



A Better Life Experience, Inc.
Substance Abuse Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to express A Better Life Experience (ABLE)'s viewpoint concerning substance abuse regarding adult foster care providers of an individual served and to identify specific actions to be taken if this is suspected or has occurred.

Policy

This policy is set forth to further ABLE's organizational purpose "To cultivate environments that make a better life experience" by prohibiting the abuse of legal and illegal substances; prescribed or over-the-counter substances which would impair the ability and/or judgment of the adult foster care provider.

Such substances include illegal drugs, controlled substances (including trace amounts), alcohol, look-alike drugs, designer drugs, or any other substance which may have an effect on the human body of being a narcotic, depressant, stimulant or hallucinogen.

Procedure

The ABLE agency staff who either receives the verbal report or who receives an allegation should complete an Incident Report.

All allegations or suspected substance abuse that meets **reasonable suspicion** definitions will receive an investigation by ABLE agency staff to ascertain whether the allegation or suspected incident holds merit by establishing reasonable cause for further investigation.

Reasonable suspicion, for the sake of this policy, may be established by the following parameters:

- Information that an adult foster care provider has caused, or contributed to, an accident while performing duties. "Accident" includes injury to individual served, self, and/or damage to equipment or property.
- Direct observation of the consumption of alcohol or controlled substance usage or of the physical symptoms or manifestations of being under the influence of an inhibitive substance.

- Adult foster care provider exhibits the type of behavior that shows symptoms of intoxication or impairment caused by controlled substances or alcohol or addiction to or dependence upon said controlled substances; and such conduct cannot reasonably be explained by other causes such as fatigue, lack of sleep, side effect of prescription or over-the-counter medications, illness, reaction to noxious fumes or smoke.
- Abnormal conduct or erratic behavior while at home or in the community or a significant deterioration in performance.
- A report of substance abuse provided by a reliable and credible source and independently corroborated.

Internal reporting is necessary so that a Residential Director, Residential Program Manager or President can assure the initiation of an immediate investigation and take any additional action that may be required. The individual served, service providers, family members, volunteers and/or visitors may make reports of substance abuse in the residence.

All actual incidents of substance abuse within the residence of individuals served will be reported immediately (as soon as possible, but no longer than 24 hours from the initial knowledge that an incident occurred). Persons notified may include the following, but are not limited to: Case Manager/Resource Coordinator of Individual Served, Guardian, and other applicable members of the interdisciplinary team. A subsequent IDT meeting will be established upon notifying all responsible parties.

Any adult foster care provider engaged in activities as defined in this policy is acting unprofessionally in the residential setting; such conduct is not permitted and shall be subject to the same procedures as followed in instances of ABLE's Mistreatment, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation (MANE) policy.

The guardian of the individual served has the right to terminate the residential service contract at any time as well as have the individual served removed from the residence during the investigation period. If the individual served is without a guardian and the IDT members feel the adult foster care provider is unfit to continue providing services, the residential service contract may be terminated immediately. The individual served may be removed from the residence during the investigation period by decision of the IDT.

If the accused adult foster care provider wishes to submit a drug test to defend themselves, they may do so at their own expense.