run personal errands (i.e., picking up a paycheck, going to the bank, shopping), have visitors, do laundry, use the phone or other personal property of the customer.
- Employees should not take customers to the employee's home unless the arrangement has been approved in advance by the supervisor or his/her designee.
- When a customer requests time alone, as defined in the Person Centered Plan (PCP), the employee must report the customer's request to their supervisor. The supervisor will instruct the employee regarding work responsibilities during the customer's time alone. If other work is not available at that time, the employee will be provided the opportunity to "make up" those hours.

#### PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

- Employees of Community Options, Inc. shall be professional at all times when providing services to customers and representing the agency.

- Employees shall report to work on time for all scheduled hours, including in-services, trainings, and staff meetings, as well as support time.
- Employees shall not report to work under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances, nor use alcohol or controlled substances while on duty, on any property of Community Options, Inc. or the customer's property.
- Employees shall not possess weapons or illegal drugs on the properties of Community Options, Inc. or its customers.
- Employees shall not smoke in the presence of customers.
- Employees shall value other employees and support team members and use them as resources to maintain a high quality of service to customers.
- Employees shall report information truthfully and timely in accordance with guidelines, policies, practices, and procedures established by Community Options, Inc.
- Employees shall abide by all local, state, and federal laws while providing services to customers.
- Employees shall not discuss agency business with persons not affiliated with Community Options, Inc.
- Employees shall not discuss personnel matters with other employees or persons not affiliated with Community Options, Inc.
- Employees shall attend to the needs of the customer while on duty during scheduled hours and not engage in personal activities such as sleeping, reading, or watching TV. Employees scheduled to work the overnight shift are exempt for sleeping during the night hours when the customer is asleep.
- Employees shall communicate between with their supervisors and other employees to ensure the customer's needs are being met. Employees shall make entries in the communication log daily on their shift.
- Employees shall not assume control of the financial and/or personal affairs of a customer or of his/her estate including power of attorney, conservatorship, or guardianship.

Community Options, Inc. strives to ensure that all customers are treated respectfully. The following sections relate to the related Rights and Responsibility policies for customers served by Community Options, Inc. These policies include that customers' rights are respected by agency personnel, restriction to rights occurs only when needed as provided through proper procedures and that the customer is free from maltreatment. Community Options, Inc. is committed to training its employees and customers on the policies relating to customer rights, customer responsibilities and maltreatment.

### **850 Rights**

Effective Date: 07/01/2008

Revision Date: 04/14/2011 and 07/13/2012

#### Policy:

Community Options, Inc. requires its employees to provide its customers with training and support to make personal choices and exercise their individual rights.

#### Procedure:

Employees will receive training regarding the rights and responsibilities of their customers.

Through the person-centered planning process, the rights that are most important to the customer are identified. Supports and strategies are developed to assist the customer in exercising those rights. Employees will provide training and supports to customers so they may exercise their rights and personal freedoms as a natural part of their daily lives (e.g. elections - assisting the customers in gathering information on issues and candidates or provide assistance to vote if requested).

Every customer has the right to:

- Be treated with dignity and respect
- Receive good medical treatment from a doctor of their choice
- Live in a clean, safe place
- Choose to attend or not to attend religious services and worship in their own way
- Receive the support they need to help them do their best and meet their goals
- Choose the goals
- Receive an explanation of services provided by Community Options, Inc. as well as other agencies
- Refuse to participate in experimental research
- Live in an environment that allows them to be as independent as possible
- Refuse medical treatment
- Receive a well-balanced diet
- Be protected from bad or unfair treatment
- Be protected from people who might take advantage of them
- Make a complaint and have people help them
- Have an attorney represent them
- Contact their guardian, family members, friends, D. D. program manager, Human Rights Committee
- Have information about them kept private
- Communicate privately by mail, telephone, Internet, or in person
- Be paid fair wages for work they do
- Not work if they choose
- Wear the clothes they want and keep their personal possessions
- Have friends of their choice
- Access their medical/mental health records and ask questions
- Be free from chemical or physical restraint, seclusion, or isolation
- Have their money spent only for them
- Keep or spend their money and manage their finances
- Receive the services that best meet their needs and help them to do things on their own to the best of their ability
- Participate in or refuse services
- Try new things
- Be informed of their rights and responsibilities and any rules they must follow

- Vote in any eligible election
- Have intimate relationships with persons of their choosing
- Pursue a driver's license
- Have a guardian to help them make decisions, if needed
- Choose what agency provides their services
- Receive services no matter what their race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, or disability

### **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**

1. When children are born, they are free and each should be treated in the same way. They have reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a friendly manner.
2. Everyone can claim the following rights, despite:
  - a. a different sex
  - b. a different skin color
  - c. speaking a different language
  - d. thinking different things
  - e. believing in another religion
  - f. owning more or less
  - g. being born in another social group
  - h. coming from another country
3. It also makes no difference whether the country you live in is independent or not.
4. You have the right to live, and to live in freedom and safety.
5. Nobody has the right to treat you as his/her slave and you should not make anyone your slave.
6. Nobody has the right to torture you.
7. You should be legally protected in the same way everywhere and like everyone else.
8. The law is the same for everyone; it should be applied in the same way to all.
9. You should be able to ask for legal help when the rights your country grants you are not respected.
10. Nobody has the right to put you in prison, to keep you there, or to send you away from your country unjustly, or without good reason.
11. If you go on trial this should be done in public. The people who try you should not let themselves be influenced by others.
12. You should be considered innocent until it can be proven that you are guilty. If you are accused of a crime, you should always have the right to defend yourself. Nobody has the right to condemn you and punish you for something you have not done.
13. You have the right to ask to be protected if someone tries to harm your good name, enter your house, open your letters, or bother you or your family without a good reason.
14. You have the right to come and go as you wish within your country. You have the right to leave your country to go to another one and you should be able to return to your country if you want.
15. If someone hurts you, you have the right to go to another country and ask it to protect you. You lose this right if you have killed someone and if you do not respect what is written here.

16. You have the right to belong to a country and nobody can prevent you, without a good reason, from belonging to that country if you wish.
17. As soon as person is legally entitled, he or she has the right to marry and have a family. In doing this, neither the color of your skin, the country you come from nor your region should be impediments. Men and women have the same rights whether they are single, married or if they are separated. Nobody should force a person to marry. The government of your country should protect your family and its members.
18. You have the right to own things and nobody has the right to take these from you without a good reason.
19. You have the right to profess your religion freely, to change it, and to practice it either on your own or with other people.
20. You have the right to think what you want, to say what you like, and nobody should forbid you from doing so. You should also be able to share your ideas – with people from any other country.
21. You have the right to organize peaceful meetings or to take part in meetings in a peaceful way. It is wrong to force someone to belong to a group.
22. You have the right to take part in your country's political affairs either by belonging to the government yourself or by choosing politicians who have the same ideas as you. Governments should be voted for regularly and voting should be secret. You should get a vote and all votes should be equal. You also have the same right to join the public service as anyone else.
23. The society in which you live should help you to develop and to make the most of all the advantages (culture, work, social welfare) which are offered to you and to all the men and women in your country.
24. You have the right to work, to be free to choose your work, to get a salary which allows you to support your family. If a man and a woman do the same work, they should get the same pay. All people who work have the right to join together to defend their interests.
25. Each work day should not be too long since everyone has the right to rest and should be able to take regular paid holidays.
26. You have the right to have whatever you need so that you and your family: do not fall ill; go hungry; have clothes and a house; and are helped if you are out of work, if you are ill, if you are old, if your wife or husband is dead, or if you do not earn a living for any other reason you cannot help. The mother who is going to have a baby and her baby should get special help. All children have the same rights, whether or not the mother is married.
27. You have the right to go to school and everyone should go to school. Primary schooling should be free. You should be able to learn a profession or continue your studies as far as wish. At school, you should be able to develop all your talents and you should be taught to get along with others, whatever their race, religion or the country they come from. Your parents have the right to choose how and what you will be taught at school.
28. You have the right to share in your community's arts and sciences and any good they do. Your works as an artist, writer, or a scientist should be protected and you should be able to benefit from them.
29. So that your rights will be respected, there must be an “order” which can protect them. This “order” should be local and worldwide.

30. You have duties towards the community within which your personality can only fully develop. The law should guarantee human rights. It should allow everyone to respect others and to be respected.
31. In all parts of the world, no society, no human being, should take it upon her or himself to act in such a way as to destroy the rights which you have just been reading about.

### **Rights of People with Disabilities**

1. The right to treatment, services, and habilitation in the least restrictive, appropriate setting.
2. The right to be presumed competent until a court of law determines otherwise.
3. The right to vote.
4. The right to free exercise of religion.
5. The right to free association, including association with the opposite sex.
6. The right to confidential handling of personal and medical records.
7. The right to receive, possess, use and have secure, lawful personal property.
8. The right to reasonable access to mail, telephone and visitors.
9. The right to be paid the value of work performed, to freely deposit earnings and other funds, and to retain all accumulated funds, including wages earned from the service provider.
10. The right to approve or disapprove service providers as payee of the person's social security, pension, annuity trust fund or any other direct payment or assistance.
11. The right to receive appropriate and adequate medical and dental care if living in an institution or residential facility.
12. The right to be free from chemical restraints and to receive only properly prescribed and promptly recorded drugs and medications.
13. The right to be free from corporal punishment.
14. The right, except in emergencies, to be free from isolation and physical restraints.
15. The right, except pursuant to court order to be free from psycho surgery, sterilization, and medical research.
16. The right, except pursuant to informed consent from the individual or other responsible party in the event of incapacity, to be free from shock therapy.

17. The right to be checked at least once every thirty minutes when properly placed in restraints or isolated for program purposes.
18. The right to an adequate and sufficient diet planned by a qualified dietitian.
19. The right, if between ages 6 through 21, to a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive, appropriate setting.
20. The right to an individualized habilitation or education plan within 30 days after admission to a program to be renewed annually.
21. The right to refuse treatment unless required to prevent serious harm to oneself or others.
22. The right to enforce these rights in a court of law or appropriate administrative proceedings.

### **851 Customer Responsibilities**

Effective Date: 07/01/2008

Revision Date: 04/14/2011 and 07/13/2012

Community Options, Inc. requires its employees to provide its customers with training and support to make choices and exercise rights. These supports also include opportunities to exercise the responsibilities that accompany rights.

#### Procedure:

1. Employees received training regarding rights and responsibilities of their customers.
2. Customers have responsibilities to:
  - Treat others with respect and dignity
  - Be honest with their doctor/psychiatrist/therapist, listen to his/her suggestions and follow them in order to get better
  - Ask questions about their treatment, services or medications
  - Sign releases of information for what can be shared and with whom it can be shared
  - Keep their home clean and safe
  - Ask for help when they need it
  - Ask for services when they need them
  - Ask staff to help them practice their religion/spirituality
  - Work toward their plan goals to the best of their ability and change them as necessary
  - Work cooperatively with staff
  - Be respectful of others
  - Be informed before they sign permission for anything
  - Obey the law
  - See that their activities do not hurt someone else or themselves
  - Act in a safe manner and communicate appropriately

- Make safe and healthy and safe decisions about his/her life
- Tell someone they trust if they are being hurt or mistreated, or if they see someone else being hurt or mistreated
- Tell the truth about situations where they believe their rights have been violated
- Respect the privacy of others
- Pay their bills and to live within their financial means, budgeting for necessities before spending money on non -essentials
- Wear appropriate clothing for the setting
- Keep their possessions clean and neat, replace as needed and discard when necessary
- Be courteous to their guests
- Tell their staff any medical/mental health information needed to support them
- Spend their money wisely, budgeting for necessities before spending on desires
- Apply what they have learned in order to live independently
- Help plan for their future by attending their Person Centered Planning meeting and expressing their dreams/goals/needs
- Carefully consider the possible good and bad consequences of a decision before making it
- Not violate someone's rights
- Educate themselves on the issues and candidates before casting their vote
- Communicate their preferences and opinions
- Drive safely and maintain car insurance
- Advocate for themselves and their rights
- Fulfill your responsibilities

The following sections cover the specific policies relating to the provision of services to customers. The purpose of these policies is to ensure that customers receive quality services from Community Options, Inc. and its employees.

### **852 Maltreatment: Abuse Neglect, and Exploitation**

Effective Date: 07/01/2008

Revision Date: 04/14/2011; 07/13/2012; 7/13/15

Community Options, Inc. believes that all customers should be free from maltreatment. This encompasses any actions or series of actions (commission or omission) that results in harm, potential for harm, or threat of harm. Acts of commission include deliberate and intentional acts, even if harm is not the intended consequence. Acts of omission involve failure to provide for needs or protect from harm/potential of harm. Additionally, maltreatment can refer to the use of behavior management techniques outside of their intended use. Maltreatment can be defined by using the definitions and indicators of abuse, neglect, and exploitation defined below. It is also the policy of Community Options, Inc. that any allegations or observed instances of abuse, neglect, and exploitation reported to employees, regardless of the source (e.g. customers, family members, employees, other agency personnel, neighbors, community members), will be reported in accordance with the procedures described.

## **Definitions and Indicators:**

1. **Verbal abuse:** willful use of offensive, demeaning, derogatory, or indignant language directed at a customer with intent to cause mental anguish in either the manner the message is delivered or the actual words used.  
Indicators: a) wary of contact with others; b) being overly compliant; c) new or explained fear of a person(s); d) change in behavior; or e) reports of verbal abuse by others f) person is crying or seeming upset.
2. **Physical abuse:** any physical act which causes or is intended to cause physical pain and/or injury to a customer.  
Indicators: a) unexplained bruises, welts, burns, fractures, lacerations, abrasions, or internal injuries; b) questionable means of attaining the identified injuries; c) recurrence of unexplained injury; d) wary of contact with others; e) new or unexplained fear of a person(s) or place(s); f) change in behavior; or g) reports of injury by others.
3. **Sexual abuse:** any act directed toward a customer that is interpreted to be of a sexual nature including but not limited to: sexual imposition; sexual intercourse; oral copulation; fondling of the genitals, breasts, buttocks, or any other body part directly or through clothing; or promoting or observing sexual activity or performance for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification.  
Indicators: a) difficulty walking or sitting; b) torn, stained, or bloody clothing; c) pain and/or itching in the genital area; d) sexually transmitted disease (STD); e) pregnancy; f) unwilling to change clothes; g) frequent showering/bathing; h) withdrawal; i) wary of contact with others; j) new or unexplained fear of person(s) or place(s); or k) reports of sexual assault/rape.
4. **Psychological abuse:** any act which causes or is intended to cause mental or emotional anguish or distress, including but not limited to: humiliation, harassment, threats of punishment, deprivation, or other punitive action, or **verbal abuse**.  
Indicators: a) changes in sleeping and eating patterns; b) habit disorder - rocking, sucking, biting, self-stimulatory behavior; c) conduct disorder - antisocial, destructive, aggressive, avoiding activities; d) neurotic reactions - hysteria, obsessions, compulsion, phobias, hypochondria, paralyzing fear; e) suicidal or threats of self-harm; f) low self-esteem; or g) verbally devaluing self.
5. **Neglect:**
  - **Class I Neglect:** Failure of any care giver to provide reasonable and necessary services to maintain the physical and mental health of a customer, when such failure presents either imminent danger to health, safety, or welfare, or substantial probability that death or physical injury would result.
  - **Class II Neglect:** Failure of an employee to provide reasonable and necessary services to a customer according to the person centered or support plan, if feasible, or according to the acceptable standards of care.

Types of **Neglect**:

- **Commission**: Perpetration of a criminal act, “Doing something you are not supposed to do.”
  - **Omission**: Intentionally or unintentionally failing to perform what the law requires, “Not doing something you are supposed to do”, e.g. not providing a support prescribed in PCP; failing to document program implementation, medication administration, and financial expenditures; or not attending required training necessary to implement PCP.
    - Indicators: a) hunger; b) poor hygiene; c) lack of supervision; d) unattended physical problems or medical needs; e) fatigue.
6. **Exploitation**: a) the taking or misuse of property or resources of a customer by means of undue influence, breach of financial relationship, deception, harassment, criminal coercion, theft, or other unlawful or improper means; b) the use of the services of a customer without just compensation; c) the use of a customer for the entertainment or sexual gratification of others under circumstances that cause degradation, humiliation, or mental anguish.

Indicators: a) missing items within the home, b) person’s personal property used as a way to manipulate behavior without proper team and committee approvals, c) customer completing favors for others, d) statements, photos, videos, in which others are making fun of a customer or referring to a customer in a sexual manner.

**Reporting Procedure**: Agency staff are **required** to report alleged or observed instances of neglect/abuse/exploitation, according to the following procedure.

1. Agency staff, who has been notified of, or has directly observed the alleged incident, will take action to ensure the consumer’s health and safety. This action may include: calling 911, taking the person to the hospital, and assisting the person with leaving the abusive situation.
2. Agency staff will notify their **Program Supervisor** and/or the **Director of Services** immediately. They will then complete a General Event Report (GER) and turn into the office within 8 hours or end of shift. The GER will include a description what occurred, or what was reported to have occurred and submit it to their **Program Supervisor and/or Director of Services**.
3. Steps should be taken in collecting and preserving all types of evidence including:

- a. **Physical evidence:** any object, arrangement of objects, substance or the condition of any person's body which has the potential for describing or explaining what occurred; examples: bruises, scratches, articles of clothing that may be or contain evidence of sexual abuse.
  - b. **Demonstrative evidence:** demonstrations which have the potential for describing or explaining what occurred; examples: maps, diagrams, pictures, role-play.
4. Injuries should be examined as soon as possible (RN or a doctor, if warranted).
5. **Program Supervisor and/or Director of Services** will immediately notify **Director of Quality Assurance** of alleged incident.
6. Within 24 hours of being notified by staff, the **Director of Quality Assurance** will notify **Protection and Advocacy's Central Intake**. The Director of Quality Assurance, Director of Services, Program Coordinator, or Program Supervisor will notify the **guardian**.
7. The **D.D. Program Manager** will be notified within one working day after the alleged incident has come to the attention of the agency. The DD Program Manager will be notified by the Director of Quality Assurance, Director of Services, Program Coordinator, or Program Supervisor.
8. **Quality Assurance** will submit the initial written report with immediate risk management steps within one working day.
9. **Quality Assurance** will complete a review of the abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation report and submit recommendations within 5 working days. If applicable, the Director of Quality Assurance and Vice President/Operations Officer will submit a copy of the GER, the individual data form, investigation data sheet, guardianship papers (if applicable), investigative findings, supporting documentation, and recommendations to the Regional Protection and Advocacy Project, the Regional DD Program Administrator, and to the DD Unit of the Disability Services Division within five working days of agency staff becoming aware of the alleged incident.
10. The **Director of Quality Assurance** will assure all recommendations from the Regional Protection and Advocacy Project are implemented following policies of confidentiality.

### **Risk Management Procedure:**

After receiving a reported incident, the **Program Supervisor and/or Director of Services** will:

1. Solicit any additional information needed from the person who reported the incident.
2. If appropriate, make collateral contacts.
3. Ensure contact is made with the alleged victim.
4. Assess the risk level and necessary responsive actions

### **Risk Levels:**

1. **Emergency** - the alleged victim is currently being threatened or there is a medical emergency;
2. **Imminent danger** - there is reason to believe there is impending risk of harm to the alleged victim; e.g. alleged victim is receiving services/care from the alleged perpetrator or the alleged perpetrator has access to the alleged victim;
3. **Non-emergency** - the alleged victim is not in need of emergency services and imminent danger is not present.

### **Responsive actions:**

1. **Emergency intervention:** priority focus is on the life/safety of the alleged victim; involve necessary services to accomplish this such as law enforcement, medical/mental health, program management, individual's guardian, Protection & Advocacy, etc. (The alleged perpetrator may be removed from direct customer care. Access medical or emergency room services and rape/crisis intervention, as appropriate.)
2. **Imminent danger:** priority focus is on the protection of the alleged victim and other potential victims through the involvement of services such as those mentioned above, as well as through the implementation of protections within the provider's authority (e.g. removal of the alleged perpetrator from direct customer care, increase staff to client ratio, increase supervision, etc.).
3. **Non-emergency:** priority is to focus on remedying any abuse/neglect/exploitation and to prevent any further occurrences. Once Emergency and Imminent Danger situations have been resolved, those cases may then be re-assessed under this level. Determine responsibilities and cooperative efforts between P&A and the agency (and any other entities) in conducting the investigation.

In determining Responsive Actions, the alleged victim's ability to consent, their right to self-determination, their right to refuse services, and their right to risk will be taken into account.

### **Supporting Individuals:**

1. When **staff** become aware of alleged incident, he/she will immediately contact the **Program Supervisor/Program Coordinator/Director of Services** if that person hasn't already been notified.
2. The **Program Supervisor/Program Coordinator/Director of Services** will make contact with the alleged victim. He/she will provide reassurance, support and will encourage the discussion of feelings, fears, etc. surrounding the alleged incident.
3. The **Program Supervisor/Program Coordinator/Director of Services** will also provide the alleged victim with information about the incident and, if needed, assistance with contacting/consulting persons in the areas of P&A, clergy, legal, financial, medical, counseling, etc. These needs will be determined by the alleged victim and the **Director**.
4. If desired by the alleged victim and/or the investigator, the **Program Supervisor/Program Coordinator/Director of Services** will accompany them throughout the interview/investigation process.
5. Through discussion with the alleged victim about their feelings, fears, etc., the **Program Supervisor/Program Coordinator/Director of Services** will determine the person's need/desire for enhancements to assure his/her feeling of safety (e.g. new locks on doors, safe homes, unlisted phone numbers, self-defense classes, etc.).

### **Investigative Process:**

The following process will be used for all reported instances of neglect, abuse, exploitation, whether occurring in/out of agency setting, or whether involving the individual and agency staff, community members, or another individual supported by the agency.

1. If the alleged perpetrator is a staff member, if necessary he/she may be **reassigned**. If unable to reassign duties, the individual may be **suspended**, without pay, until investigation is completed.
2. If the alleged perpetrator is a roommate of the alleged victim, alternate living arrangements will be made for the alleged perpetrator if the alleged victim, staff member, guardian, advocate, or any family member expresses a concern for safety. This enables both the alleged perpetrator and the alleged victim to continue routines of daily living while investigations and solutions, if needed, are determined. Substantiation of abuse necessitates a team meeting for both individuals to develop methods preventing further occurrences.
3. **Community Options** will complete an internal investigation to include the following:
  - **The Director of Quality Assurance or other designated individual** will initiate and coordinate the agency's internal investigation process.

- **The Director of Quality Assurance or other designated individual** will review records and documents. These records are reviewed to determine possible precipitating factors, preponderance of evidence that abuse, neglect, exploitation occurred, staff involvement, measures to prevent recurrence. Types of records and documents may include:
    - General Event Reports
    - Person Centered Plans
    - Contact sheets
    - Medical notes
    - Agency policies and procedures
    - Relevant staff training records
4. **The Director of Quality Assurance or other designated individual** will interview parties involved in the allegation.
  5. For formal investigations, as determined with Protection and Advocacy, interviews will include **signature, date, time, and location** of the interview as well as recording facts pertaining to the incident. Accommodations will be made for the customer so that the interview will be conducted in the most comfortable and non-threatening setting possible.
  6. All information will remain confidential with the exception of the following:
    - Agency management must determine actions to be taken based on the information if the allegation is substantiated.
    - Final report of the **Director of Quality Assurance/Vice President** will be sent to regional Protection and Advocacy and the D.D. Division.
  7. Formal investigative findings (interviews and documents) which constitute the preliminary report will be submitted to the **Vice President/Operations Officer** within five working days of discovery of the allegation. For all other investigations, a final report will be submitted to the **Operations Officer** within five working days.
  8. For formal investigations, the **Vice President** will review the Director of Quality Assurance's report and then a written report will be sent to Protection and Advocacy which includes the following:
    - The name of the alleged victim and date and time of the incident.
    - Signed and dated statements from each person interviewed in the investigation
    - A report of the findings in regard to the incident, including a statement as to whether the incident occurred and any supporting documentation related to the incident.

For all other investigations, the Director of Quality Assurance will submit the findings and recommendations of the investigation on the original General Event Report.
  9. Recommendations in regards to staff actions will be documented in the employee's personnel record and maintained in their personnel file.

10. Records of abuse/neglect, exploitation/victimization against persons served will be kept in a separate file to protect privacy.

11. President, Vice President, Operations Officer, and Director of Quality Assurance shall have access to these records.

### **853 Ethic Guidelines for Employees**

Effective Date: 07/01/2008

Revision Date: 04/14/2011, 07/13/2012, 7/13/15

Community Options, Inc. encourages and maintains professional relationships with customers. Specific guidelines have been developed to identify and promote ethical behavior in these relationships.

#### **Procedure for Staff:**

1. Personal Relationships: Employees must be mindful that they are hired to provide supports to customers, not to be “paid friends.” The employee can, and should, encourage friendship development between the customer and people in his/her community. The employee’s community is not likely to be the same as the customer’s. Facilitating friendships between the customer and the employee’s friends &/or family is not acceptable as these individuals are not “natural supports” within the customer’s community.
2. Financial Relationships: Employees shall not borrow from nor lend to customers; neither shall they enter into a business relationship with customers without contractual agreement and prior authorization from their supervisor.
  - a) Employees shall not purchase services or goods (e.g., car washes, furniture and other personal property) from the customer nor provide services or goods for compensation from the customer outside of their employment. Failure to comply in these situations can be construed as customer exploitation. Discipline measures may be implemented in accordance with the Abuse/Neglect/Exploitation Policy contained in this manual.
  - b) Employees shall not buy for or give to customers; neither shall employees receive gifts nor services from customers.
3. Confidentiality: Employees shall discuss confidential information only with authorized personnel.
  - a) Employees may discuss information relevant to the care and well-being of a customer they support with the customer’s support team. This includes the guardians, if applicable, and the DD Program Manager. Information can only be conveyed to other employees outside the team if the purpose is for training and/or necessary communication relating to the safety and well-being of the customer (e.g., alleged abuse/neglect/exploitation, floating staff, new

- employees in training for the customer, or on-call supervisor if a potential problem exists or may come into existence.)
- b) Information the customer or his/her guardian has not given permission to be passed on to a third party must be kept confidential. Employees can, and should, inform the customers and guardians of the possible benefits and/or drawbacks to sharing the information. If a situation arises where the employee feels the information needs to be shared for the customer's safety and well-being, the employee should discuss the situation with his/her supervisor. Examples may include but are not limited to: divulging crucial information to medical personnel, notifying family members of intent to leave town.
  - c) Employees shall not share any information about a customer, including that he/she is a recipient of Community Options, Inc. services, with persons not associated with the customer or agency. Exceptions to this include the duty to warn (e.g., if the customer is threatening harm and poses a real danger) and the duty to protect (e.g., if the customer is threatening suicide).
4. Use of Customer Property: Employees shall respect the customer's property and act as an invited guest in his/her home.
- a) Employees should not enter the customer's home until the customer lets them in. The customer should be the one to answer the door or phone, buzz people in his/her building and open the mail.
  - b) Employees should not use anything of the customer's without his/her permission including but not limited to: dishes, the bathroom, television/radio, refrigerator, computer, etc.
  - c) Employees should not drive the customer's vehicle(s).
  - d) Employees are responsible for their own meals.
  - e) Employees should ask permission to use the customer's phone and limit calls to emergencies only. The customer's phone number should NEVER be given out by the employee!
5. Staff/Customer Relationship: Employees shall treat customers with dignity and respect.
- a) Employees will be informed of the Abuse/Neglect/Exploitation procedural expectations and abide by them. Employees will report any and all incidents that are questionable.
  - b) Sexual interactions with customers are unethical. Employees will not engage in sexual activity of any kind with customers, consensual or otherwise. Any reports of this nature should be considered exploitation and reported immediately according to the Abuse/Neglect/Exploitation policy.
  - c) Employees should respect the integrity and promote the welfare of customers at all times. They should serve as positive role models in the community to facilitate the acceptance of the customer by others. They should stay alert and awake to provide for the protection and oversight of customers.
  - d) Employees should be respectful of the customer's culture and religious preferences. Community Options, Inc. supports participation and interest in activities which enhance the customer's appreciation for his/her culture.

- e) Employees should not take advantage of customers by using their paid time to run personal errands (e.g., picking up a paycheck, going to the bank, shopping), have visitors, do laundry, use the phone or other personal property of the customer.
  - f) Employees should not take customers home with them unless the arrangement has received prior approval from the supervisor or his/her designee.
  - g) When a customer requests time alone, as defined in the Overall Service Plan (OSP), the employee must report the customer's request to their supervisor.
  - h) The supervisor will instruct the employee regarding work responsibilities during the customer's time alone. If other work is not available at that time, the employee will be provided the opportunity to "make up" those hours.
6. Professional Conduct: Employees of Community Options, Inc. will be professional at all times when providing services to customers and representing the agency.
- a) Employees will report to work on time for all scheduled hours, including in services, trainings, and staff meetings, as well as support time.
  - b) Employees will not report to work under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances, nor use them while on duty or on the properties of Community Options, Inc. or its customers.
  - c) Employees will not possess weapons or illegal drugs on the properties of Community Options, Inc. or its customers.
  - d) Employees will not smoke during paid working times. This includes in the customer's home, on the property of Community Options, Inc., or in the presence of a customer.
  - e) Employees will value other employees and support team members and use them as resources to maintain a high quality of service to customers.
  - f) Employees will report information truthfully and timely in accordance with guidelines, policies, practices, and procedures established by Community Options, Inc.
  - g) Employees will abide by all local, state, and federal laws while providing services to customers.
  - h) Employees will not discuss agency business with persons not affiliated with Community Options, Inc.
  - i) Employees will not discuss personnel matters with other employees or persons not affiliated with Community Options, Inc.
  - j) Employees will attend to the needs of the customer while on duty during scheduled hours and not engage in personal activities such as sleeping, reading, watching TV, making or receiving personal cell phone calls, personal shopping or doing errands. Employees scheduled to work a designated sleep night shift are able to sleep during the night hours when the customer is asleep.
  - k) Employees will communicate between each other and their supervisors to assure that the customer's needs are being met. Employees will make entries in the communication log daily on their shift.

- l) Employees will not assume control of the financial and/or personal affairs of a customer or of his/her estate including power of attorney, conservatorship, or guardianship.
- m) Employees will not engage in horse play or teasing while supporting customers.
- n) Employees will follow any posted rules of conduct at community sites, businesses or activities.
- o) Employees will conduct themselves in an honorable fashion. Honesty is an important company attribute. Therefore, any misrepresentation of facts or falsification of records, including personnel records, medical records, leaves of absence documentation or the like will not be tolerated. The same honesty standard applies to any company investigation.

**Action:**

Any violations will result in corrective action, up to and including termination.

**854 Confidentiality**

Effective Date: 07/01/2008

Revision Date: 04/14/2011, 07/13/2012, 7/13/15

Community Options, Inc. employees will respect the privacy of customers by holding the highest standard of confidentiality for their personal information.

**Definition of Confidential Information:**

1. Names of customer, customer's guardian, family members, or friends;
2. The fact that the individual is a customer of Community Options, Inc.;
3. Customer's address and/or phone number;
4. Any personal identifier, such as the customer's Social Security number/driver's license number/Medicaid number;
5. List of personal characteristics or other information that would enable the customer's identity to be tracked or recognized; and
6. Any/all information included in the customer's record/file, present or historical.

**Procedures:**

1. Employees are required to use discretion when discussing any aspect of their involvement with customers to ensure that the civil rights of customers are not violated.
2. Employees may discuss information relevant to the support of a customer with the customer's support team, including the DD program manager and the guardian, if applicable, and other relevant employees, e.g., on-call supervisor, administrator(s), Human Rights Committee.
3. Employees may discuss relevant information with family members and specified others only with the written consent of the customer or guardian.

4. Employees must be careful when and where conversations occur so the information is not overheard by customers, employees, family members, or the general public.
5. Employees shall not discuss protected information with persons not associated with the customer or the agency.
6. Questions about confidentiality shall be directed to their immediate supervisor; Program Supervisor, Director of Services, Operations Officer, Vice President, President, respectively, for resolution.

**Action:**

Any violation of confidentiality will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**855 Customer Grievance Procedure**

Effective Date: 07/01/2008

Revision Date: 04/14/2011 and 07/13/2012

Community Options, Inc. provides a specific and structured procedure for customers to use as a means of finding a resolution to their dissatisfaction with the agency, their supports, employees, or other customers.

**Procedure:**

A grievance is a way of telling someone that you are not satisfied about an agency decision, your support, a staff member, or another customer. Customers may choose to make a grievance if the situation does not change or cannot be fixed without someone intervening. Here's what to do:

1. The customer, their guardian, family members, or friends decide there is a problem that needs to be fixed.
2. The customer should talk with their Program Director and let him/her know what's going on. If the problem is with their Program Director, then he/she should talk with the Director of Quality Assurance.
3. After the customer informs the Program Director, he/she will meet with the customer within three (3) business days to help solve the problem. This may include meeting with other people, reviewing records, etc. The purpose of this meeting is to correct the problem so the customer is satisfied.
4. If the problem continues or is not corrected to the customer's liking, they may set up a meeting with the Director of Quality Assurance or CEO/COO. He/she will review the situation, including any notes or reports, and will work with the customer and others if necessary to resolve the problem.
5. If the customer is still not satisfied, he/she will be supported to discuss the situation with their D.D. Program Manager or with an Advocate from Protection and Advocacy.

**856 Transporting Customers**

Effective Date: 07/01/2008

Revision Date: 04/14/2011, 07/13/2012, and 7/13/15

All employees hired at Community Options, Inc., to work with customers will provide transportation to the customers they support according to the Person Centered Plans and in compliance with all motor vehicle and traffic safety regulations of the state of North Dakota.

Procedure:

1. An employee must submit a copy of his/her driver's license and proof of insurance at the time of hire and as **often as renewal occurs**.
2. Each employee's driving record is evaluated at the time of hire and any violations and/or tickets must be reported to employee's supervisor.
3. Employees may be reimbursed for mileage when transporting customers in their own vehicles. (See Expense Reimbursement policy and procedure.)
4. All employees and passengers are required to wear seat belts at all times while operating and riding in employee's vehicle or agency vehicle. Employees are not permitted to transport customers or staff in the back of pickups, motorcycles, or recreational vehicles.
5. Charges incurred by employee driving habits or decisions (i.e. speeding, parking/towing, traffic violations) are the responsibility of the employee.
6. The customer is responsible to reimburse the employee for the cost of repairs or cleaning of an employee's vehicle caused by the customer damaging or soiling the employee's vehicle.
7. Employees are required to follow the agency driving protocol while driving the company or personal vehicle for agency use.
8. Employees driving habits or accident history may result in loss of driving privileges for agency business. Excessive moving violations or accidents on agency time may also result in disciplinary action up to and including reassignment or termination.
9. Employees are required to keep all parts of their vehicle in good working order for the safety of the customers and employees.
10. Employees must report to their supervisors any medications they are taking that may impair their ability to drive safely and must provide documentation.
11. Employees may not smoke or use smokeless tobacco in their personal vehicles when transporting customers.

**857 Emergency Procedures**

Effective Date: 07/01/2008

Revision Date: 04/14/2011, 07/13/2012, and 7/13/15

Community Options, Inc. has established procedures for employees to follow in the event of accidents and/or emergencies with customers.

Procedures:

All direct support providers will be required to have current medical emergency procedures training.

Accident/Medical Emergency:

1. In an emergency or serious accident, direct support staff will immediately call 911 to request assistance and administer First Aid and/or CPR.
2. In critical situations, the direct support provider will notify the Program Supervisor, Director of Services, or his/her designee. The doctor, psychiatrist, dentist, or other appropriate party may need to be contacted as well.

#### Fire:

1. If there is a small fire, (e.g. stove fire, trash can, shorts in electrical cords or motor sin appliances), ask the customer to leave his house or the building immediately. Staff should use a fire extinguisher to put out the flames. Remember: NEVER PUT WATER ON A GREASE FIRE! Call and report fire to supervisor.
2. If there is a larger fire (i.e. consumes a room or portion of a room), leave the house or building immediately by the safest exit. Use the front door as a primary exit unless fire is blocking the door. If the customer is in their bedroom, instruct them to leave through their window. Make sure the customer knows how to crawl out of the house if there is smoke present. If a customer is asleep and you cannot get to him/her, shout loud verbal commands to inform him/her what to do. If no response, go to their bedroom window to get their attention, and break the window if necessary.
3. After everyone is out, they should meet at a common area (e.g. across the street at the end of a neighbor's driveway).
4. If the customer or another staff's clothing is on fire, wrap quickly in a blanket or other item to smother the fire. If nothing is available, have the person drop to the ground and roll. Call 911 for assistance.
5. Call 911 after everyone is accounted for. Page/call your supervisor.

#### Earthquake:

1. If there is an earthquake, immediately get under a table or under something sturdy, such as a door frame of the bathroom. Do not stand around the perimeter of the building, as these are load bearing walls and will collapse first.
2. After the quake has stopped check for any odor of gas. Shut off gas only if there is a gas odor present. Go to the main cut-off for utilities and turn the valve to the "off" position.
3. Make sure you check the outside structure to determine if the house or building is safe for the customers and staff to stay. If it is not safe, leave and contact your supervisor for alternate sites. Follow directions of the County Preparedness Agency and to go to a shelter.
4. Do not turn on any switches, do not cause static, and do not panic.

#### Tornado:

1. If a warning is issued or community sirens sound, go immediately to the basement. If there is no basement, go to a central bathroom or closet and close the door.
2. Take water, flashlight, and a battery powered radio with you.
3. Do not stay in a room or an area with windows.
4. When everyone is accounted for, stay in the basement or central bathroom until weather reports give the "all-clear" signal.

5. If you are outside or in a car when there is a threat of a tornado, go to an open area that is the lowest possible and get in a crouched position. If you are in your car, DO NOT try to outrun it because you will not make it.

#### Power failure:

1. Use flashlights or candles for light. If using candles, be careful the lit candles do not contact any combustible material.
2. Check with neighbors to see if the power failure is in just your home or building or if it affects the entire area.
3. Contact the electric company to report the power failure.
4. In the event of power failure in cold weather, obtain portable heaters from any heating and cooling company.

#### Flood:

1. If there is a threat of a flood, listen to the emergency evacuation plan for your area. Go to the highest elevation possible or where directed by law enforcement or emergency response officials.
2. Contact your supervisor to report the evacuation as soon as you are able.
3. If caught in a flash flood, move to the highest portion of the building until help arrives.
4. If driving a car, never try to drive through a flooded roadway.

#### Blizzard/snowstorm:

1. In the event of a winter storm or blizzard, stay at the location and call your supervisor. If the next staff scheduled cannot make it to work, you should stay until weather improves (you will be compensated for your time).
2. Listen to the TV or radio weather reports for information regarding advice regarding the safety of venturing out when the storm subsides.

#### Missing Persons:

1. In the event it is determined that a person is missing, staff will notify his/her immediate supervisor.
2. Call the police department and give a description of the person - height, weight, age, sex, color of eyes, hair, and what he/she was last wearing.
3. A search of the immediate area should be conducted if there is no concern for safety and the employee does not have other customers at the scene.

#### Bomb Threat:

1. If a call is received, keep the caller on the line as long as possible. Ask the caller to repeat the message. Attempt to record every word spoken.
2. Advise the caller that the building is occupied by a person with a disability and that detonation of a bomb will result in serious injury or death.
3. Attempt to determine the location of the bomb from the caller or the time of detonation.
4. Pay close attention to any strange or peculiar background noises such as motors running, music or any other noises that would give a clue as to the place where the call is coming.
5. Listen closely to the voice, male or female, the quality, accents, or speech impediments.

6. Immediately after the caller has hung up, call 911, state there has been a bomb threat and proceed to evacuate from the site.
7. Contact your supervisor as soon as you can.

On call/After Hours Coverage:

1. A supervisor or other designated individual will always be available by phone to provide for the safety, well-being, and support of customers and employees.
2. When necessary, employees will secure community emergency services first to provide for everyone's safety, prior to calling their supervisor.
3. Appropriate phone numbers will be given to staff during orientation.

Incident Reporting:

1. General Event Reports (GER) will be completed if any of the following situations occur:
  - Injury to a customer
  - Injury to others by customer
  - Injury to staff by customer
  - Episodes of challenging behavior
  - Theft of property
  - Vehicle accident
  - Property damage
  - Medication error
  - Police involvement
  - Rights restriction
  - Missing customer
  - Blood borne exposure
2. Staff should notify supervisor of all incidents.

See Community Options, Inc. Incident Report Form for further procedural instructions.

**858 Medical Support/ Health Care Screenings**

Effective Date: 07/01/2008

Revision Date: 07/10/2012, 07/13/2012, and 7/13/15

Community Options, Inc. attends to the medical needs of its customers to the extent dictated by each customer's person-centered service plan and to promote optimal health awareness and understanding for the customer.

Procedure:

Each customer who receives services from Community Options is advised to have the following health screenings:

1. Annual physical with their primary care physician and appointments as necessary.
2. Dental visits at least yearly or per dentist's recommendation if more frequent.
3. Eye Doctor's appointments will occur every two years or per doctor's recommendation.
4. Specialty doctor's appointments (psychiatrist, neurologist, cardiologist etc.) will happen per recommendations of the specific doctor.

5. An overview of each customer's appointments and recommendations are listed in the customer's Overall Service Plan.
6. Customers will receive recommended health screenings by age. General Screenings and Immunizations Guidelines are at:  
<http://www.womenshealth.gov/screeningcharts/general/general.pdf>

### **859 Positive Behavior Support Policy**

Effective Date: 07/01/2008

Revision Date: 07/10/2012 and 07/13/2012

Staff are trained in Positive Behavior Support methods including diffusion and how to implement appropriate levels of intervention. The least restrictive approach in implementing behavioral interventions is utilized with each customer. Interventions are decided upon based on knowledge of the customer and tailored to the customer and the specific situation. For a restraint to be mandated it is required to be in a person-centered service plan and be approved by Human Rights Committee and Behavior Support Committee.

### **860 Discontinuation of Services**

Effective Date: 07/01/2008

Revision Date: 04/14/2011 and 07/13/2012

Community Options, Inc. service may be discontinued at the request of the customer, family member, state agency, funding source, or the agency at any time.

Procedure:

1. The party initiating the termination will submit written notice to terminate services to the Vice President and DD Program Manager thirty (30) days prior to the dissolution of services, if possible. Thirty days' notice is preferred but a customer can discontinue services at any time.
2. The recipient of the termination request will acknowledge in writing to the sender that the request has been received and will confirm the effective date.
3. Upon termination of services, the Department of Human Services will assume responsibility of the customer.