

Community Connections Program

The Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities (Board) in keeping with its mission is committed to offering individuals assistance to engage in community participation opportunities within their communities. Therefore the Board, through the Community Connections Program, shall provide eligible adults for Board services support in accessing a variety of recreational, learning, community participation and social opportunities.

The Superintendent is authorized to establish and revise as needed the procedures to be utilized in the implementation of this policy. All revisions and changes will be shared with the Board when made.

Board Approval: October 21, 2010,
Revised: December 18, 2014, May 8, 2015
Implemented: November 2, 2010

CROSS REFERENCE

Community Connections Procedures

I. Planned Group Activities:

The purpose of these types of opportunities is to assist individuals to engage in activities within the larger community. Activities typically shall occur at different hours of the day, evening, and weekends to accommodate individuals work schedules. The Community Connections Program staff shall strive to ensure individuals share similar recreational and social opportunities as their neighbors, while remaining person-centered and honoring activities requested by individuals.

A. Participation Requirements:

1. Community Connections services are available to eligible adults beginning within one year of high school graduation.
2. Each individual participating must submit the following form annually in order to participate in activities.
 - a. Consent to participate;
 - b. Media/photo release;
 - c. Information/ Medical Release Form.
3. Each individual participating will receive a copy of the monthly newsletter provided by the Community Connections staff which will offer a variety of activities for consideration.
4. All activities are on a first-come, first-serve basis, all activities have registration deadlines and maximum participation limits.
5. Three or more no-shows for activities within a 3 month period of time will suspend you from participation in Community Connections activities for the period of one month. Any cancellation less than 24 hours will be treated as a no-show.
6. If an individual requires ongoing staff support they may be required to provide their own staff dependent on the activity.
7. If you have personal needs that require one-to-one assistance from staff taking them away from the group, you may be required to provide your own staff.

B. Waiting Lists for recreational activities:

If an individual is placed on the waiting list due to maximum participation limits being met the Children Options and Community Support Waiting List procedures will be followed.

II. Individual or Small Group Opportunities:

The purpose of these types of opportunities is to connect individual citizens with the Erie County community that they live in. These activities are specifically focused on an individual person's dreams, desires and interests. The goal of community participation opportunities is to connect individuals with their Erie County community and foster independence and relationship building outside of the developmental disabilities community.

A. Participation Requirements for Community Participation Opportunities:

1. Eligible adults beginning within one year of high school graduation.

2. Each individual focusing on community participation opportunities will have completed the following forms on an annual basis:
 - a. Consent to Participate;
 - b. Media / Photo Release;
 - c. Information / Medical Release Form.
 3. Each individual will complete a very brief interest survey and interview with staff to assist in developing the community participation opportunity for them.
 4. Opportunities will be based on staff capacity, to be evaluated on an on-going basis.
- B. Staff Role
1. Community Connections will assist with facilitating individual ongoing opportunities with individuals.
 2. The staff goal is for individuals to develop meaningful on going community relationships; staff will eventually fade out of the relationship between the community member and individual.
- C. Waiting List for community participation opportunities:
If an individual is placed on the waiting list due to maximum participation limits being met the Children Options and Community Support Waiting List procedures will be followed.

Carmi Beier

Superintendent Approval

July 16, 2015

Date