

SUNSHINE VILLAGE CLIENT HANDBOOK: Employment and Community Based Day Supports

WELCOME TO SUNSHINE VILLAGE! PLANNING FOR A GREAT DAY

This Handbook is intended to provide clients and their families and guardians with important information related to the organization and our Employment and Community Based Day Supports (CBDS) programs. We provide updates regularly – through a variety of mechanisms, including client meetings, emails to families/guardians, our private Facebook page and through our website - www.sunshine.us

MISSION STATEMENT: Sunshine Village delivers on a GREAT day for individuals with developmental disabilities and those on the autism spectrum by helping them to live and learn, work and earn and give and grow.

VISION STATEMENT: Sunshine Village maintains a clear vision to continue building upon its solid foundation as a premier provider of services and an employer of choice, within the greater Pioneer Valley, by identifying and leveraging the unique abilities of the individuals it supports and employs.

This multidimensional vision will be accomplished by continually (i) assessing, enhancing and offering innovative services, inclusive of day and community-based services and workforce development programs; (ii) providing a safe and nurturing environment that is welcoming and inclusive for all; (iii) assisting individuals to achieve independence to their greatest ability; (iv) investing in technology and infrastructure; and (v) investing in our workforce through a competitive and comprehensive total rewards plan and professional development program, while emphasizing wellness and valuing work-life balance.

ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS and STRATEGIES

- Advance SSV as a “Premier Provider of Choice” by assessing, enhancing and offering innovative services that assist individuals to achieve greater independence.
- Ensure the financial stability of SSV with sound governance and strong leadership that strives for excellence while adhering to thoughtful policies, transparent practices, proactive planning and continuous improvement.
- Enhance service provision by investing in technology and infrastructure while ensuring that all environments are safe, welcoming and inclusive for all.
- Continue to be an “Employer of Choice” investing in our workforce through a competitive and comprehensive total rewards plan and professional development program, while emphasizing wellness and valuing work-life balance.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

CODE OF CONDUCT AND EXPECTATIONS: Sunshine Village has Codes of Conduct for many stakeholder groups, including its Board of Directors and Employees. The Client Code of Conduct

includes Expectations that serve as examples. The examples of expected conduct are not exhaustive and should not be construed as limiting those instances in which the suspension or discharge penalty may be imposed, nor limiting the Agency's right to suspend or discharge clients for offenses not contained in the listing of examples:

- ☐ **I will treat everyone with dignity and respect**
 - I will be kind to others.
 - I will deal peacefully with anger, insults and disagreements.
 - I will use appropriate language and manners.
 - I will not make threats.
 - I will not bully others.
 - I will not fight with others.
 - I will respect personal boundaries of others. This means no hugging, kissing, touching of private parts.
- ☐ **I will respect and value diversity**
 - I will respect the unique personalities and traits of others.
 - I will be considerate of the challenges others face.
 - I will not make rude and offensive remarks about someone's culture, color, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
- ☐ **I will improve awareness of my community and its resources**
 - I will participate in a variety of 'Bringing the Community to Us' activities
 - I will empower myself by making informed choices and decisions
 - I will make responsible choices throughout the day.
- ☐ **I will view learning as a life-long process**
 - I will make goals and try new things.
- ☐ **I will help make environments healthy and safe**
 - I will inform others if I need to leave an area.
 - I will not leave the building without telling the support person.
 - I will respect the property of others.
 - I will use technology safely.
- ☐ **I will encourage teamwork and open communication**
 - I will work on projects with others.
 - I will help others or get help for others if needed.

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS: A SUMMARY: As members of society, we are born free and equal in rights, dignity and all entitled to the same rights. Our rights cannot be challenged without due process. If our ability to make informed decisions is in question, we have the right to a public hearing regarding our rights and obligations. We have a responsibility to respect other people and to exercise our rights with due regard for the rights of other members of the community.

Dignity:

- We have the right to be treated with respect.
- We have the right to a nationality and the right to celebrate our culture.
- We have the right to worship.

Self-Determination:

- We have the right to choose.
- We have the right to know what information is written in our records and can view our records.

- We have the right to be independent and make our own informed decisions.
- We have the right to have our own thoughts and opinions and the right to change our minds.
- We have the right to have our own unique personality.

Communication:

- We have the right to communicate with others and to fully express ourselves.
- We have the right to send and receive letters.
- We have the right to communicate through telephones and computers.

Relationships:

- We have the right to develop friendships.
- We have the right to belong to any group we choose.
- We have the right to have intimate relationships with mutually consenting adults.
- We have the right to marry and have a family if we choose.

Privacy:

- We have the right to privacy.
- We have the right to privacy in our own home and personal space.
- We have the right to converse privately.
- We have the right to expect confidentiality regarding our personal information.
- We have the right to expect our photographs will not be publicized without our permission

Personal Safety:

- Everyone has the right to be safe.
- We have the right to be free from harm.
- We have the right to basic needs such as food, clothing, housing, medical care and social services.

Personal Property:

- We have the right to own property.
- We have the right to obtain, keep, use and dispose of personal possessions.

Education, Employment, and Compensation:

- We have the right to an education.
- We have the right to choose the type of work we do.
- We have the right to work in favorable conditions.
- We have the right to be paid for the work we do.
- We have the right to equal pay for equal work.
- We have the right to take a vacation from work.

Community Membership:

- We have the right to participate in the cultural life of the community.
- We have the right to participate in the government by exercising our right to vote.
- We have the right to belong to groups and clubs in the community.
- We have the right to recreation and leisure.

NON-DISCRIMINATION NOTICE: SSV complies with all applicable state and federal civil rights laws in the eligibility for and delivery of its services and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, gender identity or expression, genetic information, and/or veteran status. SSV does not exclude people or treat them differently on the basis of any and/or all of these protected categories.

WAITLIST NOTICE: Sunshine Village (SSV) provides services for adults (aged 18 and older) with developmental and intellectual disabilities. SSV provides services regardless of the level of disability, as long as there is adequate funding to ensure the safety of all clients and employees. If a client requires space, nursing staff, intensive clinical supports and/or staffing that is not readily available, the client will be placed on a waitlist until his/her needs can be safely met.

SUSPENSION / DISCHARGE NOTICE: Sunshine Village is committed to providing environments that are safe, welcoming and respectful for all of its clients, their families and employees. Clients and their families are expected to adhere to the agency's Client Code of Conduct and Expectations, as outlined in the SSV's Client Handbook, and failure to do so may result in either a suspension or discharge from service.

Sunshine Village will work to help clients and their families understand and comply with all agency policies and processes and work to assist clients to satisfactorily comply with all standards. If any client is unable, or unwilling, to comply with policies, rules, regulations and processes, SSV will undertake a series of corrective actions to educate and encourage clients to comply. How, and how often, Sunshine Village educates and encourages clients will be at the agency's discretion, dependent upon the severity and frequency of the actions or the consequences of the action(s.)

At any time, SSV may need to enforce a temporary suspension to undertake an internal investigation, allow a regulatory body to perform an investigation, or allow for time for the Individual Support Plan (ISP) team or a meeting with other stakeholders to convene. Decisions from any meeting will be communicated with all stakeholders, including the client and their guardian/family member(s.)

The applicability or the extent to which any of these corrective actions are utilized will depend upon the sole discretion of management as determined by the scope of the problem involved and the circumstances. Any misconduct or serious failures or inadequacies that create an unsafe environment for other clients or employees of SSV may be dealt with by immediate termination or discharge.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION: Sunshine Village offers a variety of ways for clients to communicate concerns and participate in remediation efforts.

Mediation: Clients experiencing difficulties/issues with another client or clients should discuss his/her concerns with the other individual(s.) Case Managers, Assistant Managers and Program Managers can assist with these conversations.

Grievance: Clients who believe that they have been treated unfairly by an employee or find an organizational policy or programmatic protocol unfair, can file an informal or a formal grievance through these internal and external sources:

- **INFORMAL:** Clients can talk with the Program Manager at any time about an incident or about a policy/protocol. Timeliness is a factor when investigating incidents – so clients are encouraged to bring up concerns as soon as possible. The Program Manager will investigate and respond back in person within five working days.
- **FORMAL:** If you are not satisfied with the response from an informal grievance or if you consider the incident or issue more significant, you can talk with the Vice President Day Services within five business days of the incident or about a policy/protocol. The Director will investigate and respond to you, in person or in writing, within five business days.
- If you continue to be dissatisfied, you can contact your DDS Service Coordinator or MassHealth representative.

In no way will filing an informal or formal grievance result in retaliation or barriers to service. In addition, if you feel more comfortable, you may request the support and assistance of a direct support person, a Human Rights Officer and/or a member of the Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) Advisory Team for an informal grievance or when filing a formal grievance. If you believe a conflict of interest exists, follow the grievance procedure.

Complaints: Complaints can be made when matters are significant or services are suspended or a client is discharged, in the following ways:

- **DPPC Complaint:** If you feel that you have been neglected or abused by a paid staff member of Sunshine Village, you can contact the Disabled Persons Protection Commission (DPPC) at 1-800-426-9009.
- **Complaint Regarding a Suspension or Discharge:** Clients and/or their guardian/family member who believe that they have been unjustly suspended or discharged from services and who wish to file a formal grievance should take the following steps:
 - Submit a written statement to the Vice President Day Services within ten business days of the suspension/discharge. The Vice President Day Services will investigate and respond in writing within ten business days.
 - If you are not satisfied with the response, you can submit a written statement to the President/CEO within ten business days of the initial response. The President/CEO will investigate and respond to you, in writing, within ten business days.
 - If you continue to be dissatisfied, you can call your DDS Service Coordinator or MassHealth representative.

PROTECTION AND HARASSMENT PREVENTION (ANTI-HARASSMENT): Sunshine Village promotes a workplace free from harassment. Harassment means unwelcome conduct whether verbal or physical based upon a characteristic protected by law.

Harassment includes actions such as, but not only,

- Display of pictures, written materials that are degrading to a person or group.
- Verbal abuse, slurs or insults and comments about or directed towards an individual or group.

Sexual harassment means unwelcome sexual advances which can include:

- Unwelcome sexual advances—whether they include physical touching or not
- Sexual jokes, stories, gossip regarding someone’s dating habits, showing sexual objects, pictures, cartoons, insulting comments, whistling, staring, or talking of personal sexual activities.

If you believe you have been involved in harassment, you have the right to file a complaint – verbally or in writing - with the Human Rights Officer, PBS Representative, Program Manager or Vice President Day Services. Management will investigate, respond to you and take corrective action, if necessary.

SAFETY REQUIREMENTS: Sunshine Village has comprehensive Safety, Risk Management, Emergency Preparedness, Accessibility and Security Plans. It is up to everyone to help maintain welcoming, safe and secure environments.

As Sunshine Village continues to embrace technology to enhance the safety and security of our people and property, all Sunshine Village–owned and operated vehicles used within Transportation Services utilize GPS and dual-facing dash cameras.

These cameras will be used for video monitoring purposes only capturing both exterior and interior views of the vehicle.

A written notice that video recording is in progress will be clearly displayed inside the vehicle.

You can help by adhering to the following standards, policies and protocols:

Seatbelts: Seatbelts must be worn when driving or riding in a vehicle. The seatbelt must be secured properly across your shoulder and hips so lying down or reclining too far is not an option. This is a law in Massachusetts.

Vehicle Safety: Everyone must sit in a seat when driving or riding in a vehicle. Blocking the driver’s view or grabbing a steering wheel or gears is against the rules. Yelling is not allowed. The driver has the right to assign you to a particular seat.

Bad Weather / Emergency Closing: If the weather is bad or there is an emergency, Sunshine Village may be closed or have a delayed opening. An announcement will be made on the television station WWLP Channel 22 as “Sunshine Village.” A voice mail message can be listened to after 6:30 am by calling the main number of (413)592-6142. An announcement will also be posted on the agency’s website: www.sunshine.us

Mandated Reporting: Any person witnessing mistreatment of a person with a disability is responsible for reporting mistreatment to DPPC at 1-800-426-9009.

Records: Records are primarily electronic and maintained for all individuals. You can access your electronic health record by asking your Program Manager and/ or Case Manager. Either the Program Manager or Case Manager will sit with you and review your record, if needed, will provide assistance reading the record. We do require notice and will sit with you within 1 day to

review. If you would like a copy of something in your record, we will provide it within 3 business days.

Dress/Attire: Everyone should present themselves in an appropriately dressed, neat and clean manner. Clothing should be appropriate for the day and no vulgarity or offensive language should be worn.

Smoking: Individuals who smoke must smoke outside in designated areas only and extinguish all incendiary materials properly.

EMPLOYMENT AND COMMUNITY BASED DAY SUPPORTS (CBDS)

The Employment and Community Based Day Services (CBDS) Handbook of Sunshine Village explains the various services available within the Employment and CBDS division of Sunshine Village. The handbook outlines rights, expectations and responsibilities.

If you ever have questions or concerns, you can discuss this handbook with the Program Manager, Assistant Manager or Case Manager. If you need help to review, your support staff can assist.

We currently provide services Monday through Friday between the hours of 9:00 am and 3:00 pm for individuals of varying developmental disabilities at community-based sites in Western Massachusetts. We operate programs at the following locations:

- Main Campus: 75 Litwin Lane, Chicopee, MA
- 588 Silver Street, Agawam, MA
- 4 Springfield Street, Three Rivers, MA

CBDS is a pathway to employment for you unless you and your team state otherwise. We encourage regular community involvement outside Sunshine Village, however, services are flexible meeting the needs and desires of clients and their guardians.

You will have opportunities to live and learn, work and earn, give and grow. We will support you to discover your niche and shine.

CBDS provides supports and services in the greater community within a small group model; you will have opportunities to explore your interests through unpaid work-based learning experiences and connections fostered with local businesses.

PAID EMPLOYMENT: All paid employment opportunities - individual or group - will pay minimum wage or higher. Depending on your job, you may be paid by Sunshine Village or the business you work for. If Sunshine Village pays you, the pay day is every Thursday and you will use the agency's on-line payroll system and your check will be deposited directly into your bank account. Benefits, if available, may be provided by your employer.

FUNDING AGENCY: Your services are primarily funded by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and Department of Developmental Services (DDS.) Since Sunshine Village receives payment to provide your services, Sunshine Village is required to communicate your progress or lack of progress to our funding source. This communication may include your Service Coordinator , DDS personnel, and other members of your team.

ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORD: Sunshine Village maintains an electronic record which includes your personal information such as your emergency contact information, social security information, date of birth, medical and your person-centered individual support plan with your goals and objectives and progress toward your goals. You can access your electronic health record by asking your Program Manager and/ or Case Manager. Either the Program Manager or Case Manager will sit with you and review with you. We do require notice and will sit with you within 1 day to review. If you would like a copy of something in your record, we will provide it within 3 business days.

COMMUNICATION: Since Sunshine Village receives payment to provide your services, Sunshine Village is required to communicate your progress or lack of progress to our funding source. This communication may include your Service Coordinator, DDS personnel, and other members of your team.

Sunshine Village is committed to insuring your health and safety. Elements of your day necessitating communication with your home environment regarding your health and safety will be shared.

Our preferred method of communication is via telephone and e-mail. We do not send written notes back and forth between home and Sunshine Village.

Privacy and respect are paramount within all communication and between all parties.

MONEY MANAGEMENT: Sunshine Village can support you to manage your spending money while at the program if you and your team believe you need help. If you and your team believe you need support, an individualized financial support plan can be developed and followed to assist you.

CHOICE: Sunshine Village has a philosophical orientation that emphasizes your ability to assess your needs and make choices about what services would best meet your needs in conjunction with families, the organization and its funding source. Sunshine Village values the partnerships established within your team.

Sunshine Village is committed to your success and is committed to supporting you in your personal growth and promoting human rights while simultaneously ensuring your health and safety.

Our CBDS services are provided within a small group with one direct support employee. To be a candidate for our small group model, you must be safe without direct supervision for up to 10

minutes.

SMARTCARDS: Smartcards help keep you safe while you are in the community. If you need help, your smartcard provides important information to others including phone numbers to contact in an emergency. Smartcards are updated in real time using a secure website, so your information is always current.

When scanned, the smartcard shows clear safety and contact information to help others support you. Staff are trained to manage smartcards, and all CBDS programs follow the same process.

Smartcards support your independence while keeping your health and safety a priority.

Smartcards are maintained by the program. You are encouraged to leave your smartcard with the program so that it is always available when you attend.

EXPECTATIONS

ATTENDANCE: Attendance in the ES/CBDS program must meet a **minimum of 85% to stay enrolled, unless otherwise approved or pre-approved for part time status.**

PERSONAL WELLNESS: Sunshine Village is committed to insuring your health and safety as well as the health of all clients in the program. We provide an active and engaging day and expect you to be well and symptom free of illness to attend and participate fully. If you are ill and need to go home to rest and get well, we will contact your guardian/family/residential provider and you will need to be picked up within two hours of the initial call.

ABSENCES: If you are absent from the program, please notify the Program Manager or Case Manager. You will also want to let your transportation driver know of your absence.

If you are absent **more than 5 days due to an illness**, you need a note from your physician prior to your return. Depending on your illness or condition, other conditions may apply. You will not be able to attend until the proper documentation is received.

In addition to requiring a note from your physician when you are absent more than 5 days, you will need a physician note and medical clearance to return to the day habilitation program supplied on or before returning after absences (regardless of length of absence) and pertinent documentation for the following medical concerns:

- Hospitalizations—the hospital discharge summary including any new restrictions, medication or treatment changes and a Health Care Provider's note to return must be supplied.
- Emergency room visits—the emergency room discharge form and a Health Care Provider's note to return must be supplied.

- Swallowing studies—a copy of the test as well as any updated Dining Guidelines and a Health Care Provider’s order for any new dietary modifications must be supplied.
- Orthopedic issues including sprains and broken bones—Sunshine Village must be supplied with a health care provider’s order for weight bearing status, directions for ambulation, directions for any equipment to be used, as well Health Care Provider’s note to return.

Any significant change in your health status requires a Health Care Provider’s note and Sunshine Village may suspend your services until proper documentation is obtained.

REQUIRED MEDICAL DOCUMENTATION: A current physical-not more than two years old-must be forwarded to Sunshine Village as well as any medication orders that the organization is responsible for administering. Sunshine Village may suspend your services if a current physical is not on file.

To better support individuals and keep them safe and well, we require copies of evaluations and ongoing follow-up care reports from specialty medical providers the individual sees for health conditions and diagnosis. This includes but is not limited to:

- Neurology
- Cardiology
- Pulmonology
- Endocrinology
- Psychiatry

CUSTOMER INPUT: Your input is valued and important and you can provide feedback formally during meetings as well as informally, through personal communication and electronic means. Sunshine Village administers an annual Satisfaction Survey where clients and/or guardians can express opinions about services and supports. Participation in all surveys is voluntary.

PROHIBITED CONDUCT: Sunshine Village has an expectation that all clients and employees will treat each other with dignity and respect and help to ensure that all environments are warm, welcoming and safe. This handbook details the Code of Conduct and Expectations and support staff will educate and encourage all clients to understand and comply with expectations.

Bullying is not allowed and violence of any kind is not acceptable. Hitting, biting, slapping, kicking, pinching, spitting and destroying property are examples of violent behavior. Individuals engaged in this type of behavior will be assessed and a plan may be developed to address the behavior(s).

Weapons, including guns, knives and switchblades, are not allowed. If you see a weapon, do not touch the weapon, notify the Program Manager or Case Manager and contact 911.

Illegal drug use is not acceptable for either clients or employees of SSV. Clients are not allowed to participate in programming if they are impaired by alcohol or illegal drugs.

If you need support in being respectful or to comply with any of the expectations outlines in this handbook, education will be provided.

EMPLOYEE QUALIFICATIONS: Sunshine Village recruits and retains caring people to work within programs and support services. The organization provides on-going, robust professional development to ensure that all employees satisfy performance requirements.

- All support personnel are at least 18 years of age and have a current driver's license.
- Newly hired employees undergo a comprehensive orientation program and then receive the professional development opportunities provided to all employees.
- All personnel must undergo a criminal record check and fingerprint-based background checks for employment at Sunshine Village. A criminal record will not automatically disqualify an applicant.
- Certain positions require a college education and licensure. Credentials are secured for all positions requiring a college degree or license.
- Program Managers, Assistant Managers, and Case Managers are regularly available within the program between 8:00 am and 4:00pm – although programs may close early for holidays or at other times. Direct Support Programs (DSPs) typically work from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm.
- Some employees, including many DSPs, work with other human services organizations when not working at Sunshine Village. If this poses a conflict for you, please let your Program Manager, Assistant Manager, or Case Manager know.

Various Policies used prior to 1999

Employment Services Personnel Handbook established 2000

Revised 2001 (added Benefits)

Revised February 2002 (added Conflict Resolution)

Revised: December 2003 (added Code of Ethics)

Revised: November 2004 to be effective January 2005 (removed 'significant other' clause)

March 2005 (revised Conflict Resolution and add Grievance)

Revised 2006: Name Change and Risk Statement

Revised 2008: Conflict of Staff and Cost of Service and Records

Revised 2009: Picture Identification/Wages and payday change (Fridays to Thursdays)

Revised 2009: Clarification of vacation time.

Revised March 2011: Clarification of Wkpl Violence/Respectful Interactions/Hours of Service

Revised January 2013 Change in benefits

Revised March 2013: Clarify dress code.

Revised January 2014: Change in benefits

Revised 2017: Change in pay and CBDS

Revised 2019: Separate CBDS

Revised 2020: Added DDS Conflict Resolution

Revised 2022

Revised 2023: Record access

Revised March 6 2024 Removed COVID reference under absences

Revised December 2024

Revised July 8, 2025: Clarified small group model

Revised December 12, 2025 Change of titles, addition of smartcards, GPS/videos SSV vehicles/clarification re: seatbelts and sitting upright