



**437 Welland Avenue  
St. Catharines, ON L2M 5V2**

## VOLUNTEER SERVICES

## POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

April 2009

<b>Community Living St. Catharines</b>	Manual <b>Volunteer Manual</b>			
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## PURPOSE

Community Living St. Catharines has a commitment to assist people who have an intellectual disability to acquire personal gains which enhance their quality of life.

The agency recognizes the benefits that volunteers provide to enrich the lives of people we support. We strive to provide meaningful volunteer opportunities, as you contribute to the success of our organization.

This manual will provide guidelines and procedures to ensure the volunteer opportunities are provided in an educational, consistent and safe manner for all parties.

The Volunteer Coordinator will be responsible for providing a copy of this manual to each volunteer as part of their orientation to the agency.

We trust that you will have a rewarding experience as you spend time with the people and their families that we support in our agency.

## **Volunteer Services Policy and Procedures**

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**PURPOSE: Volunteers –Orientation and Training**

Community Living St. Catharines is committed to providing all volunteers with proper training and orientation before a placement begins.

**PROCEDURE:**

Orientation begins with the interview. Volunteer Services will provide information on the Agency as a whole and its overall function, Agency programs, the opportunities available, as well as the volunteer’s responsibilities and participation. Topics include Policies and Procedures, Advocacy and Health and Safety.

When a volunteer is placed, it is the responsibility of the specific program site to provide an onsite orientation and information on the person supported by the program. An “Orientation Checklist” form must be completed within the first 2 weeks by the volunteer and a site staff working with the volunteer. The form is then forwarded to the Volunteer Coordinator to place in volunteer’s file.

Additional training is provided depending on the volunteer position.

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## **POLICY: Volunteers –Screening Practices**

Community Living St. Catharines seeks the support of volunteers to enhance the day to day activities for the people we support. The following conditions for volunteerism apply to those seeking to volunteer for Community Living St. Catharines.

### **PROCEDURE:**

New volunteers placed at Community Living St. Catharines must have the following completed before their volunteer placement is accepted.

- an volunteer application must be completed
- an interview with the Volunteer Coordinator
- one work and one personal reference are to be completed
- approved Police Clearance Certificate\*
- sign an oath of confidentiality
- completed driver's abstract (if applicable)
- proof of immunization (if applicable)
- proof of at least one million liability insurance (if applicable)
- an orientation of Community Living St. Catharines and of the program site
- be provided with a position description
- the volunteer will meet with the person requesting the volunteer (if applicable)

\* This applies to volunteers who have direct contact with people that CLSC supports.  
NOTE: Volunteers may begin working with the people we support only under direct supervision until the approved police check is submitted to CLSC.

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**PURPOSE: Confidentiality**

To ensure that confidentiality for people who receive service and participate in Agency activities is maintained.

**PROCEDURE:**

The volunteer pledges to maintain professional and ethical standards in respect to observing the strictest confidentiality at all times regarding any information acquired by them through involvement with the Community Living St. Catharines to the limit of legal requirements.

This applies equally to matters relating to:

- People accessing Community Living St. Catharines services and their families.
- All matters relating to the affairs and activities presently provided by Community Living St. Catharines.
- Future projected affairs and activities under consideration by the Agency.

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**PURPOSE:       Volunteers –Recognition**

It is important that the contribution that volunteers make to Community Living St. Catharines be recognized. It is also important that volunteers receive feedback on the significant addition they offer towards our agency and the people we support.

**POLICY:**

Community Living St. Catharines will recognize volunteers formally and informally throughout the year.

Placement students will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the placement.

All volunteers will be granted the opportunity to complete an Exit Evaluation about their volunteer experience with us upon completion of their volunteer placement.

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**POLICY: Volunteers –Expenses**

From time to time volunteers may participate with an individual we support in an event requiring the expenditure of the resources of the Agency. Financial support may be approved when resources permit and approved in advance.

**PROCEDURE:**

Volunteers donate their time and do not usually incur expenses as part of their Agency activities. At the discretion of the volunteer, any costs that are incurred during an activity are without expectation of reimbursement by Community Living St. Catharines.

When a volunteer participates with an individual we support in an activity or event it is the responsibility of the volunteer to have prior approval from the appropriate staff member/supervisor prior to incurring the expense. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to verify with staff/supervisors the individual has the appropriate resources to attend the outing or event.

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**PURPOSE: Volunteer –Insurance Coverage**

Community Living St. Catharines wishes to ensure that both volunteers and the Agency are protected against potential risk while conducting activities with the people we support.

**PROCEDURE:**

All volunteers are covered by general liability insurance through the Agency.

Volunteers are not allowed to drive Agency owned vehicles due to restrictions on the insurance liabilities.

All volunteers who use their own vehicle to provide transportation for the people we support must provide proof of at least one million dollars worth of liability insurance. The volunteer must sign the “Volunteer Liability Insurance Verification” form and return to the Volunteer Coordinator.

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**POLICY: Volunteers –Hours and Time Sheets**

Volunteers are encouraged on a regular basis to track volunteer hours. Tracking hours provides useful statistics for internal use. The statistics provide information when applying for grant funding, such as, the United Way of St. Catharines, in order to secure funding. Tracking hours also insures the safety and security of the people we support.

**PROCEDURE:**

All volunteers are required to fill in their hours on the Volunteer Time Log Sheets provided by the Volunteer Coordinator. When completed it is given to the program supervisor who submits them to the Volunteer Coordinator. In addition, volunteers must sign in and out at the site with which they are volunteering.

A volunteer may request at any time the total number of hours that they have logged. Volunteer Services supplies detailed reports to the volunteer upon written request.

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**POLICY: VOLUNTEERS –Placement Review**

Periodically, a review of the volunteer placement is undertaken. This provides both volunteers and staff/supervisors feedback on the progress of the placement.

**PROCEDURE:**

Evaluations provide feedback for both the volunteer and the program. It is the responsibility of each person in a working relationship with a volunteer to ensure that performance evaluations are completed. This includes the Volunteer Coordinator, a Support Coordinator II, and/or the Program Supervisor.

Any issues or concerns concerning the volunteer must be brought to the attention of the Volunteer Coordinator to follow-up with volunteer.

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**POLICY: Volunteers –Termination**

Occasionally a volunteer placement is not in the best interest of the volunteer or the agency. If adjustments are not made to meet the needs of the Agency the volunteer will be released from the assignments, re-assigned or relieved of their duties. If a serious concern exists and the Volunteer Coordinator in conjunction with the Manager of Human Resources have openly and honestly discussed the problem with the volunteer and the volunteer is not willing or able to make the necessary changes, the volunteer placement will be terminated.

**PROCEDURE:**

1. The Volunteer Coordinator will notify the volunteer that their actions are under review and may result in a termination.
2. Conduct an investigation, being fair and objective to determine if a policy was actually violated.
3. Thoroughly document the findings of the investigation.
4. Meet with the volunteer to discuss the reasons for the change or their termination of placement.
5. Send a formal letter outlining the reason for termination.
6. Perform an exit interview at the volunteer’s request.

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## **PURPOSE: Employees as Volunteers**

Community Living St. Catharines is proud to have employees that wish to volunteer for our Agency in their own time to enhance the quality of life for the people we support. At the same time, we have a responsibility and commitment to ensure that we are providing for the welfare and safety of our volunteers, the people we support and our employees.

Any time that an employee assists a CLSC program and/or person we support outside of scheduled work hours is considered volunteer work and must go through the volunteer process with the Volunteer Coordinator. Please note that this does not apply to agreements made between staff and the people we support's families and/or guardians.

## **PROCEDURE:**

Any employee wanting to volunteer for Community Living St. Catharines must contact the Volunteer Coordinator BEFORE volunteering for the Agency. These potential volunteers must fill out a Volunteer Application and meet with the Volunteer Coordinator for an interview.

Guidelines for becoming a volunteer with Community Living St. Catharines:

- Driver's Abstract if driving a person we support because of our Agency Insurance guidelines.
- May not perform any task that a unionized staff member is expected to perform such as administer medication and/or participate in any act of personal hygiene, as per the Operating Procedures.
- Not entitled to employee coverage such as WSIB, and 1<sup>st</sup> Party Liability Insurance. Volunteers are covered under 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Liability Insurance and must have a million liability coverage from their own insurance company
- Volunteers are not permitted to drive agency vehicles as per our agreement with our insurance provider.

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**PURPOSE:       Volunteers - Children and Relatives of Employees**

Community Living St. Catharines recognizes the importance of community volunteers as they contribute to the overall quality of life for the people we support. At the same time, we have a responsibility and commitment to ensure that we are providing for the welfare and safety of our volunteers and the people we support.

**PROCEDURE:**

1.0   Volunteers – Children under the age of 13 years:

Volunteer opportunities for children under 13 years of age will be limited to community and fundraising events. They must be accompanied by their parent/family member/guardian who is over the age of 18 years. If the parent/family member/guardian is an employee of Community Living, the employee must also be volunteering their time for the event.

2.0   Volunteers – Adolescents 13 years to 18 years:

Volunteer opportunities for adolescents’ 13 years to 17 years of age (highschool community hours) may volunteer at community and/or fundraising events, as well as agency programs. Eligibility will be based on the screening process. Volunteers may not work at a site where their parent/family member/guardian is scheduled to work. Volunteers also may not volunteer at a site where a family relative lives.

3.0   Volunteers – Adults 18 years of age and older:

Volunteer opportunities will be open to all adults’ 18 years of age and older, at community and/or fundraising events, as well as agency programs. Eligibility will be based on the screening process. Volunteers may not volunteer at a site where their parent/family member/guardian is scheduled to work. Volunteers also may not volunteer at a site where a family relative lives.

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**POLICY: Volunteers –Health and Wellness**

It is recognized that the health of the people we support and our volunteers is important to the wellness of all people associated with the Agency.

**PROCEDURE:**

In order to promote the health of those associated with Community Living St. Catharines; volunteers are not to report to their volunteer placements if they have an infectious condition which may be harmful to the people we support and others. Volunteers must contact the Volunteer Coordinator and the program site of any absence.

If a volunteer is working in a high risk area, they will be notified of the risks by the Volunteer Coordinator.

If an infectious outbreak occurs at a volunteer placement site, the volunteer placement may be either temporarily suspended or placement may be relocated to another program site if needed.

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**POLICY: Volunteers –Snow Days/Inclement Weather**

Volunteers are advised not to attend their placement on days where their personal safety could be jeopardized getting to their assigned placement because of inclement weather.

**PROCEDURE:**

- If a program is cancelled due to inclement weather, this information will be made available in the morning on local radio stations.
- If a site remains open, it is the responsibility of each volunteer to personally notify their placement site and Volunteer Coordinator if they are unable to travel safely to volunteer.

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**PURPOSE:       Volunteers – Wireless Communication Devices**

Community Living St. Catharines recognizes the importance of wireless communication as not only an effective business tool but also a means for personal safety. For these reasons Community Living St. Catharines have provided directors, supervisors, and agency programs with cell phones.

**PROCEDURE:**

**Agency Cell Phones**

Agency owned cell phones should be used for business related needs only.

**Personal Cell Phones**

During volunteer hours, the use of personal cell phones, Blackberries, pagers, text messaging devices, etc. are to be used only for urgent matters. These devices should be either turned off or placed on vibrator mode. When possible, messages should be returned during breaks or after volunteer time. **Community Living St. Catharines does not reimburse money for personal cell phone use.**

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**PURPOSE: Sun Safety**

For volunteers to be aware of and protect people who receive support from potential sunburn.

**PROCEDURE:**

- 1.0 Head protection to be worn i.e. hats, caps, light scarves, etc.
- 2.0 Wear light coloured/textured clothing to cover all limbs.
- 3.0 Sunscreen 30UV, or higher, MUST be applied to the person, 30 minutes prior to outing and every 2-3 hours thereafter.
- 4.0 If the person appears reddened, remove from the sun immediately.
- 5.0 Seek shaded areas. Create shade, if natural shade is not available, i.e. umbrella.
- 6.0 Volunteers should plan ahead for outings i.e. Is the location shaded? Bring proper equipment, umbrella etc. if it is not.
- 7.0 Fluids should be available for people at all times to prevent heat stroke and/or heat exhaustion. Sun is strongest between 11:00 – 4:00 PM –use caution for everyone, avoiding the sun during this time if possible.

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## **POLICY: Volunteers –Smoking in the Workplace**

This policy was developed to comply with the Smoking in the Workplace Act R.R.O 1990 Chapter S.13. and the Regional Niagara By-Law no. 22-2002.

The Act sets out the restrictions on smoking in the workplace by establishing minimum standards that limit exposure to tobacco in the workplace. The Regional by-law restricts smoking in public places and workplaces.

All locations under Community Living St. Catharines are non-smoking facilities. The people we support have the right to smoke, but are encouraged to smoke outside. This is in consideration for the health of anyone residing, working or visiting the location.

### **PROCEDURE:**

#### **1.0 Employees, Volunteers and Visitors**

All persons visiting any Community Living St. Catharines program location are permitted to smoke in designated smoking areas only.

#### **2.0 Disciplinary Measures**

- 2.1 Anyone found smoking within the home would be subject to disciplinary measures.
- 2.2 A Ministry of Labour Inspector could impose a \$500.00 fine to a person violating this policy and a \$25,000 fine to the employer.
- 2.3 Anyone who contravenes the Regional by-law is liable to a fine of not more than \$5000.00, exclusive of costs, as provided in the Provincial Offences Act.

### **3.0 Designated Smoking Areas**

See site specific locations for designated outdoor smoking areas. These areas are located in the rear of the building, out of view from the neighbourhood.

### **4.0 Vehicles**

In addition to all pre-mentioned guidelines and restrictions there is to be no smoking in any CLSC owned vehicle by anyone. In consideration for the people we support, volunteers are asked to refrain from smoking in their own vehicles when transporting participants. Smoking is against the law in vehicles where children are present.

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**POLICY: Volunteers –Eloping/Missing Persons**

To ensure the safety and well being of persons supported by Community Living St. Catharines.

**PROCEDURE:**

**Elopement:**

This is provided as information for a volunteer that may have a placement in a site that uses these precautionary measures:

- If it has been identified that a person has eloped or has the potential to elope from any environment, security measures will be implemented to prevent or reduce the possibility of elopement/missing persons emergencies.
- The implementation of mechanical security measures such as security locks on all exits that leave the site (usually the front entrance), if not exiting into a secured yard; security door chimes are used to prevent the elopement.
- All gates to secured yards must be kept locked at all times if unattended and must be checked each shift by an employee when conducting a house check.
- Any malfunctions of security equipment are to be reported immediately to the supervisor or their designate.
- If elopement is a concern for any individual, this would be formalized in a personal caution and also documented in the individual support plan.
- Upon reporting the elopement/missing person (see below), the emergency pager fan out system would be implemented to ask any employees who might be available to assist in search for the person.

**Missing Person:**

This procedure is intended for the Leisure Buddy volunteer who may be alone on an outing with a person we support.

- Following a search of the immediate area, the police should be summoned within fifteen minutes of the person being noted as missing. Once the police have been notified, the emergency pager must be called to report the person as missing and the supervisor on call will notify the Director or designate. When the person has been found, the police should be notified. Contact the Agency

- Contact listed on the Leisure Buddy Information Sheet to report the details of the incident.

THE POLICE MUST BE PROVIDED WITH THE FOLLOWING DETAILS:

1. Missing person's name, age, hair colour and length, and distinguishing features
2. Height, weight
3. What the person was wearing when last seen
4. Skill level (communication, safety, public transportation)
5. What time the person was last seen
6. Reporters relationship to missing person
7. Has she/he gone missing previously
8. Where located, if previously missing
9. Areas the person is likely to frequent
10. If the person attends a day program, be prepared to provide the following information:
  - Name of day program (school/work)
  - Address of day program
  - Telephone number of day program
  - Whether or not the person attended the day program that day
11. Any additional information

In the case of a missing person is not found, contact the Emergency Contact Person located on the Leisure Buddy Information Sheet. Volunteers must recognize that the police may not return a person who is over the age of eighteen and not legally incompetent, if the person does not wish to return. In such cases the police may be asked to observe and follow until the Community Living St. Catharines' employees or family arrive.

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**POLICY: Volunteers –Police Emergencies**

To provide for the health, safety and welfare of people receiving support.

Some examples of incidents which may require police intervention are:

- Missing person
- Theft
- Vandalism
- Assault
- Death

**PROCEDURE:**

**Leisure Buddy Volunteers:**

Volunteers should not hesitate to call the police if their help is needed.

In case of a police emergency, the volunteer must:

1. Call the police -911
2. Be able to give the information listed on the policy for missing person
3. The volunteer will notify the Emergency Contact and Agency Contact as outlined in the Leisure Buddy Information Sheet. The Agency Contact will in turn notify the Director and the Volunteer Coordinator.
4. Allow the Police to provide assistance.

All incidents where police involvement has occurred must be detailed in an incident report by the Agency Contact. The volunteer may need to assist in filling out the report.

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## **POLICY: Volunteers –Medical Emergencies**

To provide the necessary assistance to people who receive service in the event of a medical emergency.

A medical emergency is defined as a situation that is potentially life threatening. Examples of such situations are:

- Cardiac Arrest
- Respiratory Distress or Arrest
- Severe Injury/Haemorrhaging
- Head Injury
- Status Epileptics
- Unconsciousness
- Poisoning

## **PROCEDURE:**

If a medical emergency occurs while a volunteer is at placement, the volunteer will assist the employees in calming the people we support that are not affected by the emergency.

### **Leisure Buddy Volunteers**

If a medical emergency occurs while a volunteer is alone with a person we support:

1. The volunteer is to call 911.
2. If trained and comfortable, the volunteer is to apply emergency first aid or basic Heart Saver techniques given.
3. Leave door at a main entrance open and attend to the person supported until the ambulance arrives.
4. The volunteer will notify the Emergency Contact and Agency Contact as outlined in the Leisure Buddy Information Sheet. The Agency Contact will in turn notify the Director and the Volunteer Coordinator. An Incident Report will need to be completed by the Agency Contact with the assistance of the volunteer.

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## **POLICY: Volunteers –Violence in the Workplace**

The management of Community Living St. Catharines recognizes the potential for violence in the workplace and therefore will make every reasonable effort to identify all potential sources of violence in order to eliminate or minimize these risks. Community Living St. Catharines refuses to tolerate\* any type of workplace violence, within the workplace or at work related activities. Community Living St. Catharines is committed to the expenditure of time, attention, authority and resources to the workplace parties in order to ensure, to the best we can, a safe and healthy work environment for all.

## **PROCEDURE:**

### **1.0 Employees and Volunteer Relationships**

Volunteers, regardless of their personal feelings, are always expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner while they are on duty in order to promote a positive workplace environment. Volunteers are expected to present a civil attitude towards each other as gossiping, slanderous comments, threats (or any of the other definitions noted in section 2.0) are reportable and offenders could be subject to progressive discipline up to and including dismissal.

### **2.0 Definitions Associated with Workplace Violence**

- ◆ **Verbal abuse:** is the use of vexatious comments that are known, or that ought to be known, to be unwelcome, embarrassing, offensive, threatening, or degrading to another person (including swearing, insults, or condescending language).
- ◆ **Threat:** (verbal or written) is a communicated intent to inflict physical or other harm on any person or to property by some unlawful act. A direct threat is a clear and explicit communication distinctly indicating that the potential offender intends to do harm, for example, “ I am going to make you pay for what you did to me.” A conditional threat involves a condition, for example, “If you don’t leave

me alone, you will regret it.” Veiled threats usually involve body language or behaviours that leave little doubt in the mind of the victim that the perpetrator intends to harm.

- ◆ **Physical attacks:** is aggression resulting in a physical assault/abuse with or without the use of a weapon. Examples include hitting, shoving, pushing, punching, biting, spitting, groping, pinching, or kicking the victim, unwelcome displays of affection or inciting a dog to attack.
- ◆ **Psychological abuse:** is an act that provokes fear or diminishes an individual's dignity or self worth or that intentionally inflicts psychological trauma on another.
- ◆ **Assault:** is any intent to inflict injury on another, coupled with an apparent ability to do so; any intentional display of force that cause the victim to fear immediate bodily harm.
- ◆ **Sexual abuse:** is any unwelcome verbal or physical advance or sexually explicit statement, such as jokes, displays of pornographic material, pinching, brushing against, touching, patting, or leering that makes a person feel humiliated, intimidated, or uncomfortable, thus interfering with work performance.
- ◆ **Sexual assault:** is the use of threat or violence to force one individual to touch, kiss, fondle, or have sexual intercourse with another.
- ◆ **Near miss:** is an act of striking out, but missing the target.
- ◆ **Poisoned work environment:** is a hostile and abusive work environment resulting from harassment by comment or conduct that ridicules or demeans an individual or specific group of employees: for example, racial slurs or derogatory comments about sexual orientation.
- ◆ **Discrimination:** is a showing of partiality or prejudice in treatment: specific action or policies directed against the welfare of minority groups. Every person has a right to full and equal recognition and exercise his or her human rights and freedoms without distinction, exclusion, or preference based on race, colour, sex, sexual orientation, civil status, religion, political convictions, language, ethnic or national origin, social condition, or the fact that he/she is a handicapped person, or that he/she uses any means to palliate his handicap. Discrimination exists where such distinction, exclusion, or preference has the effect of nullifying or impairing such a right.
- ◆ **Harassment:** is any behaviour that verbally, physically, deliberate unsolicited or unwelcome invitations, that demean, embarrass, humiliate, annoy, alarm or verbally abuses a person and that is known or would be expected to be known as unwelcome. Harassment includes, words, gestures, jokes, remarks, innuendo, taunting about a person's body, attire, age, marital status, ethnic or national origin, religion, and so on. Harassment extends to incidents occurring at or away from the workplace, during or outside normal working hours, provided such incidents are employment related.

#### **4.0 Reporting and Investigation**

- ◆ As with all health and safety issues, volunteers are responsible to report all acts defined in the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy to the Volunteer Coordinator.
- ◆ The Volunteer Coordinator will assemble a team (consisting of the program director and supervisor and a neutral party) to investigate the report. In addition, they will ensure that appropriate measures are taken to safeguard the volunteer and curtail the violence. No report of workplace violence or risk of violence will be subject to reprisal against person making the report.
- ◆ Any volunteer or employee found to be in violation of this policy, in the perpetration of violence, in the failure to report or purposefully fabricating a false report shall be subject to disciplinary measures up to and including dismissal.
- ◆ All third party reports of workplace violence must be investigated.

Zero Tolerance means, when there is an incident of workplace violence, management has insured that there is a system in place for reporting, debriefing, and following up. This support system for volunteers, regardless of who the assailant is, ensures they have an avenue of assistance. However, it does not mean that there is always a consequence, especially in the case where the perpetrator is a person supported by this agency.