

# Client Services Handbook

"WHAT WE DO IS IN OUR NAME."

## Ability Focused Professional Services

Main Office Number: (302) 543-5733  
Main Office Email: [office@afpsde.org](mailto:office@afpsde.org)

### *Hours of Operation*

Monday through Friday 8:00 am - 4:30 pm



*"Assisting People with disabilities to go to work is our business!"*  
<https://dvr.delawareworks.com/>



DELAWARE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES  
Division of Developmental Disabilities Services

<https://dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/ddds/>

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*Welcome to AFPS Client Services!*

We look forward to working with you and helping you achieve your employment goals through our Client Services. We also hope to assist you in utilizing the many resources we have available. We will ensure our program benefits your needs and desires.

This Program handbook explains the policies and procedures as they relate to receiving services from Ability Focused Professional Services, LLC. (AFPS) and to protect and promote your rights while receiving services through AFPS. It is also a way to inform you of what is expected of you and the expectations you should have of AFPS staff. This handbook is reviewed annually and updated as necessary to reflect changes in information. Please keep it and look to it as a reference. If there is any part of this handbook you do not understand, or needs further explanation, please let us know. This document has an alternate format in English, with pictures, large print, or any other way to better help you understand what is in this handbook. If at any time you misplace this handbook, please ask your Career Coordinator for a replacement.

You will be assigned a Career Coordinator that will work closely with you to make the most of your employment goals. We are pleased you chose AFPS as your provider. If you have questions at any time, feel free to ask your Career Coordinator or contact us through email at [office@afpsde.org](mailto:office@afpsde.org). If at ANY time you are unhappy with your service or require immediate assistance, please feel free to contact me directly.

Best Regards,

Brandt Emory  
Director  
(302) 543-5733  
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*AFPS' Mission is "empowering people with supports to reach independence."*

## **ABOUT AFPS CLIENT SERVICES**

Ability Focused Professional Services (AFPS) was founded in 2019 by a father and a son who have a tenured track history providing vocational rehabilitation supports to clients with disabilities. AFPS has pioneered thousands of people with physical, intellectual, and developmental disabilities discover their unique abilities and become a part of their communities through a person-centered approach. We provide clients with cutting-edge, and cost-effective services focusing on person-centered planning for clients with a variety of challenges. At AFPS, we discover, build, and celebrate the ability in all people. Our unique approach to supporting clients helps people of all abilities to make connections, independence and succeed in the community.

AFPS provides vocational rehabilitation services which include innovative community job training, placement and retention services, and job readiness skills, training and education allowing the clients we support to live full and rewarding lives. AFPS Owners have been a resource for clients – many of whom have developmental disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, brain injury, mental illness, and often accompanying physical disabilities. The clients we support are adults or young adults and the services we provide can address an episode in someone's life or span a lifetime.

AFPS employs persons with disabilities within the State of Delaware through its facilities maintenance services contracts. AFPS consistently seeks to provide opportunities to clients with barriers to employment.

## DESCRIPTION OF AFPS SERVICES

AFPS is a non-facility-based agency providing non-facility-based services operating in the community. Clients will be provided supports by a Direct Support Professional (DSP) in their workplace. Community based supports are provided on a as needed basis to meet the needs of the client served.

Our support team is reachable for general inquiry, general communication, between the hours of 8:00am-4:30pm, Monday-Friday.

The Program emphasizes integrated work with supports on the job. Services are based on the philosophy that all clients have the right to work in the communities in which they live.

Clients seeking Client Services from AFPS must live in Delaware. AFPS provides service to a diverse group that includes students transitioning from high school special education programs, adult job seekers, and people who are already employed, but in need of some assistance to become more effective on their jobs. Services are individualized, depending on person’s needs, goals, and preferences.

DVR Services include:	
<b>Service:</b>	<b>Definition:</b>
Career Counseling	AFPS engages clients to identify employment skills, interests, and goals.
Job Skills Training	AFPS provides various training programs, both in person and virtual. The trainings are essential in preparing clients to learn job skills leading to employment.
Job Preparation	As needed, AFPS staff assists clients to develop work-related skills, attitudes, behaviors, and functional capacities to successfully achieve employment goals.
Job Development and Placement	AFPS staff uses vocational assessment information to target jobs well-matched to employment goals.
Job Coaching and Support Services	To ensure long-term success on the job, AFPS assists clients with learning new job tasks and helps them understand job cultures and industry practices.
Rider Training	As needed, AFPS staff assists clients to independently use public transportation.

AFPS does not charge clients who are referred from DVR and DDDS.

AFPS staff members are well-equipped to provide services specifically to people with disabilities. All staff members employed by AFPS are vetted and trained. AFPS staff receives ongoing training to stay abreast of resources that improve services.

### **ENTRY & ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

To participate in client services, a person must meet the following criteria:

- Be at least 18 years old.
- Reside within the state of Delaware
- Have a disability that interferes significantly with the ability to be gainfully employed in the community.
- Possess a state-issued identification card, or driver's license, and a social security card.
- Be legally eligible to work in the United States.
- Have enough independent functioning to not need indefinite one-on-one staff assistance for personal care.
- Be able to behave in a manner that doesn't endanger self or others.
- Display appropriate work behaviors.
- Be connected to DVR or DDDS
- Have been, or in the process of being approved for HBCS LifeSpan Waiver
- Undergo and Pass a state background check
- Be able to complete all the requirements of our intake process, such as signing release forms and providing emergency procedure/contact information.

### **WAITING LIST**

Even if a person meets the eligibility criteria, there may be a waiting period for services for the reason that clients are served on a first-come, first-serve basis. The Program Manager will inform the person of the approximated wait time upon completion of the intake process.

Clients may be removed from the waitlist by their own request or if they chose to work with another agency. Should a client decide to begin services with another agency while on the AFPS

waitlist, it is expected that they notify AFPS as soon as services start with the other agency. Future referrals for that client will be placed at the bottom of the waitlist.

### **INELIGIBILITY**

If a person is found ineligible for services, the Program Manager will be in contact with the prospective client or designated guardian as well as the funding/referral source to explain the reason(s) he or she was not accepted. AFPS will also explain the reason for non-acceptance to the referral source along with recommending or referring the prospective person to alternative services.

### **GUARDIANSHIP/LEGAL DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY**

AFPS will inquire about guardianship at the time of eligibility determination. If it is determined that the client is not their own guardian, the guardian must be present at the time that all services are delivered.

### **DESIGN OF SERVICES**

AFPS's services are designed to respect the needs and desires of the person served. We work to meet their expectations and goals. We are relevant to a person's maximum participation in the environments of their choice. AFPS is committed to a system that nurtures personal growth and dignity of persons served.

The following outline is considered to be AFPS's procedure for acceptance into the program and it is the typical format used to deliver services. The timeframe for services will vary based on a person's needs and also for the reason that AFPS utilizes a Person-Centered Planning (PCP) approach when providing Client Services. PCP is a life-planning model designed to enable clients with disabilities to increase their personal self-determination and independence. This model is based on accepted practice in the field of providing services to clients with disabilities. AFPS recognizes that clients with disabilities must be a driving force in making important decisions that affect their lives and utilizes this evidence-based practice.

AFPS understands the need for timely communication to ensure services and programs are consistently provided. People served by AFPS can expect communication and collaboration to occur through written or oral communication, such as:

- Email
- Texts
- workbooks
- face-to-face meetings
- progress notes
- specialized communication devices
- handheld devices
- computers

- videos
- audio recordings
- group and one-on-one teaching.

While receiving services from AFPS, staff will work to ensure that people are informed about securing and retaining public assistance for which they are eligible. Staff will provide information regarding these services through referral to the appropriate support services, which may include Supplemental Security Income, Social Security Disability Insurance, food stamps, bus passes, clothing vouchers, public health services, and local, county, and state assistance, such as insurance/benefit programs. This may include educating people on how social security benefits may be affected by employment.

**Step 1- Referral is received**

AFPS receives a referral for services. All referrals are received by and reviewed by the Director of Operational Services. Based on the information provided by the referral, the Director of Operational Services (DOS) may contact the DVR Counselor, or DDDS Case Manager for further information. If not already on file, the DOS will request a referral.

**Step 2- Client(s) is placed on the waitlist (if applicable) and contact is made**

Once found eligible by the Director of Operational Services, the client(s) name is placed on a waitlist. Clients are served on a first-come, first-serve basis. *(AFPS informs the client of the approximated wait time for services, which is determined by the Director of Operational Services. This waiting period may vary depending on the availability of staff and/or the time of year that services are requested.)* The Director of Operational Services will directly call and speak to the client(s) and/or guardian. During this phone call, the Director of Operational Services explains the waitlist process and emails the client(s) and/or guardian a Program Handbook for a full understanding of AFPS’s services as well as other resources listed that may be beneficial to the client(s). Upon request, AFPS will mail a hard copy of the Handbook to the address on file.

**Step 3- Client(s) is assigned to a Direct Support Professional (DSP)**

When a referral is on file and there is a caseload opening, Client Services may begin. The client(s) is assigned to a Direct Support Professional (DSP). The DOS will send a courtesy email to the client(s) and/or guardian(s) notifying them their case has been assigned to a designated DSP.

**Step 4- Direct Support Professional makes initial contact with the client(s)**

The designated DSP contacts the client(s) personally to set up an intake interview. The client(s) must respond to this contact within 14 days in order to remain eligible for services. If the client(s) has not contacted the DSP, notification will be sent to the funding source stating that the client(s) has not responded to numerous contact attempts and risk of being denied services. If there are extenuating circumstances that prevent the client(s) from contacting the DSP, such as hospitalization or vacations, the situation will be reviewed by the Director of Operational Services to determine a satisfactory outcome. Also, if the



client(s) contacts the DSP after receiving a notice to discontinue service, the client(s) will be placed at the end of the waitlist as opposed to being removed from it.

### **Step 5- Intake Assessment appointment completed**

The initial appointment with the DSP is an opportunity for everyone involved, the client's team, to learn about the policies and procedures as they relate to receiving services from AFPS. The DSP, client and/or guardian will review the Program Handbook and as required, signed informed consent for services is obtained at this time. (Please see Appendix A to review a critical form that is signed at the intake appointment.) In addition, the DSP and the client will review other appropriate documents, which may include:

- Past evaluations- vocational, psychological, or safety
- Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or other documents from high school special education programs
- Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Testimonials to work habits from school personnel
- Resume
- References from previous employers
- References from previous service providers

### **Individualized Service and Employment Planning and Development**

A key element of the intake appointment is the completion of the Program Career Profile/Assessment. This in-person assessment is a profile created between the DSP and the client.

The document covers specific areas to be addressed for assessment:

- Functional limitations
- Transportation needs
- Interest related to employment
- Identification of barriers to employment
- Remediation strategies
- Areas of interests as they relate to employment
- Work related skills and experiences
- Life skills assessment
- General work behaviors
- Abilities and aptitudes
- Recommendations

### **Step 6- Skills Assessment/ Job Readiness**

Clients begin by working with their assigned DSP to identify vocational needs, skills, qualifications, and preferences. At this point, clients may also complete a self-evaluation of employment exploration and engage in job readiness activities with their DSP. These activities include identification of career opportunities, resume development or revision, goal setting, and practicing customer service and interviewing skills.

### **Step 7- Job Development Placement Plan**

The job development plan provides the blueprint guide to desired employment outcomes. Placement Plans are highly specialized, reflecting the individuality of the person served. They are reviewed on a regular basis and revised based on the satisfaction and changing needs of the person served to remain meaningful. Upon completion of a career profile and assessment, copies will be provided to the DVR, Community Navigator and/or DDDS Case Manager.

Information used in the development of the client's placement plan includes:

- Relevant medical/psychological history
- Information on social aptitudes
- Information on previous employment services

A service plan is based on the client's:

- Strengths and abilities
- Needs and preferences
- Desired outcomes
- Cultural background
- Any other issues as identified

With the input of the person served, plans are developed to determine:

- Overall employment goals
- Specific measurable objectives
- Methods to achieve the objectives
- Those parties responsible for implementation of the goals

The following needs are addressed in the plan:

- Assistive technology
- Reasonable accommodations
- Identified health and safety risks
- Any other needs as identified by the client or advocate

These documents clearly state the planned employment outcomes and/or plan to achieve the desired employment outcomes that will include relevant jobs available in the employment market, strengths of the client, identified barriers and other support needs.

### **Step 8- Job Development/Search Activity**

Once a client decides on a job objective/outcome, the DSP provides job development services. This process includes assistance in filling out applications, establishing contacts with local employers, obtaining job interviews, and securing competitive employment. During this time, there will be established meeting times and regular communication between the DSP and client. These established meeting times are used to promote positive activity and reevaluate the direction services are heading.

Job placement services use an individualized person-centered process to assist the client to identify, obtain, and/or advance in employment. AFPS considers a variety of approaches to job development including contacting employers and building networks within the community to develop and/or identify job opportunities, providing access to information about current job openings, completing a worksite analysis, cold calling, inquiry letters and customized employment and the principles of employment first.

It is important to point out that although it is AFPS's main objective and role to find and place clients into employment opportunities, and the agency does have existing employer partnerships, this does not necessarily mean that a job opportunity will be readily and immediately available. Careful consideration is taken into account for each client to match them to an appropriate employment opportunity which may involve some time for AFPS staff to develop relationships with hiring employers.

It is also important to note the utmost importance of the client's participation during this stage. The job search process is an on-going experience, requiring quick turnaround time and response to employers when job openings are solicited. The DSP will work with the client to teach job seeking skills so that they can be an ACTIVE part of the job search as to increase the opportunity for successful job placement. Failure to be an active part of this process may warrant closing a client's case.

AFPS works with each client to place them into COMPETITIVE employment. AFPS does not provide job development for any job opportunities that are less than minimum wage. Also, at this time, the client is informed about retaining public assistance for which he or she is eligible. All DSP's recommend that clients take advantage of the available resources during and after their job search to maximize job placement potential.

### **Step 9- Job Coaching/Job Supports**

When a client has been hired, job coaching services are offered. (See Appendix B to review the form that will be signed when a client is placed on a job.) The DSP does not replace the employer/employee relationship and is NOT a workplace supervisor. The assigned DSP will act as a "coach/trainer" for initial, intensive support to help the worker learn and become stable on the job. The DSP will ensure complete orientation of the client onto their new job to ensure success. This may include coaching the client on the duties of their job as well as the work culture at the work setting. The DSP will also advise on job standards and work requirements for the worker to gain independence. Coaching is also used when job tasks change, and the worker needs to become acclimated to new tasks. To adhere to each clients' unique needs, job coaching services will vary and may include task analyses, observation followed by a discussion about methods to improve, implementing reasonable accommodations, or assistive technology instruction. AFPS staff will work to revise and modify the job training plan based on each client s needs, however, may not always be experts in their client's chosen vocation. AFPS uses a variety of resources to address these modifications such as the Job Accommodation Network (JAN).

Job coaching is not available if the client is working on a volunteer basis or is a temporary/seasonal employee.

Job support services are rendered when a client needs less assistance to maintain employment. Examples include helping with public transportation, communicating with the employer, or developing social skills.

During the job coaching/support phase, AFPS will utilize an evaluation form to identify job duties, skill acquisition, areas needing improvement that will assist both AFPS and the client to identify and enhance functional capacities to continue success in employment.

### **Step 10- Services Fade**

As the worker becomes more independent and comfortable with their job duties, and begins to consistently meet their employer's expectations, job coaching will gradually fade on the job site. The DSP may help the client build natural supports at the job site. Natural supports can include using coworkers for job training, promoting mentor relationships between the supported employee and others in the workplace, and using environmental cues as a means of sustaining new behaviors at work. At this point in services, the client is working with minimal assistance from the DSP or employer.

### **Step 11- Transition to Long-term Support**

Once the worker is considered at an acceptable level of independence on the job (typically 80/20) and natural supports are established, a meeting is scheduled to successfully transition to long-term support services. A transition summary is prepared that describes services rendered, the result thereof, and recommendations for continued achievement of the client's goals. At this time, the client will also be asked to fill out a service evaluation to provide feedback on their level of satisfaction with our services.

### **Step 12- Case closure/Exit Criteria**

If you are connected to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) it is very typical of cases to be closed after 90 days of successful employment. After 90 days, it will be necessary to discuss how acclimation to the job is going and if more supports are needed. This will require immediate communication between the client, DSP, and DVR counselor.

If, *at any time in the future*, a client requires additional support, services may resume with a referral made to AFPS. The referral will be evaluated, along with the situation to determine the most appropriate actions.

## **CLIENT RIGHTS**

AFPS Client Services aims to protect and promote the rights of all persons served. This commitment guides the delivery of services and supports ongoing interactions with the persons served.

It is the policy of AFPS that every client receives the protection and exercise of all rights: legal, human, and civil. Additionally, it is understood that all staff representing AFPS must promote the rights, health, safety, and privacy/confidentiality of all people served.

#### Rights:

- All clients are entitled to know their rights as people of AFPS.
- All staff and volunteers associated with the organization are knowledgeable of the rights of all clients served.
- All staff and volunteers must promote those rights to the best of their ability.
- All staff, volunteers, and advocates have the responsibility to notify the Director OR Quality Assurance Manager when a client's rights are not being respected.
- Once notified, it is the responsibility of the Director OR Quality Assurance Manager to ensure corrective action is taken to guarantee the rights of people are being respected.

#### Health:

- All people have the right to a healthy environment under which they receive services.
- All staff will work to ensure that people are placed in employment environments that take safety into consideration.
- All staff will work to ensure that people are not placed in employment situations where safety will be an issue due to their particular needs or disability.
- All staff, volunteers, people and/or advocates have the responsibility to notify the Director OR Quality Assurance Manager when an unhealthy environment exists for any reason.
- Once notified, it is the responsibility of the Director OR Quality Assurance Manager to ensure corrective action is taken to make healthy the environment or remove the client and staff from the unfit environment.

#### Safety:

- All people have the right to be and feel safe while receiving services from AFPS Client Services.
- All staff and volunteers associated with the organization must keep the safety of people being supported in mind, at all times.
- All staff and volunteers associated with the organization must work to eliminate any conditions that are unsafe.
- All staff, volunteers, and advocates have the responsibility to notify the Director OR Quality Assurance Manager when unsafe conditions exist.
- Once notified, it is the responsibility of the Director OR Quality Assurance Manager to ensure corrective actions are taken to make conditions safe or remove the client and staff from the unfit conditions.

#### Confidentiality:

All information related to the client being served is treated as confidential. Confidentiality of records means limited access and that only those staff members who have a need-to-know

information have access to the records of persons served. It is the intent of AFPS to abide by the guidelines and provisions of the “DDDS Policy: HIPPA & Confidentiality”. A copy of the policy is available upon request.

Any release of confidential information will be authorized by all people by signing the release of information (ROI) sheet at the time of intake and is clearly limited to the specific information that is identified on the form. These forms are updated annually. AFPS complies with all funding and referral sources applicable laws pertaining to the ROI for each client served.

To protect people’ rights to confidentiality, the following procedures are observed by AFPS staff:

1. Strict sign-out procedures, regarding client files are enforced.
2. Contents of the file are not discussed with, or released to, anyone outside of AFPS without a signed authorization form allowing the information to be given to the specific person or agency requesting it. The authorization is to be signed by the client and legal guardian, if applicable. *(Faxed consents are not acceptable.)*
3. Information indicating that a client is enrolled in services at AFPS will not be given without an appropriately signed release.
  - The authorization form known as the “Release of Information” is available through any AFPS employee for review. With this form, any release of confidential information is authorized by the person served and/or their legal representative; is limited to the specific information identified; has a time limitation; and conforms to the guidelines of funding sources, referral sources, and applicable laws.
  - Client files are returned to the appropriate place immediately after use and are not left on desks or in public view while not in use.
  - Photographs of a client, in which the client is named or can be visually identified, will not be used outside the AFPS office without prior written consent of the client following the guidelines outlined above.

#### Client Files/Records:

A complete file/record is maintained for each person served. Information in this file may include DVR paperwork (CRP, IPE & referral sheet), Intake Assessment, Individual Service Plans (Goals & Progress Sheets), Job Development Reports, Case notes, etc. After services end, the file will be kept for an additional 7 years. After 7 years, the files will be shredded and destroyed. Each client has the right to access their file and may do so by notifying the Main Office in writing.

AFPS staff will not release any information contained in the case file or any other confidential information to any outside source without the written consent of the client or their legal guardian. Some information within the file may not be released to the client unless authorization has been given by the originating client, such as the psychologist in the case of a client's evaluation.

Upon request, the entire case record will be made available for the client to review within 5 working days. Because the original file cannot be removed from the AFPS office, the client requesting to review the case file must do so at the AFPS office.

If the client disagrees with anything that is found in the file, they may submit a written statement documenting their dispute. That written statement will then become a permanent part of the case file. (For additional information, see the Grievance and Appeal Policy on page 19.)

Client files may include:

- Funding contracts/Client Employment Plans
- Names of personal representatives, such as parents, guardians, and advocates
- Referral reports on functional abilities
- Demographic data
- Medical information, such as medications taken and name of physician
- Emergency contact information
- Release/consent forms
- Application for services
- Progress reports
- Exit summary
- Referrals to other sources
- Case notes made by the DSP
- Job Development logs
- Client resume
- Task analyses

### **CODE OF ETHICS**

In abiding by the code of ethics, it is understood that all staff and volunteers of AFPS view his or her responsibilities in as wide of a context as the situation requires. It is also understood that those responsibilities are undertaken considering the Code of Ethics and choosing the course of action within the philosophy and mission of AFPS, as well as the spirit and intent by which the principles of the Code of Ethics were established. AFPS, in adopting the Code of Ethics and accepting the principles shall:

- Provide services designed to meet the needs of clients with an emphasis on promoting choice, inclusion, growth, and development.
- Provide services in a manner that is sensitive to language and cultural differences, and which does not discriminate against clients on the basis of race, ethnicity, creed, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, national origin, or mental or physical disability.
- Protect the privacy of persons served and protect the rights of confidentiality.
- Seek to prevent and promptly respond to the signs of abuse, exploitation or humiliation and shall not engage in sexual, physical, or mental abuse.
- Inspire others through their own sense of dedication and purpose.
- Value the privacy, freedom of choice, and interest of all those affected by their work.
- Be alert to situations that may cause a conflict of interest or have the appearance of conflict. When a conflict arises, action is taken in the best interest of the persons being served.
- Fulfill commitments in good faith and in a timely manner and shall conduct their obligations and responsibilities on behalf of AFPS with honesty, integrity, and fairness.
- Utilize AFPS's Grievance and Appeal Policy to resolve allegations of violations of the Code of Ethics.

#### Commitment to Clients:

AFPS staff & volunteers aspire to:

- Recognize both the limits and potential of each client and to work in cooperation with the client, family, and other professionals to help people achieve optimal level of activity and independence in regard to their employment situation.
- Make every effort to educate the people on the principles of self-advocacy in order to help people achieve life-long independence.
- Take reasonable precautions to ensure all people' safety.
- Provide services according to the policies and procedures set by the organization while obtaining informed consent of the client.

#### Commitment to Employment Practices:

AFPS staff, board of directors & volunteers aspire to:



- Abide by all federal state and local laws regarding the delivery of services to all people.
- Attract qualified persons to employment/volunteerism with AFPS and promote continued professional development.
- Improve their professional knowledge and skills in a manner that their performance will better serve others.
- Avoid assuming responsibility for services that are better provided by other professionals. Referrals to other professionals shall be done in agreement with the client.
- Not solicit or directly accept a gift, subscription, advance or deposit of money, gratuity, favor, entertainment, loan, or anything of significant value from a person, business, or organization with whom they have official relationships.
- Avoid causing misrepresentation of professional credentials or competencies.

Commitment to Business & Marketing Practices:

AFPS staff, & volunteers aspire to:

- Recognize the importance of credibility, integrity, and trustworthiness in all business transactions.
- Serve as a responsible steward for public, private and client supported funds.
- Assure that competitive advertising of services and products is factually accurate.
- Offer only those services that there is reason to believe can be provided.
- Not enter into a fee arrangement that would likely create a conflict of interest.
- Protect the organization’s assets and ensure their efficient use.

**RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN STAFF AND CLIENTS**

It is the policy of AFPS Client Services (AFPS) to place restrictions on socializations between staff and people. It is expected that all staff members are friendly and helpful, but it is also expected that relationships are kept professional, instead of personal. Socializing outside of work is discouraged. Dating is never permitted between staff and client.

AFPS does not encourage staff to provide transportation for people, except when necessary to provide proper service.

AFPS also does not permit staff to enter into any client's living arrangement at any time. However, staff can arrange to meet clients at an appropriate public site, such as a library or other public place, to discuss services.

### **MEDICATIONS POLICY**

Due to the nature of services provided by AFPS Client Services, under no circumstances will staff prescribe, administer, or dispense medications (including prescription and over the counter) to people. If staff members are asked to administer, handle, or store medications for people or other staff, they will notify a member of Management or Director immediately.

Also, it is necessary for people to make known to AFPS any medications being taken at the time of services for knowledge of possible side effects. Should there be new medications, dosage changes, or any other changes in prescription, this information is also to be shared with AFPS as soon as possible.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURE**

AFPS staff are properly trained on the emergency procedures, including courses of action in the events of fire, bomb threats, natural disasters, nuclear, utility failures, medical emergencies, and safety during violent or other threatening situations. An overview of these emergency procedures may be explained to the client during the intake interview. AFPS asks that people are aware of their surroundings and rely on their assigned DSP for instruction during any of the above types of situations.

### **CRISIS INTERVENTION**

In the event that a critical incident arises that requires intervention, AFPS staff will utilize the same policies as listed in the policies and procedures for behavior correction.

### **CLIENT SAFETY AND RISK ASSESSMENT**

AFPS Client Services (AFPS) is dedicated to advocating and promoting the ongoing safety of people while receiving services. It is the policy of AFPS to work with people to identify and minimize any health and safety risks through a risk assessment. Risk Assessment will provide thorough consideration of any potential risks to people's health and safety in the community; identification of actions to be taken to minimize such risks; and identification of clients responsible for taking those actions. Even after identifying such risks that may be posed to the client, it is up to the client to reject, or in some cases, *accept* these inherent risks, with no responsibility held to AFPS.

In recognition of the changing lifestyles and choices of persons served and the wide variety of opportunities for community inclusion and access, AFPS encourages the persons served to explore any risks inherent in their choices in terms of health, safety, lifestyle, sexuality, and so forth, and to take responsibility for their choices. Risks are considered to be exposure to a predictable event or environment that could result in serious physical or psychological injury to the client or another person.

The personal and professional opinions of staff members do not influence the information that is provided beyond what are known to be and what may possibly be expected benefits, risks, and responsibilities.

Examples of health risks include:

- A person who takes psychotropic medication being employed in a position that requires working in extreme temperatures
- A person who takes seizure medications having to wait for public transportation in hot weather
- A person with an eating disorder being employed at a buffet

Examples of safety risks include:

- A person being placed in a job that requires them to wait for public transportation after dark
- A person who takes psychotropic medications being employed in a position that requires him or her to work with industrial machines

At the beginning of employment, the DSP will assist the client in becoming aware of any safety concerns at their job site. Thereafter, it is the responsibility of the client to interact with their employer to address safety concerns/issues. In addition, AFPS will follow the identified actions from the risk assessment to minimize risks throughout services.

If the client chooses to not disclose to their employer that they are receiving Client Services, the client is expected to produce a copy of the safety forms they sign with the employer for the file maintained by AFPS. It is important that the client and client's supports understands that AFPS is not held responsible for injuries on the jobsite.

Both the Risk Assessment and Safe Practice Orientation given to the client will be shared with employers to assist them in ensuring that a safe working environment is provided to people given that the client has disclosed the fact that they are receiving Client Services. AFPS assumes no responsibility in monitoring the overall safety of the client; therefore, it is the full responsibility of the employer to do so.

In the event that a client feels that their employment site is not safe, the client needs to notify their employer and Career Coordinator. A plan to correct the unsafe environment will be developed with the input of all parties (the employer, the DSP and client). The plan and notifications will be documented in the client's case file.

In rare circumstances, if a client threatens harm to themselves or others (including suicide threats), AFPS has the right and responsibility to adhere to the following procedure:

1. Contact police
2. Inform the client's guardian of the situation
3. Complete an incident report and inform the Director

### **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY**

AFPS promotes the concept of equal access for everyone and strives to accomplish this belief through client service goals. Therefore, a certain level of professional and appropriate behavior is expected. At all times, people are expected to show respect to all AFPS staff, other people and all clients associated with the services received. Additionally, people are to refrain from using foul language, from causing bodily harm, while showing respect for equipment, supplies and facilities at all times.

AFPS staff is trained in the use of positive intervention and is committed to providing a professional and positive approach regarding corrective actions of people displaying inappropriate behavior. This includes not using undue force or restricted procedures that could lead to the injury of the person served.

AFPS believes the use of positive behavioral interventions to be consistent with service goals and enhancing the client's employability, independence, and personal growth. While the use of positive approaches may not always be successful in correcting extremely inappropriate behaviors, the use of more restrictive procedures is always to be considered as temporary, approached with caution, and designated to meet the client's goals while assuring safety. AFPS does not and will not use restrictive procedures or actions that constitute restrictions on rights and any prohibited practices.

However, AFPS does reserve the right to refuse or terminate services of any client who displays inappropriate behaviors on an ongoing basis. If restrictions are placed on the rights of a person served:

- AFPS will follow the established policies and procedures
- AFPS has obtained informed consent prior to implementation
- AFPS will enforce methods to reinstate rights as soon as possible

#### **Policies and Procedures for Behavior Correction:**

AFPS strives to build positive relationships with each client served to promote the prevention of unsafe behavior and empower clients with disabilities to change their own behavior. The use of positive interventions is emphasized in the following policies and procedures and through regular provision and training of staff. AFPS utilizes a written informed consent (Policies and Procedures for Behavior Correction form) to explain restrictions that may be placed on the rights of a client, as well as methods to reinstate rights. AFPS staff may make a determination (with

consultation from the Director or Program Manager if possible) at any point that the behavior being exhibited is life threatening or deemed an emergency reserves the right to call 911. AFPS staff members are educated in the use of restrictions and the following list is illustrative of the kind of behaviors that may result in restrictive actions and not limited to:

- Unsafe behaviors including threat of suicide, verbal aggression, or physical violence toward another person or toward property, an emotional outburst, or other behavior deemed by personnel to pose an immediate risk
- Excessive tardiness or absenteeism (no call, no show) at any scheduled appointment, such as with the DSP or a job interview
- Quitting a job without consulting the DSP beforehand
- Threatening verbiage or actions to AFPS staff, other people, volunteers, or others
- Involvement in criminal activity at any point during services, such as stealing
- Involvement with illegal substances at any point during services, including denying or failing a drug test required by an employer
- Possessing a firearm on his or her person or other endangering weapons at any point while receiving services
- Failure to report criminal backgrounds to AFPS or other pertinent information that may affect employment services
- Excessive refusal to participate in Client Services
- Falsifying information/documents or if a client partakes in untruthfulness in any situation
- Lack of communication with the Career Coordinator, including excessive unreturned phone calls or emails
- Any behaviors that AFPS deems inexcusable and unethical
- Constant inactive involvement with SEP services.

The following progressive steps will be employed by AFPS in its efforts to correct inappropriate client behavior and respond to unsafe behaviors exhibited by any client that is being served by AFPS. The DSP will immediately inform the Program Manager (PM) and Director of the situation. Prior to implementation and with the client's input (if possible), AFPS will obtain informed consent from the client/guardian to decide at which step to begin taking corrective actions. **Please note that, depending on the severity of the situation, service restrictions may**

**begin at any step as decided by the Director.** Also, the funding source will be notified immediately.

**1<sup>st</sup> Step- Informal Verbal Warning:** An offer of positive assistance to correct the behavior and a written record (case note) of the warning and issue will be documented in the client's file. Services are not interrupted at this time.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Step- Formal Verbal Warning:** The first formal notice that inappropriate behavior, or a violation of a policy or procedure, has occurred.

- a. The DSP shall meet with the client in a private setting to discuss and provide counsel on the issue that needs improvement. The DSP will make clear to the client that the issue is serious and, together, they will agree upon methods and a reasonable timeframe to correct the situation. If an agreement is not reached regarding what a reasonable timeframe may be, the DSP shall make the determination with assistance from the AD.
- b. The DSP and client will both sign a detailed memorandum acknowledging that a verbal warning has been issued. This memorandum also adheres to the policy that should a more severe violation occur, or if the client fails to resolve the current issue within the specified timeframe, further corrective actions may take place, not to exclude termination of services. The original document will be placed in the client's file and a copy will be given to the third-party funding source. At this point, services are not interrupted.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Step- Written Warning:** The second formal notice that inappropriate behavior, or a violation of a policy or procedure, has occurred.

- a. If the client continues to have difficulties in the same area(s), or if a separate, more severe violation occurs, the client may receive a written warning. The DSP will prepare the written warning and schedule a private meeting with the client to discuss the issue(s) in question and mutually agree upon corrective actions. If an agreement is not reached regarding corrective actions, the DSP shall determine a corrective action with assistance from the Director or AD. A date will be set to follow up on the client's behavior.
- b. The DSP and client both sign the written warning and will receive and retain a copy. The original document will be placed in the client's file and a copy will be given to the third-party funding source. At this point, services are not interrupted, but the client is informed that services may be terminated or postponed if the situation is not corrected.

**4<sup>th</sup> Step- Termination of Services:** If client conduct is not satisfactory within the parameters of the written warning, or should a more severe violation occur, AFPS reserves the right to terminate services. The Associate Director will issue a formal letter to the client informing them of the decision to terminate services and if/when services can resume. A copy of this letter will be sent to the third-party funding source as well.

### **JOB LOSS POLICY**

If a client gets fired from a position that is a direct result of unacceptable behavior(s) on behalf of the client (not showing up at work, not following employer guidelines, drug use, etc.), the

client's case status will be discussed with the DSP(ES) and the Behavior Correction Policies and Procedures will be followed. AFPS staff will work closely with the client to identify the cause of termination and develop a plan to address and correct these issues. Each case will be treated individually to determine the status of services.

If a client loses his or her job for reasons out of the client's control (layoff, uncooperative employer, etc.), the DSP will work with the client, family, and DVR Counselor, or DDDS Manager (or other funding sources) to determine options for future employment and continuation of services.

If a client is placed into a job that he or she does not feel is a good fit, he or she is expected to inform the DSP and discuss the matter prior to acting on the decision to quit. The DSP and client will decide together what the appropriate action is. Failure to consult with the DSP may result in AFPS following the Policies and Procedures for Behavior Correction.

### **ON HOLD STATUS**

This form of case standing will be used as circumstances require it such as hospitalizations, a leave of absence from work, or short-term education/vocational training. On Hold status will last no longer than 3 months. If the situation requires a longer duration of time away from services, the client's case will be closed and placed on the waitlist when ready to resume services.

### **CRIMINAL BACKGROUND POLICY**

AFPS Client Services is dedicated to advocating and promoting employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. However, it is understood that, at times, people may have criminal backgrounds that can impede the ability for AFPS staff to locate appropriate jobs. Clients served by AFPS are responsible for disclosing any criminal history prior to the beginning of job search activities. AFPS also requests criminal background checks on people that are being served. It is understood that not disclosing this information to an employer or AFPS may permanently disqualify the client for employment and further Client Services.

It is understood that AFPS reserves the right to coordinate services with other systems including State and/or local government authorities.

### **CLIENT GRIEVANCE AND APPEAL POLICY/ FORMAL COMPLAINTS**

AFPS complies with all applicable provisions of state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to non-discrimination, sexual harassment, and equal employment opportunity. Any client participating in AFPS services who feels he/she has been discriminated against in any of those areas is entitled to seek redress by the means of the established Grievance and Appeal Policy/Formal Complaints as stated below.

It is understood that there may be times during services, whether in the job development or job coaching phase, that decisions will be made, or actions taken with which all parties including the client, Counselors, Career Coordinator, legal guardian, or other funding source may not agree. In such cases, all parties must try to resolve the disagreement through communication and mutual compromise.

If an agreement cannot be reached, it is understood that the client has the right to appeal any decision made or file a formal complaint. He or she may appeal the decision by contacting the Director in writing, whom of which has the responsibility of responding to the appeal in a timely manner. Any action taken will not result in retaliation or barriers to services for the appealing client. All Career Coordinators have the responsibility of keeping the Program Manager and Director apprised of conflict during services after an appeal has been made.

The Director and funding/referral source will hold a formal meeting with the client to address the issue at hand and to reach an agreeable decision. Depending on the severity of the grievance/formal complaint, if an agreeable decision cannot be reached with a two-week timeframe, the Director may consult with AFPS Senior Management to hold an additional meeting between all parties. If an agreeable decision cannot be made within 30 days, the client, Program Manager, Director and/or referral source has the right to terminate services immediately. All communication regarding the appeal will be communicated in the most understandable means possible for the client. All information regarding the appeal, actions taken, and decisions made will be documented in writing and shared with all parties.

It is suggested that any client submitting a grievance or formal complaint, reference the client rights section of this handbook. At any time during services or during the appeal of a decision regarding services, the client can utilize the statewide Client Assistance Program (CAP: 800-640-9336) for further advocacy and assistance.

### **ABUSE OF ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES INTERVENTION ACT**

AFPS Client Services (AFPS) is in compliance with the Abuse of Adults with Disabilities Intervention Act to protect people with disabilities who are abused, neglected or financially exploited and who, because of their disability, cannot seek assistance on their own behalf. Anyone who believes a person with a disability living in a domestic setting is being abused, neglected, or financially exploited is encouraged to call the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC). The ADRC can be reached at 1-800-223-9074. For Delaware Relay services, dial 711. AFPS has an obligation to report suspected fraud or irregularities committed by clients or other entities to which they interact on the Department's behalf and should make a report to the appropriate program office.

-Actions to be taken by AFPS staff:

1. Documentation: Case notes, incident report sent to Program Manager, Director, and/or DVR Counselor



2. Reporting: Program Manager, Director, and/or DVR Counselor, Client Assistance Program
3. Referral: Appropriate referral authority, and local police department

## CLIENT INPUT

AFPS believes that people with disabilities should have as much input into decision making about their lives and the services they receive as possible. It is strongly encouraged that all people participate actively in the monthly goals & progress meetings, so that the services provided are structured around client needs and preferences.

Monthly Goals & Progress meeting will:

- Integrate results from other services.
- Contain the job objective and the responsibilities of the staff providing services and person receiving services.
- Include choices of the person receiving services.
- Consider career planning, including job advancement and job changes.
- Identify criteria for wage increases, including productivity, longevity, and skill level.
- Specify short- and long-term goals related to employment.
- Identify opportunities for integration and independence.
- Utilize integrated community resources to meet non-work needs.
- Identify short and long-term support needs, including such supports as financial resources, natural supports, and assistive technology.
- Specify the length of time for which follow-up contact will be maintained, primarily based on the person's needs.

AFPS is constantly seeking ways to gain input from people on how to improve services. One way this is done is through monthly goals and progress meetings. Another way is through a Service Evaluation completed by the client upon case closure. AFPS also regularly interviews all stakeholders through a phone survey to measure the satisfaction of services and how AFPS can improve. The results received from this survey are used to constantly evaluate program planning, performance improvement, strategic planning, organizational advocacy, and financial and resource planning. More specifically, AFPS has a long-range plan that encompasses the

following areas: programs and services, marketing, business development, fundraising, leadership, human resources, and technology advancement.

### **OUTCOME MEASUREMENT REPORT**

AFPS produces a career aid and guidance services report for each quarter of the year in March, June, September, and December. A full report is available upon request.

The type of information that is collected includes:

- Typical demographic information- people' ages, ethnic backgrounds, disabilities, and residential areas
- Number of clients served, and the types of services received
- Number of new people served each quarter and number of people carried over
- Number of closed cases and reasons for closure
- Number of new job placements
- Wage information
- Number of hours worked per week
- Number of people receiving benefits at work
- Job types
- Length of time between dates of referral and intake, intake and job placement, and job placement and case closure
- Number of clients that remain employed
- Number of clients who increased their duties, wages and/or hours worked per week

## GLOSSARY

The following terms have been defined in the sense that AFPS Client Services refers to them in this handbook.

### Director-

Superior to Program Manager and DSPs

### Direct Support Professional (DSP)-

Person responsible for providing employment services to people from intake to closure. Not limited to only job development or job coaching.

### Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)-

Statewide agency that assists people with disabilities in preparing for and finding quality employment. AFPS's main funding source. <https://dvr.delawareworks.com>

### Delaware Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS)-

Statewide agency that assists people with developmental disabilities in preparing for and finding quality employment. <https://dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/ddds/>

### Program Manager (PM) -

Direct supervisor of all DSPs (Career Coordinators and Career Coaches)

### Client-

Refers to the person receiving services from AFPS. May also be described as a participant, customer, or client

### Right-

A client's innate privilege to certain ethical and legal principles

### Responsibility-

Mature behavior that is expected of all AFPS people and staff

### Vocation-

An activity pursued as a livelihood

### Waitlist-

A list of potential people waiting for AFPS services to begin

## **CLIENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The following statements have been organized in a manner to which client rights and responsibilities are explained in general terms and in other terms regarding specific services. By signing this agreement, I am testifying to AFPS Client Services that my opinions do not differ and that I have clarified any details that were unclear to me. This document may be referred to throughout services.

### Client Rights Before or After Job Placement

1. To review my case records at any time by notifying the DSP with whom I am working.
2. To know about AFPS Client Services as an organization including:
  - The types of services offered
  - The eligibility criteria
  - Any policies and procedures that affect the services I may receive
  - The approximate waitlist for services
  - Previous performance outcomes
3. To participate in establishing all plans and goals for the services I am receiving, including expressing any opinions or desires I have about all services I wish to receive.
4. To invite anyone, I wish to all meetings held regarding the services I am receiving.
5. To refuse services. I can then expect appropriate staff to explain to me the consequences of that decision.
6. To request to work with a certain DSP and to have that request reviewed by the Director.
7. To complete confidentiality. I understand that staff from AFPS Client Services cannot release any confidential information to any outside sources without written permission from me or my legal guardian.
8. To appeal a decision that is made that I do not agree with by contacting the Director and/or my DVR Counselor. I agree to talk about the disagreement initially with my DSP, but if an agreement cannot be reached, I also have the right to contact DVR Counselor or DDDS Case Manager regarding unhappiness with services.

### Client Responsibilities Before or After Placement

1. To keep my DSP informed of any upcoming events that would require long-term absence from my job or job development activities, such as vacations or surgeries.

2. To disclose any criminal record or conviction of a crime other than minor traffic violations to AFPS. I understand that not disclosing this information to an employer and the with whom I'm working may disqualify me for employment and/or further Client Services.
3. To make known any potential risks to my health and/or safety that may impact my ability to receive services from AFPS Client Services. Risks are considered to be exposure to a predictable event or environment that could result in serious physical or psychological injury to me or someone else.
4. To be truthful with my DSP in order to receive the best possible services during job development and after job placement.
5. To communicate with my DSP continuously throughout services. I am depended upon to keep my DSP updated on any happenings during job development and after placement. For example, if an employer calls me for an interview or if I am being mistreated at work, I will notify the DSP immediately. I also agree to speak with my DSP before acting on decisions that I have made to determine consequences of that decision and the best possible outcome.

#### Client Rights and Responsibilities Specific to Job Development

1. I agree to actively participate in my job search. I will assist the DSP in establishing goals towards successful employment and follow my DSP's guidance in locating a job that suits my employment desires and needs. I also will keep my DSP fully informed of where and when I have job searched on my own in the community.
2. I will notify my DSP of any occurrence related to finding a job including, but not limited to, calls from potential employers, upcoming interviews, or changing employment desires.
3. I have the right to accept or not accept any employment that is offered to me and can expect my DSP to discuss the outcome of that decision with me.

#### General Understandings (After Placement)

1. I understand there might be several AFPS staff working with me until I am able to do my job independently. Therefore, I agree to accept instructions from any Job Coach during job coaching.
2. I understand that once the DSP, my employer, and I agree that AFPS Client Services support can fade, a Job Coach will be available to spot check and monitor my work.
3. I understand that my employer and AFPS staff may regularly review my work performance.
4. It is the responsibility of the employer to follow all labor laws, including minimum wage, personnel records, family leave, etc.

By signing below, I acknowledged that I have reviewed and understand my rights and responsibilities as a person receiving services from AFPS.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Client Signature

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

AFPS Representative's Signature

**EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The following statements encompass my rights and responsibilities as an employee and as they relate to job coaching. By signing this agreement, I am testifying to AFPS Client Services (AFPS) that my opinions do not differ and that I have clarified any details that were unclear to me. This document may be referred to throughout services. I understand that AFPS and my future and/or current employer expect me to meet the following standards:

Employment Rights:

1. To earn a fair wage and be knowledgeable of what I am earning.
2. To know what benefits I am eligible for, my employer's pay schedule (including information regarding direct deposit and overtime wages), policies for transfer, re-entry and termination, and employment classification (seasonal, temporary, etc.).
3. To seek legal recourse through private or government agencies if any of my client and human rights have been violated by my employer.
4. To AFPS terms and conditions if I lose my job. (Please refer to "Job Loss Policies" in the Program Handbook)

Employment Responsibilities

1. To know my work schedule and work as scheduled unless excused by my employer. I understand that excessive absences or poor work performance may result in termination from my job.
2. For transportation to and from work.
3. To learn and follow my employer's policies and procedures, including:
  - Health and safety
  - Dress code
  - Telephone/computer usage
  - Conflict Resolution/Nondiscrimination Practices
  - Procedures for vacation and sick time.
4. To ask about job growth potential, salary and performance reviews, internal job posting procedures, etc.
5. To do all assigned work and to the very best of my ability. If there is a task that I need additional help with, I will contact my DSP immediately for assistance to avoid any troublesome situations at work.

6. To follow all specific rules, regulations, and guidelines of the company and to be respectful of other workers and/or customers.

By signing below, I acknowledged that I have reviewed and understand my rights and responsibilities as a person receiving services from AFPS.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Client Signature

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

AFPS Representative's Signature

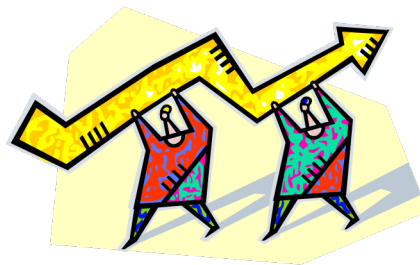


**Summary and Overview of Program Handbook Alternate Format**

Welcome to AFPS Client Services!



The goal of receiving services from AFPS is to help you with employment. We will work together to reach your goal of getting a job.

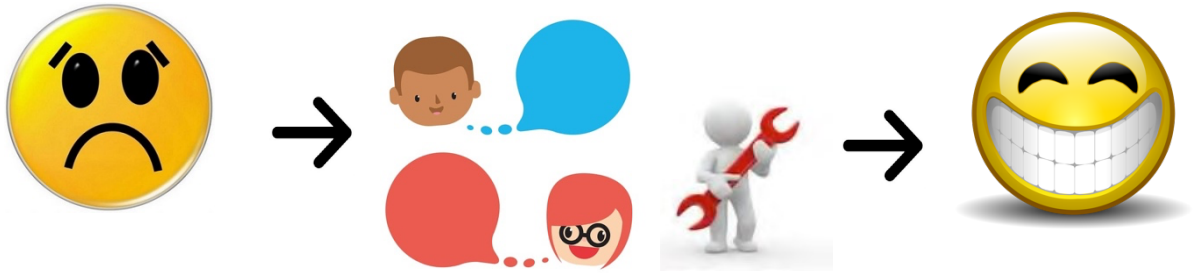


You have certain rights during this process while we are reaching your goal.

- All information is confidential.



- If you are unhappy, let us know and we will talk to fix the problem.



- Services are based on your choices!



- You have the right to feel safe while receiving services and be aware of any emergencies or risks involved while receiving services. If you do not, you can let us know.



- We expect that you will show good behavior while receiving services. This means no yelling/threatening staff or anyone else, showing up to scheduled appointments on time, listening, and having good manners.

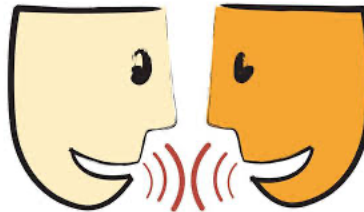


**Failure to follow rules/policies will result in the following:**

- Step #1: AFPS will give verbal warning #1.



- Step #2: AFPS will give verbal warning #2.



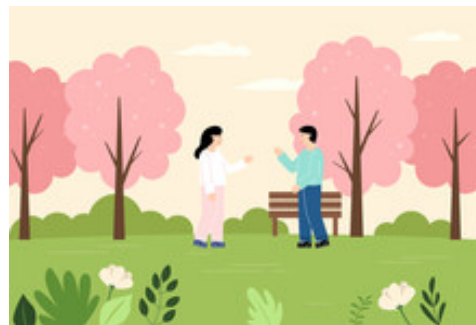
- Step #3: AFPS will give written warning.



- Step #4: AFPS will stop services with you.



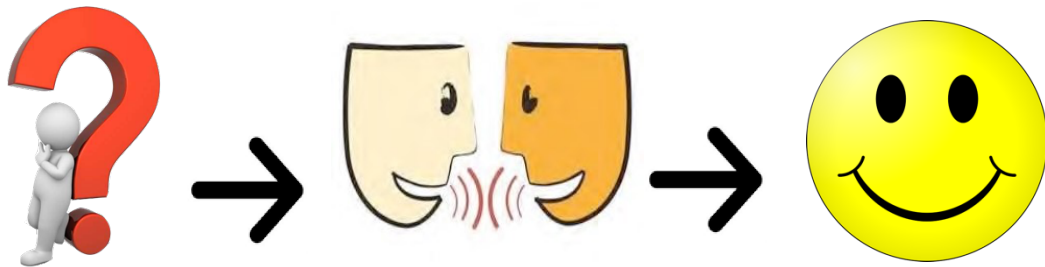
AFPS does not provide transportation, except when necessary to provide proper service, and we will meet with you only in public places.



We want your input! During your scheduled meetings with your Direct Support Professional, express yourself and your thoughts! Be an active part of the process while receiving services from us! You can expect us to guide this process and give you our feedback as well!



If you are unsure of anything and any time, talk to your DSP and ask questions.



DSP Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Office Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

