

## Community Engagement Program Standard Operating Procedure

### **Provides Guidance Related To: Behavioral Expectations for Group Service Recipients**

#### **Definition of Group Services:**

*The Alaska Division of Senior and Disabilities Services Group Day Habilitation regulations state that “The recipient's medical, social, educational, or other records support the recipient's need for, and capacity to engage in and benefit from, additional active teaching or training”*

Group Day Habilitation is a service that is provided to more than one person at the same time. Staff can support two to five people while engaging them in active learning through group activities that allow for personal growth in designated individualized goal areas. Ideally, staff time is divided equally among the participants prompting and intervening when necessary to keep participants actively working on their goals.

#### **The Capacity to Engage and Benefit:**

As stated in the State regulations, group participants need to have the “capacity to engage and benefit from” the service of Group Day Habilitation. The following skill sets have been identified as necessary for participants to benefit from services delivered in a group setting through the service of Group Day Habilitation.

1. They must be able to follow staff instructions **most** of the time.
2. Have a certain level of independence in **some** of the following areas: self-regulation, social skills, self-initiation, environmental awareness, personal safety,
3. Have the desire to be in a group setting
4. Have a basic ability to interact or manage peer interactions
5. They must be able to engage in minimal disruptive behaviors on a regular basis.
6. They must be able to be unsupervised for short periods of time i.e., going to the bathroom, eating lunch etc.
7. They should be able to participate in some of the following group dynamics: sharing, taking turns, being respectful of others, leaving materials where they belong, and listening

We know that not everyone will have all the basic skills above but having some of these will increase the success of group participation and learning.

If a participant lacks some of these skills area but still wants to participate in group activities, they can work on learning and practicing these skills through Individual Day Habilitation. This service allows for someone to have a one-on-one staff available to give them the attention and support they need to be successful while participating in the group activities and learning the skills to be successful in a group setting.

#### **Group Day Habilitation vs Individual Day Habilitation:**

How do you know which Day Habilitation service is right for you? Choosing and accessing these services is often discussed in planning meetings. Participants often move from one service to

the other depending on what is happening in their life. Here are some indicators that someone **may not ready** to be successfully supported by group staffing levels:

1. High frequency of disruptions to the group process
2. Monopolizes staff time
3. Disruptive behavior that interferes with the other group members experience
4. Refusal to participate in scheduled activities
5. Refusal to follow rules
6. Demonstration of behaviors that make it unsafe

If a participant is participating in group services and is having a difficult time, likely supports include:

1. Regular communication
2. Team meetings
3. Problem solving
4. Staff training
5. Behavioral assessments
6. Tracking and documentation
7. Requests for Behavioral Health Services

**Some circumstances/behaviors that cannot be safely staffed by group service staff are:**

**Eloping:** staff in group services are assigned to multiple people making it extremely difficult to leave the service area to follow someone. This behavior typically results in a pause from services (length of pause varies for each individual and can be defined in their behavior plan). Repeated violations would result in a change of support service.

**Consistent non-compliance/refusal to participate:** when someone refuses to participate in group activities, staff problem solve ways to get them engaged. If this becomes an on-going pattern and is disruptive to the group process, group service staff will request a team meeting to assess the issue and find a more supportive path for the participant to participate. This may require a pause in services.

**Aggression:** If this behavior occurs towards anyone in the environment, it can precipitate police involvement and/or a pause in services (length of the pause varies for each individual and can be defined in their behavior plan). Repeated violations would result in a change of support service.

**Personal Hygiene:** staff in group services are assigned to multiple people and are unable to attend to one person out of the environment for long periods of time. If personal hygiene or toileting issues are time consuming and occur regularly, the group service staff will request a team meeting to assess the issue and find a more supportive path for the participant to participate. This may result in a pause in services.