

# Client Handbook

## AbleLiving Services

AbleLiving Services is committed to providing exceptional, quality service to all our clients. All programs and services are provided in a manner that upholds the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.



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## Welcome to AbleLiving!

We are pleased that you have chosen AbleLiving as your service provider. At AbleLiving, we put the client in the centre of all that we do. Our dedicated staff and volunteers are passionate about client service and go above and beyond to ensure that the client experience is exceptional. With an integrated service delivery model, AbleLiving provides a healthy living experience that meets service, safety, and care requirements in an environment suited to your unique circumstance.

We hope to be your provider of choice for many years to come. As part of our commitment to quality services, we welcome your feedback and comments. For more information on any of our services, policies or practices, please contact your program office or AbleLiving representative.

## *ABOUT THE HANDBOOK*

This handbook has been developed to provide you with an overview of AbleLiving operations - providing information on the continuum of our services and answering a number of common questions. The information in this handbook is not intended to replace or supersede laws, government legislation, or agency policies, procedures or practices. This handbook has been prepared in accordance with Thrive Group's Accessible Customer Service Policy and is available in audio and electronic format upon request.

Our goal is to have a resource that is useful and relevant to you throughout your journey with AbleLiving. Depending on the services you utilize, some aspects of the handbook may be more relevant than others. The person-specific details of your services will be found in your service plan.

Included in the handbook is information on:

- How to contact us
- Agency mission, vision and values
- Your rights and responsibilities
- Role of employees in service provision



- Policies and procedures that may impact your services

## BACKGROUND

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AbleLiving is a not for profit organization funded by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC) through the Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) of Hamilton, Norfolk, Haldimand and Brant. Additional service funding is assigned from the Mississauga Halton LHIN. In addition to the LHIN funding, AbleLiving actively pursues federal opportunities, and engages in fundraising initiatives and collaborative projects in order to deliver quality services to our clients. Our services extend from the Hamilton area all the way to Mississauga.

AbleLiving opened our doors in 1978 with the first project being our Binbrook location. We continue to build the organization with the support of our funders and now operate more than 12 distinct programs! AbleLiving offers frail seniors and persons with disabilities a wide spectrum of services with distinct programs such as Supportive Housing, Shared Living, Community Outreach, Caregiver Respite and Homemaking. AbleLiving also provides supports and services to a number of provincial and federal initiatives which prioritize vulnerable and at risk populations.

In 2013, AbleLiving Services became a founding member of Thrive Group, which brings together charities with a health care focus to share best practices and back office resources. Thrive Group organizations operate independently but collaboratively with other organizations in the network.

Thrive Group's mission, vision and values are overarching and guide all member organizations. Thrive Group's volunteer Board of Directors, Chief Executive Officer and Senior Team are ultimately responsible for all aspects of the member organization's operations. They act as the umbrella organization, providing leadership and creating efficiencies so that we can focus on what we do best – deliver excellent customer service to our clients and stakeholders in the community.



WE BELIEVE LIVING WELL IS AN ART NOT A SCIENCE. WE MAKE LIVING LIFE WELL, ON YOUR OWN TERMS, A REALITY. WITH AN INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL, ABLELIVING PROVIDES A HEALTHY LIVING EXPERIENCE THAT MEETS SERVICE, SAFETY AND CARE REQUIREMENTS IN ENVIRONMENTS SUITED TO YOUR UNIQUE NEEDS.

## OUR MISSION

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Thrive Group provides a spectrum of integrated services to support and care for individuals to live as independently as possible. By bringing together like-minded organizations we will:

- Develop and deliver quality services that are responsive and innovative
- Enhance collaborative approaches to service provision
- Inform government directives and influence health care system transformation, and
- Create efficiencies and reduce duplication.

## OUR VISION

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Building a community of quality and responsive services in a highly integrated and transformed health care system.

## OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

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1. Cultivate and deliver a culture of quality service excellence for residents and clients, employees and other stakeholders through engagement and understanding.
2. Build capacity through strategic partnerships that will allow Thrive Group to have greater impact and influence for those served.
3. Create a diversified funding base to ensure financial sustainability.



## OUR VALUES

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**TEAMWORK** is essential for our success. We believe we are more effective together than individually. We require our collective knowledge and skills to accomplish great things. Our employees and volunteers are expected to work in collaboration with each other, our clients, residents and family members. By building strong and effective partnerships with our community and funders we believe we can build more accessible and cohesive systems of care for all.

**HONESTY** and transparency are fundamental in building relationships with our clients and residents, partners, funders, families and community. We are trustworthy and ethical in all our dealings and hold our employees and volunteers to the highest standards of conduct. We value open, honest and direct communication and encourage regular feedback from our employees and volunteers, clients, residents and stakeholders.

**RESPECT** is required in all our interactions. We respect the privacy and dignity of our clients and residents and will provide them with support and services that allow them to live as safely and independently as possible. We value and celebrate diversity in our clients, residents and colleagues. We respect the environments within which we work and will strive to maintain them to the highest standards possible.

**INNOVATION** and progressive approaches to care are essential in meeting the current and growing needs of our clients and residents. We are committed to continuous learning and development, and encourage our employees and volunteers to strive to be the best that they can be. We are committed to learning new approaches and open to researching and implementing best and most promising practices to ensure we remain a leader in the field of human service provision.

**VERSATILITY** ensures our ability to adapt and change to meet growing demands with limited resources. We are committed to building services and systems that are responsive, timely and cost efficient. We will remain solution-focused and will provide our clients, residents and stakeholders with demonstrated value without compromising quality of service. We will build a culture of responsibility and accountability across all organizational systems.

**EXCELLENCE** is a fundamental requirement in all we do. We are committed to building a leading-edge organization that attracts and retains a highly qualified and engaged workforce. Through the expertise and commitment of our employees we will subsequently develop high quality programs, services and systems that are held in the highest regard across the wider health and social service sector.

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## CUSTOMER SERVICE

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### You Are Our Customer

Within the non-profit or health care sector the word customer is not often used. We use such words as client, resident, patient, family member, or visitor to describe our customer. We want everyone involved with AbleLiving to receive exceptional customer service and encourage clients to tell us about their experiences so that we can continue to improve.

### Service Promise




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## OUR PHILOSOPHY

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### Independent Living

AbleLiving has adapted the fundamental concepts of the Independent Living Philosophy (originally developed for persons with physical disabilities) including the right of people to:

- Live with dignity in their chosen community
- Participate in all aspects of their life
- Maintain control and make decisions about their life through "Directing Services"
- Make his/her own choices and decisions, even if those choices involve risk and failure
- Assume all responsibilities associated with these rights



## Client-Centred Service

AbleLiving provides services and supports that are client-centered. This is an approach in which clients are viewed as whole; it is not merely about delivering services where the client is located. Client-centred care involves advocacy, empowerment, and respecting the client's autonomy, voice, self-determination, and participation in decision-making.

Characteristics of client-centred services include:

- Service that is centered on the individual
- Recognizes that the client and or designate knows best what their needs are and how they should be met
- The client or designate identifies what key tasks they would like staff to perform, when the tasks will be performed and how they wish these tasks to be performed
- Processes are in place to facilitate the identification of client needs expectations and outcomes
- Service is individualized, customized to meet the needs of each client.

## Communication

Open communication is very important to us and is reflected in our mission, vision and values. We embrace a number of methods of communication such as onsite program locations, voicemail, email and the ability to access any member of leadership in an emergency.

It is important that the focus on good communication is a standing priority for all stakeholders to ensure quality service delivery. For services to be successfully delivered, you must let the staff know what is expected of them during your booking so they can perform routine tasks without you being required to oversee them. There are a variety of methods to support clear communication of expectations. Verbal instructions, written notes, checklists, and routine summaries are the most common.

Good communication is:

- Clear
- Concise
- In-keeping with our facial expressions and body language
- Delivered in the right place and in a timely manner
- Caring and respectful

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## RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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### The Client Bill of Rights (As they appear in the Ontario Long Term Care Act)

1. You have the right to be treated in a courteous and respectful manner and to be free from mental, physical and financial abuse.
2. You have the right to be dealt with in a manner that respects our dignity and privacy and promotes your autonomy.
3. You have the right to be dealt with in a manner that recognizes your individuality and that responds to your needs and preferences. This includes preferences based on ethnic, spiritual, linguistic, familial and cultural factors.
4. You have the right to have information about community services provided to you and to be told who will provide those services.
5. You have the right to participate in the assessment of your requirements, development of your service plan, review of your requirements, evaluation and review of your service plan.
6. You have the right to give or refuse consent to the provision of any community service.
7. You have the right to raise concerns or recommend changes in connection with the community services provided to you and in connection with policies and decisions that affect your interests, to your service provider, government officials or any other person without fear of interference, coercion, discrimination or reprisal.
8. You have the right to laws, rules and policies affecting the operation of the service provider and the right to be informed in writing of the procedures for initiating complaints about the service provider.
9. You have the right to keep your records confidential in accordance with the law.



## Client Responsibilities

Fulfilling your responsibilities as a client helps keep your services from being disrupted, delayed, changed or cancelled. Your responsibilities are to:

- Actively participate in service planning and the delivery of services; including eligibility & appropriateness assessments; and developing, revising and updating the Individual Service Plan at least annually and/or when triggered by a change of need or circumstance
- Sign a Service Agreement and other relevant documents that support your plan of care
- Advise in a timely manner of any concerns related to your service provision, including any concerns related to employee performance, booking schedule or level of support
- Be available to receive services outlined in the Service Agreement and Schedule A of the individual client service plan. AbleLiving requires 24 hours' notice of cancellation unless an emergency arises
- Allow a leadership or agency representative to enter your home, to observe and evaluate service delivery and interactions
- Avoid exposing AbleLiving employees to any illegal activity that may occur within the confines of your home
- Provide an environment that is free from verbal, physical, sexual or any other type of harassment in accordance with Bill 168
- Retain a health care professional who can meet your medical needs
- Inform AbleLiving of changes that affect your health status or functional abilities (i.e. falls, hospitalization, infection), including any instructions or orders given by your health care team if they have the potential to impact service delivery
- Abide by AbleLiving Client Service policies and procedures, (i.e. smoking restrictions, pet provisions)
- Ensure good conduct of guests and animals in your home
- Purchase and provide all necessary supplies and personal protective equipment required to carry out services (i.e. liquid hand soap, gowns, gloves)
- Ensure that equipment, including assistive devices such as lifts, commode chairs, etc., are available and in good working order. Assistive devices, specialized equipment and supplies used by AbleLiving employees are the responsibility of the client and require regular annual maintenance at the cost of the client

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- Comply with all Health & Safety and Fire regulations and agree to occasional visits from AbleLiving Health and Safety representative. It is important that clients familiarize themselves with the fire and emergency procedures in the home. Please refer to the Health & Safety Appendix B for more information;
  - Participate in training or orientation of staff
  - Hold a current lease with the landlord if receiving assistance through a Supportive Housing program
  - Obtain "Apartment Contents" and "General Liability" Insurance
  - Arrange transportation as required; AbleLiving employees can assist in making arrangements but cannot provide transport in private vehicles
  - Refrain from removing or borrowing articles from any AbleLiving employee or volunteer

### AbleLiving's Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the organization are to ensure first and foremost we adhere to the Client Bill of Rights, as noted in client rights section of this Handbook. The role of the AbleLiving is:

- Deliver support within the scope of the service provided to the client.
- Collaborate with the client and communicate continually, learning the individual's perspective and sharing what is relevant from the employee perspective.
- Resolve issues around requests to which there is no clear-cut answer. The attendant seeks appropriate guidance from their supervisor in this regard.
- Set and monitor appropriate professional boundaries.
- Actively participate in orientation and compulsory training as it relates to their role; they may also receive project specific and / or client-specific training.
- Engage in appropriate training prior to the Attendant delivering an identified service that is delegated by a regulated healthcare professional
- Meet service quality standards of job assignments and assume competency.
- Conduct environmental scans at every visit to identify safety risks and risk reduction strategies
- Report any concerns, issues or complaints to the leadership team in a timely manner
- Perform all services in a respectful, professional and non-judgmental manner that is in keeping with the agency's mission, vision and values
- Abide by AbleLiving policies, procedures and best practices

## Boundaries of the Professional Relationship

AbleLiving employees, volunteers and students have an obligation to maintain appropriate professional relations at all times. A professional relationship is one where there are positive and friendly interactions between Agency representatives and



clients but does not cross over into a personal relationship where interests may be conflicted. It is the responsibility of all parties to exercise discretion with disclosure of personal information. Please be advised that when a client shares private information that may have an impact on services, the agency representative has a responsibility to report it to AbleLiving. There are specific policies in place that address social media and other forms of electronic documentation, confidentiality and conflict of interest. Policies

that impact service provision can be obtained by contacting the program office.

AbleLiving may hire relatives of clients, provided that relatives don't work in the same department or site. Should a personal relationship develop or exist between an employee and a client, the agency must be informed in the early stages so the appropriate measures can be taken to prevent conflict of interest.

For the safety and security of all involved, under no circumstance should a client loan or give any employee money or personal property legal complications. The organization has a policy that outlines the handling of client money should clients require this level of support.

Gifts of any kind to employees from clients or their friends and families are discouraged. All gifts must be reviewed with leadership as per our policy which states that no employee can receive a gift valued at more than \$50.

Clients and Families wishing to acknowledge our staff are encouraged to participate in employee recognition events such as the Thriving for Excellence program or Staff Appreciation week. Other opportunities to show your appreciation include participating in a fundraising event or making a financial contribution, in-kind donation, or an in memorial dedication to the organization.

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## Health and Safety

Maintaining a safe environment for clients, guests, employees and volunteers is everyone's responsibility. At AbleLiving, we follow a risk identification system that looks at Processes, Equipment, Materials, Environment and People (PEMEP), as the contributing factors to most hazards. Activities such as home risk assessments, monthly site inspections, equipment inspections and emergency drills are completed regularly to reduce risk for all parties. Policies related to health and well-being and respect in the workplace are in place to address the way we treat each other.

Many of our provisions are in direct response to the Occupational Health and Safety Act and as such are mandated by law. Additional client service policies and best practices that relate to client safe handling, fall prevention, responsive behavior management and infection control may be triggered by your service plan. By keeping in mind the guiding principles of the independent living philosophy and the client's right to risk, we have developed a carefully constructed framework of Health and Safety and Risk Management strategies to help guide our actions (see Appendix A).

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## SERVICE QUALITY

AbleLiving has a number of procedures and activities in place to ensure clients experience high quality service delivery. Employees, clients and other stakeholders all have a role in making AbleLiving a provider of choice for those we serve. Activities include:

- Employee performance development plans
- Client Engagement/Experience Surveys and Committees
- Scheduled and unscheduled service observations (job observations)
- Client Service policies, procedures and best practices

## Client Engagement

Your voice is important to us and we want to hear from you. Tell us your stories, your hopes and wishes. There are a number of agency initiatives that could benefit from your perspective. Speak to your program leadership about how to get involved or give feedback on our programs and services.

## SERVICE FEEDBACK and COMPLAINTS

You are encouraged to resolve possible conflicts directly with the staff and/or to bring forward to the program leadership any complaints or recommendations related to safety, health standards, staff performance and quality of service.

We respect the clients' voice and encourage the expression of concern regarding the services provided by the agency. We value good client service and have several tools that can be used to help resolve conflict should occur.

Clients have the right to have their unresolved complaints/objections reviewed by the agency in a fair, consistent and timely manner. A client with an active or unresolved complaint at the program or service level is to be contacted every three days with an update unless there is a mutually agreed upon alternate schedule of contact.

All complaints are recorded and analyzed with the goal of identifying the root cause and recommendations to reduce reoccurrence. Complaints may be categorized for ease of reference i.e. punctuality; client safety; skills & training; problem solving; conflict resolution; continuity; communication; and client rights.

### Complaint Resolution:

1. Complainant discusses concerns directly with the employee to resolve the issue.
2. Employee receiving complaint works toward a solution or, if the complaint is about another employee, recommend that the complainant speak to that employee's supervisor.
3. If no solution is found, complainant alerts the supervisor of the concern and the attempts made to resolve it. Complaint may be submitted in writing, via email or reported verbally.
4. Employee also reports concern to supervisor. Outline the issue in detail and describe the problem with any suggestions for remedies.
5. Supervisor considers all the facts, circumstances and information provided, discusses the issue with the client, caregiver and employee if appropriate and attempts to find a satisfactory solution.
6. If no solution is found, supervisor refers the complaint to the next senior leader or appropriate designate. All parties are advised that the complaint has been referred.
7. Complainant meets with the management representative to discuss the issue and the steps that have been taken toward resolution.
8. Management Representative considers the facts, circumstances, and information provided, discusses the issue with the client, caregiver and employee if appropriate and attempts to find a satisfactory solution.
9. If no satisfactory solution is found, process continues to escalate up the chain of leadership until a resolution is determined.
10. If no satisfactory solution is found or the complainant is not satisfied by the determination of the CEO, the complainant may trigger the appeals process.

## Client Services Manual

AbleLiving has a best practice manual that outlines service procedures and routines for each task staff may be expected to perform as part of a client's Service Plan. The Client Services manual is intended to guide employees in understanding the expectations for safe service provision. It does not replace a client's preferred method of service provision. Where clients indicate a preference that is different from the best practice, the activity will be assessed for risks to clients and staff. Consultation and negotiation with clients will inform the practice going forward and any exceptions to best practice will be clearly documented in the service plan.

## Documentation

Information sharing is a key component of the service and completing daily reports, written or electronic is an important function for quality assurance. Employees are required to immediately address and notify the program leadership of all health and safety concerns; changes to the service or the client's health condition; as well as any service complaints or quality concerns. Point of time documentation is the highest standard and best practice that we aim to meet. Documentation supports investigation and conflict resolution; it can also identify gaps in service and areas for improvement. These are considered part of our day to day operations and are the property of AbleLiving.

## SERVICE PLANNING

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### Eligibility and Appropriateness Criteria

Applicants and current clients must participate in an assessment to determine if they meet the eligibility criteria for entrance to or ongoing access to a particular program. We use internationally recognized resources (i.e. Inter-RAI) to inform or decision making. Many of the eligibility requirements are directed to AbleLiving by our funders and they may place specific limits on the types and level of services available at each program.

Appropriateness is another factor that is considered during the assessment process. It is important to review expectations, strengths and abilities of the client or applicant to ensure they are receiving the right service at the right time in the right location.

In the majority of our programs, AbleLiving determines eligibility and appropriateness based on the results of an in-home assessment – comparing the applicant’s needs with the requirements for each program applied for. For example, an applicant for Assisted Living needs to understand that the service model is much more than an opportunity for accessible housing or homemaking. There must be a demonstrated need for access to 24 hr services and yet the applicant must also be able to be left alone safely for hours at a time.

In some of our programs, initial eligibility is determined by an external partner such as the LHIN Home and Community Case Manager and AbleLiving is responsible for ensuring that anyone on the programs maintains their eligibility or is discharged when appropriate. This is the case for the Community Home Support Service (CHS) and the Westwood Project.

## Service Plan

Service planning is an active process that may be triggered at different times in response to changes in circumstances such as: increased or decreased service needs; frequent cancellations; and changes in health conditions or physical abilities. The service plan (Schedule A) is developed jointly by you and your AbleLiving representative. It details the specific types of services, times and frequency of service visits and your preferences in service delivery. The role of AbleLiving in achieving your personal goals is also recorded. Where applicable, a Substitute Decision Maker (SDM) will represent the interests of the client. The client/SDM is encouraged to identify any family, friends or other members of their circle of care that should be part of the planning process.

## Advance Care Planning

Advanced care planning involves discussing and recording your wishes related to your care in the event that you cannot speak for yourself. The plan will help you to clearly communicate your values, beliefs and wishes to your loved ones and health care team. Examples of advanced care plans include: Do Not Resuscitate Orders (DNR), Powers of Attorney for personal care or finance, and Medical Assistance in Dying protocols. When requested, we will connect you to the appropriate professionals who can help you develop a customized advance care plan. If you have any of these plans in place, please discuss with your program supervisor so we can discuss how the plan may impact service delivery and to ensure we have a copy on your file.

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## Service Documents

Individual Service Planning documents are developed and used to assist AbleLiving staff in understanding your needs, abilities, strengths and preferences. The most recent copy of your service plan and schedule is kept on file as are any additional consent forms or training agreements. In order to ensure consistency and quality, records are completed as part of the service provision and retrieved for auditing. The service records or person-specific tracking forms may be archived as proof of service.

As an organization, we have an expressed commitment to reducing our carbon footprint in the environment and are actively moving towards electronic documentation. This will also allow staff to utilize their time focusing their energy on service provision rather than administrative tasks.

## Scheduling

AbleLiving strives to make efficient use of its human and financial resources. As such, scheduling is arranged at the discretion of the agency and must consider a number of factors such as work flow, physical demands, priority of task, travel time, collective agreements, vacations, illnesses and employment standards.



Due to the nature of the services we provide, there are certain times of day that are more commonly desired. We cannot always provide the services at a client's preferred time nor can we guarantee that the frequency of occurrence will be a perfect fit. AbleLiving must make difficult decisions in assigning times based on priority needs such as time sensitive medication support, attending dialysis appointments, and level of physical dependence for activities of daily living. We ask that you provide us with a range of time for service and understand we will do our best to accommodate based on client need.

Employees are assigned according based on a client's individual service plan. AbleLiving endeavors to provide regularly scheduled staff to your planned bookings as we are all aware that continuity is an important factor in service delivery. However, the same employees may not always be available to you at your preferred time, especially when you request a change in booking time. When your preferred employees are not available, it is important to note that all staff are trained to provide the services offered in the specific program.

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## PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

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Your personal health information is protected by law and shared only with your consent. AbleLiving employs a Privacy Officer who supports the organization in compliance with the *Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA), 2004*. Our privacy policy outlines assurances that privileged information is collected for sole purpose of providing clients services they require, and information is safeguarded. For more information, clients may contact the program leadership at AbleLiving, send an email to [privacyofficer@thrivegroup.ca](mailto:privacyofficer@thrivegroup.ca) or to [privacyofficer@ableliving.org](mailto:privacyofficer@ableliving.org). You can also reference the Contact Information Appendix at the end of this handbook.

Clients have the right to:

- Know why we collect health information, how we use it, and to whom we disclose it;
- Refuse to give consent expect in specific circumstances;
- Request corrections to your own health information ;
- Withdraw consent;

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## APPEAL PROCESS

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Clients have the right to have their unresolved complaints / objections reviewed by the agency in a fair, consistent and timely manner. The appeal process may be triggered to address eligibility concerns, service delivery complaints or termination of services.

If you consider it necessary to utilize the Agency's appeal process, you must send a written request to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) with thirty (30) days of being notified of senior management's final decision. The CEO will then explain the appeal process to you and forward the matter to the Board of Director's.

Should you find the Board of Directors' decision to be unacceptable, and if there are sufficient grounds, you may wish to appeal to the Health Service Appeal and Review Board.

**Health Service Appeal and Review Board**

151 Bloor Street West  
9<sup>th</sup> Floor, Toronto ON M5S 2T5  
Telephone: 416-327-8512 or 1-866-282-2179  
Facsimile: 416-327-8524  
Email: [hsarb@moh.gov.on.ca](mailto:hsarb@moh.gov.on.ca)

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## SERVICE RESTRICTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

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### Controlled Acts Assistance

Sometimes a client requires assistance with a procedure that the law (Regulated Health Care Professionals Act, 1991) restricts because it can be potentially harmful if performed incorrectly. There is an exception to the law where an unregulated Health Care Provider such as a personal attendant can perform the task if it is deemed to be “a routine activity of daily living”. Key phrases such as “routine, stable and predictable” help to identify which activities may qualify for exception.

Assistance with controlled acts is only available at some locations and is clearly identified in the scope of service and funding agreement for each program. Where appropriate, AbleLiving employees receive standardized training to perform these tasks. Each activity must be formally assessed and authorized by a Regulated Health Care Professional before AbleLiving will consider adding the activity to a person’s service plan. If the client’s condition changes, AbleLiving may withdraw authorization to perform the controlled act and alternative arrangements will need to be made by the client.

### Medication Assistance

Many clients require medication to help treat their conditions and manage symptoms. The level of assistance a person requires may change over time. Prior to receiving support with medication assistance, a client must complete a medication agreement. Medication reminders, medication tracking and/or physical assistance may be available at certain locations. The agreement will also define any limitations and safeguards that are to be followed (i.e. blister pack or lock box) to keep everyone safe from harm.

### Security of Property

All employees and volunteers providing direct service to clients must complete a Vulnerable Sector Screening (VSS) prior to employment. It is important that clients also take an active role to preserve and safeguard their personal property. This includes keeping medications, valuables and money in a discreet area and limiting the number of people who have access to them. Narcotics must be locked up for the safety of all parties. Upon request, we will assist in the setup of a lock box system in the home for medication as well as for valuables. AbleLiving can assume no responsibility to replace lost items or items that break through normal wear and tear.

## SERVICE INTERRUPTION

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### Client Absence from Service

In order to ensure responsible and effective management of government resources, AbleLiving has established the following for service interruption:

- Planned absences require a minimum of 24 hours' notice
- Absences greater than 7 days require 48 hours' notice in advance and confirmation of return
- Absences of 30 days or greater may result in suspension or termination of services
- An Inter-RAI assessment must be completed following an absence from service of greater than 20 days following an unplanned absence or a hospital stay.

### Service Disruption

From time to time service disruption may occur due to a variety of reasons. In the event of a temporary disruption to facilities or services that clients with disabilities rely on, reasonable effort will be made to provide advance notice of the disruption. In some circumstances, such as in the situation of unplanned temporary disruption, advance notice may not be possible. However, every effort will be made to inform the client in advance.

Clients receiving outreach services or community respite are responsible to make their own personal arrangements for how their service needs will be met in the event that we are unable to provide supports or have reduced service levels. These back up plans should be communicated and reviewed as part of service planning and annual contract renewal.

### Contingency Plan

The contingency plan is developed in consultation with you. As a client, you determine your service priorities in the event that access to staff is limited. The agency identifies which activities are considered essential and what tasks can be re-scheduled. Factors to consider include physical dependence, access to food, water and medication and ability to communicate. Clients must understand that in an emergency all non-personal care services (i.e. homemaking) would not be available.

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## SERVICE TERMINATION

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### Termination by the Client

You may choose to discontinue services at any time. Under normal circumstances sixty (60) days' notice is expected and appreciated. Whenever possible we ask that you advise the program in writing of your desire to terminate your services.

Services in supportive housing or shared living are attached to the tenancy and vice versa. Should you wish to withdraw from service we will help you seek other accommodation. Should you wish to move residence, we can assist you to apply for alternate services.

In the event that a client expires or is admitted to Long Term Care, the services are terminated upon notice. The next of kin or substitute decision maker is responsible for notifying the landlord when applicable.

### Termination by AbleLiving

When AbleLiving initiates a discharge from service it will attempt to resolve issues with you and assist you access a service that might be more appropriate or better suited to your particular needs.

The Following are instances in which the agency may initiate discharge from services:

1. The client no longer meets eligibility requirements.
2. The client has physical needs which exceed the agency's ability to satisfy.
3. The client is psychologically and/or emotionally unstable such that an attendant cannot safely and consistently perform scheduled services.
4. The client is verbally, mentally, or physically abusive to staff.
5. The client is consistently unavailable at the negotiated times or location without previous notice.
6. The funding base for the project/program is withdrawn or reduced.
7. The client engages in an illegal activity as defined by the law.
8. The client is hospitalized for more than thirty (30) days and is unable to return home.
9. The client is unwilling or unable to participate in problem solving to reduce significant risk of injury to self or others.

## PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

AbleLiving provides a variety of programs and services to support individuals in our community in Mississauga, Oakville, Etobicoke, Milton, Halton Hills, Burlington, Hamilton, Stoney Creek and Binbrook. Upon request, support with system navigation is available.

**Supportive Housing:** 24 hour attendant services provide activities of daily living such as bathing, toileting, range of motion exercises. The services offered also include instrumental activities of daily living such as life skills and light housekeeping support within an apartment or townhouse complex setting.

**Shared Living:** Like Assisted Living, where individuals live in a shared setting such as a group home or congregate living environment.

**Community Outreach:** Attendant support provided for activities of daily living such as bathing and toileting, range of Motion exercises as well as the instrumental activities of daily living such as lifeskills and light housekeeping support within a clients' personal home in the community.

**Community Respite:** An in-home respite program to support Caregivers so they can have a much needed rest from their caregiving role. Service recipients have high attendant needs and may require responsive behavior management and homemaking supports in order to remain safely in the community.

**Transitional Wellness Program:** Attendant and nursing services in a shared living setting. Services are planned to support clients in transition from hospital ALC into the appropriate community setting.

**Transitional Support Programs:** Camps and community programs offered to young adults with disabilities; services include attendant care for both activities of daily living and instrumental activities of daily living.

**Respite Care:** Short stay Attendant services provided in a safe, accessible environment.

**Homemaking:** In-home light housekeeping, meal preparation support and laundry services for frail seniors and at risk populations.

### Fee for Service

Servicing our communities for over 35 years, AbleLiving provides opportunity for some services at an hourly fee. Any fee for service arrangements are negotiated individually with an agency representative. We specialize in:

- Quality client experience
- Individual customized care
- Peace of mind for loved ones

## Emergency Preparedness

One of our goals is to have measures in place to prevent and reduce the consequences of potential or real emergencies. It is important to be prepared to cope without regular services and assistance for a period of time. In an emergency, you may need to take shelter in your home or workplace. You could be without electricity, heat, or water for hours or a few days. In some circumstances you might even need to leave your home and evacuate to a safer area.

We encourage all clients to have an emergency plan in place. There are a number of resources available through your local municipal office or website. Your program team can also assist you to access emergency planning tools and resources.



### Be Prepared for Any Emergency

Evacuation – Situations such as fire, smoke, flooding, etc., requiring the movement of clients from a location on which immediate danger is present, to a safe area

Relocation – Situations such as explosions, requiring the movement of clients from a location in which immediate danger is present, to a safe area

Reception – Situations requiring the provision of accommodation to persons seeking temporary residence because of a personal emergency situation.

Extreme Weather Conditions– Situations such as severe weather, tornadoes, snow or ice, flood, etc., in which there is complete or partial restriction in accessing the project/site/program

Infection Control – Plans to prevent the spread of influenza- like illness. When clients have a cough, cold, fever or flu we will take precautions to reduce the spread of illness. i.e. Wearing mask/ eye protection etc.

**APPENDIX A**

| Health and Safety Initiative                   | Client Role (with assistance)   | Potential Client Impact  |
|--|---|--|
| 1. Comply with all Fire Regulations            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The law requires that smoke detectors and fire extinguishers are maintained</li> <li>• Maintain environment as clutter free keeping all exits clear</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install and maintain detectors or extinguishers where required by law</li> <li>• Potential relocation of furniture or belongings to maintain clear exits</li> </ul> |
| 2. Annual Safety Inspections                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support AbleLiving representative to identify potential workplace hazards within the home on an annual basis</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slight disruption to personal schedule to accommodate the inspection</li> </ul>   |
| 3. Approved Lifts and Transfers                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At time of admission and thereafter, should there be a change in mobility, client to actively participate in assessment of lifts and transfers by certified personnel</li> <li>• Follow recommended transfer guidelines</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential change to clients preferred transfer routine</li> </ul>   |
| 4. Routine Practices and Universal Precautions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide disposable gloves and paper towels for employees</li> <li>• Liquid hand soap to be available to promote hand washing</li> <li>• Participate in regular cleaning and sanitation procedures such as washing bed linens</li> <li>• Ensure disposal or sanitation procedures of products or linens contaminated by blood or feces immediately</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial cost of supplies and potentially for additional laundry requirements</li> <li>• Potential interruption of service if hygiene is not maintained</li> </ul> |

| Health and Safety Initiative             | Client Role   | Potential Client Impact  |
|--|---|--|
| 5. Second Hand Smoke Legislation         | <p>In compliance with the <i>Smoke Free Ontario Act, 1994</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no smoking by anyone in the home within ½ hour of scheduled services and during the service booking itself (includes cigarettes, cigars or other vapour substance)</li> <li>• Are to be properly ventilate the home prior to staff arrival</li> <li>• Under no circumstance are employees or volunteers permitted to smoke in a client home</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential inconvenience of not smoking</li> <li>• Disruption or loss of service if clients or others in the home choose to smoke during service visit.</li> </ul> |
| 6. Workplace Violence and Harassment     | <p>All parties are required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain an environment free of verbal/mental/physical abuse and harassment</li> <li>• Actively engage in conflict resolution process</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential disruption or termination of service</li> </ul>   |
| 7. Equipment Safety                      | <p>We will assist to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain equipment in proper working order</li> <li>• Schedule ongoing maintenance for any personal equipment that employees operate (ceiling lift/ commode etc.)</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential service interruption if equipment is deemed unsafe</li> <li>• Financial costs to maintain, repair or replace equipment</li> </ul>                       |
| 8. Employees Right to Refuse Unsafe Work | <p>As per OH&amp;SA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees have a right to refuse work that is deemed unsafe where danger is clear and imminent</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible service disruption</li> </ul>  |

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|--|---|--|
| <p>9. Exposure to Pets (Sick or Dangerous)</p>         | <p>To keep everyone safe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure vaccinations are current for all pets</li> <li>• Timely veterinary care for all sick or injured animals</li> <li>• Isolate pets during services if demonstrating aggression or has behavioral issues</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service disruption if pets demonstrating dangerous behaviors are not isolated</li> <li>• Potential financial costs to care for sick/injured pets</li> </ul> |
| <p>10. Material Safety Inventory</p>                   | <p>As per OH&amp;SA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in annual inventory of chemical products</li> <li>• Ensure commercial chemical products are labelled appropriately</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slight disruption to personal schedule to accommodate inspection</li> </ul>   |
| <p>11. Home Risk Assessment</p>                        | <p>At time of admission and thereafter as required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess the home for safety threats or challenges in and around the home.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential delay in service initiation until risks can be addressed</li> <li>• Financial cost to correct issues in the home</li> </ul>                       |
| <p>12. Not Home for Service</p>                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide Not Home for Service instructions that detail the steps AbleLiving will take should client not be available, without notice for service</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential harm to client</li> <li>• Disruption of service</li> <li>• Potential involvement of emergency services to locate client</li> </ul>                |
| <p>13. Job Observation and Direct Service Training</p> | <p>In order to support staff learning and ensure service excellence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow both scheduled and unscheduled access to the home during scheduled bookings so that direct observation, coaching and feedback may occur</li> <li>• Actively engage in orientation and training of new staff</li> <li>• Provide feedback on employee performance, strengths, skills and development needs</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible service disruption to the timing of client routines during training and or job observation.</li> </ul>   |

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|---|--|--|
| <p>14. Employee incident/Accident Investigation</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When an incident or accident occurs while staff are performing their duties an investigation is conducted to identify factors that contributed to the incident and possible solutions to reduce the risk of reoccurrence</li> <li>• Client is asked to actively participate in the problem solving of the incident or accident</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential inconvenience to personal schedule during investigation</li> <li>• Possible change to service routine depending on outcome</li> </ul>           |
| <p>15. Return to Work and Modified Duties</p>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support employees to engage in meaningful and appropriate activities during bookings while on an established return to work plan</li> <li>• Respect any limitations outlined in an employee's return to work plan</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible change to service schedule and work flow</li> <li>• Potential interruption of schedule to accommodate replacement worker arrangements</li> </ul> |
| <p>16. Falls Assessment</p>                         | <p>To ensure the safety of all involved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Client to participate in problem solving to reduce the risk of falls</li> <li>• Maintain environment free of trip hazards</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider furniture placement to reduce risk</li> <li>• Rugs might be secured to flooring</li> </ul>   |