

Ingersoll Support Services Inc.

Policy: Reporting Incidents of Abuse

Policy # QAM 15

Section: Quality Assurance

Approved by the Board of Directors: Sept. 22 2011

Procedure Revision:

Ministry requirement –

Last Reviewed: November 20 2017

QAM II.8

ISSI will not tolerate any form of abuse of the persons we support. Any alleged, suspected, or witnessed incidents of abuse that may constitute a criminal offense will be immediately reported to the Police.

Introduction

ISSI has comprehensive Policies and Procedures to ensure that people are valued community members -- including ensuring that allegations and incidences of reported, suspected or observed abuse are dealt with thoroughly. These include policy and procedure on **reporting** (QAM15), **supporting people who are abused** (QAM16), **steps that are taken with members who are accused** of perpetration (QAM17), **the promotion of zero tolerance** through *orientation, training, annual refreshers* for staff, *education of persons supported* by the agency, and **policy review and revision** (QAM18), and the **notification with consent** of incidences (QAM19,20).

Procedure:

Definition:

Abuse is “any act or situation which may be physical, psychological, sexual or verbal in nature, which harms, demeans or infringes on the personal rights or dignity of an individual, or places the individual’s personal health and safety at risk. It could also include neglect.”

Types:

Sexual abuse: Sexual abuse is the unwanted touching of a person’s sexual body parts or the denial of a person’s right to engage in informed consenting sexual behaviour. The lack of consent is the defining feature. It is important to note that consent is not possible given the role of the service provider and the person supported.

Physical Abuse: Physical Abuse is an act of assault, or a threat of an assault, such as hitting, slapping, and burning that cause or could cause actual physical injury or fear of physical injury.

Verbal Abuse: the use of demeaning language and name calling. Negative verbal depictions of disability or attractiveness are also forms of verbal abuse.

Psychological abuse: Whenever constant criticism, insulting, threatening, degrading, humiliating, intimidation or terrorizing of a person occurs, this is deemed psychological abuse.

Emotional abuse: Emotional abuse is the misuse of power, in any way, to cause a person to lose respect for themselves. Psychological and Emotional abuse can also include the demeaning of one's faith or beliefs or the imposition of another's faith onto the person.

Financial abuse: Financial Abuse constitutes the misuse, misappropriation or restriction of someone's financial assets for personal gain.

Neglect: Neglect is about the failure to provide the necessities of life such as food, clothing, shelter, care or supervision. People supported by the agency have a right to expect that their basic needs will be met and they will be provided with appropriate supervision for their age and their developmental needs.

Exploitation: Taking advantage of a person's disability to trick or manipulate for personal benefit is exploitation. This includes persuasion to do things that are illegal or not in the individual's best interest.

Harassment: The use of any comments, conduct, or gestures that are insulting, intimidating, humiliating, malicious, degrading, offensive, or discriminatory, directed toward an individual or group of individuals.

Sexual harassment: The use of any comments or conduct of a sexual nature undertaken with the intent of causing offence or humiliation.

Reporting and Supporting:

1. Ingersoll Support Services in keeping with mission and principles of service will not tolerate abuse of any kind by one person against another. Sexual abuse is a crime; physical abuse is common assault as defined by the Criminal Code of Canada. Acts of abuse by staff persons against a person supported by the agency are a betrayal of trust and confidence and will result in disciplinary action. (Refer to policy #5050 Standards of Conduct)
2. The proper steps regarding reporting of incidences should be undertaken in consultation with the Policies on Support to the Abused Person (QAM 16) and Notifications of Incidents of Abuse (QAM 19).
3. All incidents of suspected, alleged or witnessed abuse of a person with an intellectual disability that may constitute a criminal offence are immediately reported to

the police. If appropriate, notify the external authorities, such as Police, or Ambulance to report the incident. Additional notifications are based on the consent of the person (QAM 19).

4. The agency will not initiate an internal investigation before the police have completed their investigation with respect to incidents of abuse that may constitute a criminal offence.

5. The person who has been allegedly abused will be advised about the possible outcomes of disclosure, actions available to them and advocacy support available.

Written Reporting:

6. A written incident report regarding the incident is required as a part of the service record.

7. Your incident report is considered documentation that can be used as evidence in a court of law. It is important that your documentation is accurate and clear. Make your statement professional, be objective. Do not be general, use specific language.

8. Do not use language the person did not use. If the person talks about the abuse the employee should record the exact words only. Do not prompt, persuade or attempt to question the person. Record any question you asked or action you took.

9. Do not prejudice information by including extraneous information. The report is about the allegation that was made, nothing more.

10. Use only black or blue ink. Do not use white out or rewrite the report; if you make an error put a line through it and rewrite the word. This shows you did not change your statement.

11. Serious Occurrence Reporting procedures will be followed for the reporting of abuse, as per Policy # S 8.