

## 3.11 ABUSE AND NEGLECT OF ADULTS

### **Overview:**

Employees, volunteers and others who are involved in the lives of the individuals that we serve are often in positions of trust and authority over those people.

Some of the individuals we serve have physical, cognitive, and developmental limitations that make them unable to protect themselves or look after all of their own needs. These circumstances make them vulnerable to abuse and neglect.

This policy is intended to guide employees and volunteers (including Board Members) in: (1) dealing with suspicions of abuse; or (2) reports of abuse or neglect; and (3) handling situations where abuse or neglect has occurred or might occur. Where programs are under the jurisdiction of Community Care Licensing, the intent is to provide direction which is consistent with the Residential Care Regulations. Where programs are funded by Community Living British Columbia (CLBC), the intent is to provide direction which is consistent with CLBC's policies and guidelines for practice. All applicable laws and legal reporting requirements also apply in this policy.

### **Policy:**

The Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion (BACI) will support individuals in a safe, positive, and nurturing manner at all times. The support will be free of any abuse, neglect, and/or harm to the individuals. BACI is committed to the safe care of the individuals receiving support and will not tolerate any form of abuse, neglect and/or harm. If an individual receiving supports is at risk or the victim of abuse, harm, and/or neglect, BACI will take every measure to ensure the individual is safe and no longer at risk as well as ensuring reporting requirements are met.

### **Definition and Categories of Abuse:**

#### **1. Definition**

Abuse is an action, inaction or behaviour that may result in physical, sexual, emotional, or mental harm to an individual by a person in a position of trust, power, and/or authority. This may also include abuse by one supported individual against another supported individual.

#### **2. Categories of Abuse**

##### *Physical*

- Assault (for example: slapping, hitting, kicking, punching).
- Rough handling without regard for the individual's comfort (for example: unnecessary force applied during lifts, transfers, and activities of daily living).
- Physical neglect (for example: withholding food, personal or medical care including untreated pain).

### *Psychological*

- Verbal or emotional abuse (for example: yelling, making demeaning or derogatory remarks, teasing, swearing, and/or name-calling.)
- Psychosocial neglect (for example: lack of attention, isolation, confinement).
- Setting individuals up for ridicule or scorn by peers or others.
- Interactions that are, or could reasonably be interpreted as, disrespectful.

### *Financial*

- Misuse of an individual's finances for inappropriate purposes (for example: payments made to caregivers to provide food or benefits are not implemented or used for other purposes)
- Theft of money or personal property.
- Fraud, which is deceitful manipulation of finances.
- Solicitation for compensation (example; undue and inappropriate pressure placed on the individual to pay for more services or support).

### *Sexual Abuse/Assault*

- Any form of sexual abuse/ assault by force or threat of force by any individual including employee, a person in position of power, trust or authority, a family member, roommate or co-supported adult
- Any sexual exploitation by an employee, or any other person in a position of trust, power or authority
- Any form of sexual contact by a person in a position of power, authority, or trust
- Any attempt to engage in sexual activities by a person in position of power, authority, or trust
- Unnecessary disregard for privacy
- Unnecessary touching of a person's private parts (for example: disregard for Person Care Policy).

Note: Consensual sexual activity and/or behaviour between supported adults is a respected right.

### *Medication Abuse*

- Medicating or sedating unnecessarily.
- Over sedation or non-compliance with medication refills.
- Misuse of an individual's medications and prescriptions.
- Misuse of non-prescription medications.

### *Violation of Rights*

- Denial of basic civil/human rights – linked directly to Policy 9.1- Rights and Responsibilities of People with Disabilities

### *Neglect*

- Intentional neglect: willful withholding of basic necessities and care (including pain).
- Unintentional neglect: withholding of basic necessities and care, usually due to a lack of experience or information (including pain).
- Failure to respond to an individual's need for interaction, inclusion, or routine interaction on a daily basis.

### **BACI's Responsibilities:**

BACI will provide services in an environment that is safe and free from any abuse or neglect.

BACI will report allegations of abuse to family members and/or appropriate authorities.

BACI will ensure the investigation of any allegations of abuse. To ensure that individuals are supported without fear of abuse, every effort will be made to ensure that all reported incidents are investigated and dealt with quickly. We will try to maintain confidentiality but it cannot be guaranteed, particularly if there are legislative reporting requirements.

BACI will take any necessary action to ensure that individuals are, and feel, safe and secure and that abuse does not re-occur. Any employee who, upon investigation, has abused or neglected an individual that we serve will face disciplinary measures up to and including immediate dismissal. Resulting discipline does not preclude or replace any ensuing legal actions or outcomes taken by the authorities.

### **Employees' and Volunteers' Responsibilities:**

Employees or volunteers who suspect that abuse or neglect has occurred have the responsibility to report their suspicions within 24 hours to their supervisor. If the accused is a supervisor, the suspicions must be reported within 24 hours to the manager.

Employees or volunteers who know or could reasonably be expected to know about an incident of abuse or neglect and who do not report it will be treated as having aided the abuse or neglect and will face disciplinary measures up to and including dismissal.

### **Linking Policies:**

- 1.8 Code of Ethics
- 9.1 Rights & Responsibilities of People
- 9.2 Family Involvement
- 9.3 Advocate & Friend Involvement
- 9.4 Promoting Friendships of People with Disabilities

- 9.5 Involvement in Decision-making
- 9.6 Personal Care Assistance
- 9.7 Behavioural Interventions

### **Statement of Compliance**

I have read BACI's policy on the Abuse and Neglect of Adults.  
I fully understand the terms of this document and agree to abide by them.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)  
(Board member, employee, or volunteer name)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)  
(Witness)