

# ABILITY KC – EMPLOYMENT SERVICES Program Handbook



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## Welcome –

Welcome to Ability KC. We are pleased that you have chosen us to provide your vocational rehabilitation services and will do our best to ensure that your time with us is productive, positive and worthwhile. Our professional staff is committed to your success and will provide the support, encouragement and education needed to help you meet your goals.

## Our Mission –

To build brighter futures for children and adults with disabilities by providing vocational, therapeutic and educational services. We do this by:

- Providing excellent and results driven services
- Maintaining a highly trained and effective professional staff dedicated to serving individuals with disabilities
- Offering programs that reflect a respectful, compassionate commitment to individuals served and their families/support providers
- Presenting educational and treatment environments tailored to individual client needs throughout their continuum of care
- Celebrating the successes of individuals served by creating clear, concise communication regarding the impact and outcomes of our programs
- Maintaining financial viability

## Our Values –

**We value** the right of each individual to seek and receive the highest quality of services and are committed to providing that level of service.

**We value** attitudes and behaviors that demonstrate respect for individual differences.

**We value** service delivery that honors the individual's choices.

**We value** the full and active participation of the individual's support network in their rehabilitation program.

**We value** ongoing, open, honest and constructive communication at all levels within our organization.

**We value** a positive outcomes-oriented work environment.

**We value** personal & professional commitment to our mission, goals and objectives.

**We value** fiscal responsibility and efficiency.

**We value** innovation and creativity.

**We value** individual responsibility, empowerment and achievement.

**We value** the staff as one of our organization's most important resources.

## **About Ability KC –**

Ability KC builds brighter futures for children and adults with disabilities by helping them achieve their goals. While Ability KC serves a large number of diagnostic groups, it has the reputation as the “place to go” for the most challenging conditions, injuries and disabilities such as spinal cord injury, brain injury, concussion, stroke, amputation, birth defect, developmental delay, and neurological disorders.

With over 74 years of experience and more than 175 medical and vocational professionals on staff, we provide the most comprehensive rehabilitation services in the region. Our programs are highly individualized, goal-oriented and assist individuals at all stages in life, from birth to the elderly. Whether it is achieving success at home, school or work, we have the outpatient medical services and employment programs in place to help build brighter futures for individuals with complex conditions, injuries and disabilities.

## **Accreditation and Certifications –**

Ability KC is accredited by CARF - The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities. We are certified by CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) as a Comprehensive Outpatient Rehabilitation Facility (a CORF). We are certified and funded by DESE (the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education). We are a member of the Missouri Association of Rehabilitation Facilities. Our programs receive support from the Heart of America United Way, Developmental Disability Services of Jackson County (EITAS) and the Platte County Board of Services and Developmental Disabilities Resource Board.

## **Privacy Policy –**

Our organization is in full compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Upon admission, you will receive a copy of our Notice of Privacy Practices. You may also access a copy on our website at [www.abilitykc.org](http://www.abilitykc.org). Out of respect for our patients' and clients' privacy, staff will conduct conversations about your services in private settings.

## **Non-Discrimination –**

Ability KC does not discriminate in admission or access to programs or activities based on age, race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, sex, marital status, disability or US veteran status.



## **Accessibility Policy –**

Ability KC is an equal opportunity / affirmative action employer. Please refer to individual program descriptions for more information concerning the scope of services available and specific entrance criteria.

We are committed to providing a barrier-free environment and accessibility to the services you desire. Free accessible parking is available at all of our locations. If you encounter a barrier or need accommodations, please inform the staff member coordinating your program.

## **Access to Records –**

All requests for copies of records will be handled by our Medical Records Department. An authorization signed by you or your authorized representative must be submitted prior to releasing records. At least 72 hours notice may be required to fulfill your request and a reasonable fee may apply.

## **Ethical Conduct and Grievance Procedure –**

As a participant in a program at Ability KC, you or your representative (guardian, legal representative, family member or friend) have the right to file a formal complaint or grievance, without fear of retaliation or barrier to services, if you feel you have been treated unfairly or disagree with a decision that has been made about you or your program and services. Please follow these steps:

1. Discuss your concerns with the staff person responsible for the decision or action you are unhappy with. Or you may choose to discuss the issue with their supervisor. In most cases, a discussion between you and one of these individuals should resolve the problem.
2. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of those discussions, you may speak to the program manager or your case manager and decide if you want to file a formal grievance. If you choose to file a formal grievance, you will be given the paperwork to complete. You may request assistance to complete the form.
3. The appropriate manager or supervisor will contact you within 3 business days of receipt of the formal grievance. He/she will gather information and contact you with an appropriate resolution within 7 business days of receiving the grievance.
4. If you are not satisfied with the resolution, you may appeal the decision to the Director of the Program involved within 10 business days. You will be informed of his/her decision in writing within 5 business days of his/her receiving your request to continue the grievance process.

5. If you are not satisfied with the decision of the Director, you may appeal the decision to the President/CEO within 10 business days. You will be informed of his/her decision in writing within 5 business days of receiving your request to continue the grievance process.
6. If you are not satisfied with the President's decision and would like an external review of the situation, we will provide contact information so that you may request a review by the licensing agency of the person or organization you are filing a grievance about (when applicable).

**Involvement of Family Members and Significant Others –**

The involvement of family members, friends and other community supports can be a critical factor in your success. At your request, these individuals will be included in planning meetings and conferences related to your program.

**Satisfaction Surveys and Outcomes –**

We value your feedback and suggestions for improving our services. During your employment program and at the conclusion of your program we will ask you to rate the services and overall experience. A staff member will also contact you twice after leaving our program to check on your status. Those contacts will be at approximately 180 days and one year.

We regularly gather data concerning the impact of our services and the results achieved by people who participate in our programs. That information is summarized and available on our program outcome sheets. Additional information is available upon request.

**Holidays and Cancellations during Bad Weather –**

Ability KC observes the following holidays when our programs will be closed:

New Year's Day	Martin Luther King Day	Memorial Day
Independence Day	Labor Day	Thanksgiving Day
Day after Thanksgiving	Christmas Day	Winter Break (Dec. 24 – Jan. 1)

If the weather prevents you from attending your scheduled program, please contact us as early as possible. If you are participating in voluntary work site assessment and the weather conditions are a concern please contact your Community Employment Specialist or assigned Job Skills Trainer to determine if the work site will indeed be in operation and/or to inform staff that you will not be in attendance that day.

## **Safety Issues –**

Ability KC follows CDC health guidelines as well as any Kansas City Missouri Health Department mandates and regulations. When any CDC recommendations or health department mandates are in effect (including mask mandates), staff, participants and visitors are required to follow those mandates according to Ability KC policy.

Ability KC works closely with our medical leadership to develop and update policies and procedures regarding the health and safety of participants and employees. This includes policies and procedures regarding Ability KC's response to COVID-19.

Ability KC conducts COVID-19 screenings at each location each day upon your arrival. You will be required to complete an acknowledgement form upon entry to our programs to ensure your understanding of the precautions we take to keep you safe.

We conduct routine safety drills, which may occur during your time at our facility. Staff will instruct you on where to go and how to respond.

Our facilities and campuses are smoke free. Use of any tobacco products (smoking, vaping, chewing) is not allowed anywhere on any of our owned or leased properties.

It is the policy of ABILITY KC that the possession, transport, storage, use or sale of weapons, including firearms, is prohibited in or on any property owned, leased, or operated by ABILITY KC, and at work sites and all functions, and in our vehicles.

We encourage you not to bring large amounts of cash or valuables with you to program activities, as staff cannot assume responsibility for those items. Out of courtesy to others, we ask that you turn off cell phones while involved in program activities.

Use of ABILITY KC's computers by program participants for internet access may be arranged upon request. Users are reminded that such use must comply with all laws. ABILITY KC computers cannot be used to access, browse or distribute illegal, abusive or obscene messages, or websites.

Please do not bring your children with you to scheduled activities, as staff cannot supervise them, and it distracts you from full program participation. The exception is for children receiving services in our pediatric therapy program.

## **Admissions Criteria –**

### **Persons receiving employment services must:**

- Be at least 14 years of age (some work settings require that participants be at least 16)
  - Be able to care for their personal needs (e.g. feeding, bowel and bladder control, medication management) or can direct such services if provided by a personal assistant. When personal assistant services are to be used, the assistant should be selected, arranged for and paid by either the participant or his/her sponsoring agency.
- Possess sufficient emotional control so as to pose no physical threat either to themselves or to others.

Individuals with uncontrolled seizure disorders or diseases that are communicable by casual contact are not eligible for services. ABILITY KC does not provide psychiatric treatment, substance abuse treatment or transportation to/from the individual's place of residence.

If services are determined to not be appropriate, the responsible person will:

- a. notify the person seeking services and the referral source of the reasons, and;
- b. provide information about potential alternative services.

## **General Information –**

- Schedule: Program hours vary at each of our locations; an individualized schedule will be established once you have started your program.

**Note:** *Your schedule may change depending upon what part of the program you are working in and if you go to community job sites. Your case manager will give you those details.*

- Your attendance and punctuality is important in demonstrating your ability to keep a job. If you are unable to attend or if you will be arriving late, please call your case manager before 8:30 a.m. If the case manager is not available, be sure to leave a message on their voice mail system or call the designated phone extension provided to you. Frequent absenteeism may result in your program being discontinued.
- Try to schedule outside appointments so that they do not interfere with your workday. If you have appointments already scheduled that will interfere with your attendance, please let your case manager know as soon as possible.
- It is your responsibility to arrange dependable transportation to and from ABILITY KC. At orientation you will complete a COVID Acknowledgment Form that explains our protocols to help encourage safe transportation. If you have problems with transportation talk to your case manager.



- In the event of an accident or illness while at ABILITY KC, please notify your assigned team member immediately. They will assist you with obtaining any necessary medical attention and contacting your emergency contact.
- In general, participants are expected to behave and dress as appropriate to a work setting. The way you interact with others is a good predictor of your ability to keep a job. Maintaining a clean and neat appearance is also important.
- Borrowing or lending money to other people causes problems. You are responsible for making sure that you bring enough money for transportation, breaks, lunch, etc.
- The following are considered serious matters and will result in your immediate termination from services:
  - Stealing property of any kind
  - Using alcoholic beverages or taking illegal drugs on the premises or reporting to the program under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
  - Intimidating, threatening, hitting or causing bodily harm to another individual
  - Carrying a weapon of any kind

### **Financial Arrangements –**

**Transportation Assistance (if applicable):** If the person who referred you to ABILITY KC authorizes transportation allowances, a check may be issued to you on a weekly or monthly basis. If a check is provided to you, this money is to be used to cover the cost of your transportation to and from ABILITY KC. If you are absent during the week for any reason, your check will be reduced the following week.

Another method of transportation assistance that your referring agency may provide while you are involved in services with ABILITY KC may include a bus pass through the local public transportation authority. In that case, you will not receive a weekly check from ABILITY KC.

## **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PERSONS SERVED –**

Recognizing your right to quality services, we believe that mutual respect for rights and responsibilities will contribute to better outcomes and greater satisfaction with your program.

### ***As a participant, you can expect:***

#### **RESPECTFUL AND SAFE SERVICES:**

- Be given considerate, respectful and compassionate treatment, care and services.
- Be given care in a safe environment, free from physical, sexual, or psychological abuse, physical or psychological neglect or physical punishment, humiliation, threats, exploitative actions (financial or otherwise) or retaliation from employees of Ability KC.
- Know the names and jobs of the people who work with you.
- Know when students or other trainees are involved in your program.
- Have your culture and personal values, beliefs and wishes respected.
- Discuss your concerns, questions, and needs with your program manager or other appropriate staff without fear of retaliation. Presenting a concern will not affect your ability to receive quality services.
- Be treated without discrimination based on race, color, age, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, physical or mental disability, religion, ethnicity, language, or your ability to pay for your care.
- Be given a list of legal representation, self-help and advocacy services, when needed. These services help certain persons (e.g. children, elderly, disabled) exercise their rights and protect them from abuse and neglect.

#### **EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION AND PARTICIPATION IN YOUR SERVICES**

- Receive information in a way you can understand. Availability of language interpretive services or assistive devices such as TDD machines for the hearing impaired.
- Obtain from your program manager complete current information concerning your job and outcomes of services (anticipated and unanticipated) in terms that you can reasonably be expected to understand.
- Participate in the planning of your own program. The individualized program plan developed jointly with the staff should tell you how the staff expects to help you reach your goals.
- To meet regularly with staff to talk about your program. Ask questions and get a timely response to your questions or requests
- Involve your family in decisions about your program.
- Refuse services.

#### **INFORMED CONSENT**

- Give permission (informed consent) before starting your job including risks and benefits of your job duties.
- To choose to or refuse to participate in research projects. Staff of Ability KC will adhere to research guidelines and ethics involving research projects.
- Agree or refuse to allow photos or videos.

#### YOUR RECORDS:

- To review your records and receive copies of the records at a reasonable photocopying fee. At least 72 hours notice may be required to prepare copies.
- To refuse the release of information from your records.

#### PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

- Have privacy and confidential treatment and communication about your services.
- Be given a copy of the HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices.

#### COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

- You have the right to complain and have your complaint reviewed without affecting your services. If you have a problem or complaint, you may talk to the program manager or other appropriate staff.
- You have the right to file a formal grievance without fear of punishment, retaliation, or barriers to services, and to expect that your grievance will be investigated and resolved to the best of our ability.

#### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF PERSONS SERVED –**

##### ***As a program participant, you have the following responsibilities:***

- Follow all guidelines and policies that affect Ability KC participants, such as mask mandates. If a mask mandate is in effect, you must put on a fresh new mask upon arrival and participate in the screening process the first time you enter the building each day. You must follow instructions from Ability KC staff regarding masks.
- You must notify Ability KC if you or someone you live with has a positive COVID-19 test result, or if you are exposed to anyone who is positive for COVID-19. If you don't feel well, please do not come for services. Please notify the appropriate Ability KC staff member before your scheduled appointment time.
- Provide complete information requested by staff and related to your program. That may include medical, social, psychological, educational and vocational history. If changes occur, please let us know as soon as possible.
- Inform staff about accommodations, cultural issues or other beliefs that are important to consider in planning your program.
- Keep scheduled appointments and be on time. When appointments cannot be kept for whatever reasons, you should contact ABILITY KC immediately to cancel or reschedule.
- Participate actively in developing your program.

- Comply with the program plan we develop together or, if you disagree, discuss your needs with the staff person responsible for coordinating your program.
- Accept responsibility for your decisions and consequences, if you refuse services or don't follow the agreed-upon plan.
- Follow the rules and regulations explained to you and outlined in the participant handbook.
- Be considerate of others including personal safety and freedom from abuse of any kind.
- Provide a copy of documents supporting guardianship or custody when requested.
- Respect the rights of staff members and others regarding noise, cell phone use, inappropriate language, etc.
- Do not bring valuables with you. ABILITY KC CANNOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR VALUABLES.

If you have any questions regarding these rights or wish to voice a concern about a possible violation of your rights, please contact the Director of Professional Standards at 816-751-7832.