

F-301 MANAGING MONEY AND PERSONAL POSSESSIONS OF ADULTS IN VARIOUS RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES



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(previously SA-14)

Policy

Valoris' Executive Director is appointed by the Ministry as the guardian of adults whose revenue comes from the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) or the Old Age Security pension, the Basic Needs Allowance (BNA) and, in some cases, from a low-income job. The Executive Director delegates his responsibilities and authority to the Supervisors (Managers of the residences or Valoris Managers) and to staff (Community Integration Agent or Social Worker) in the various residential services, namely:

- Group homes with support services
- Residences with intensive support services
- Home sharers
- Supervised independent living services

These managers are responsible for ensuring the proper administration of all funds of the adults according to Ministry requirements and Ontario Regulation 299/10.

The management of an adult's money and Basic Needs Allowance must be included in the initial and annual reviews of his life plan. Adults have the right to have personal possessions with them, and they are encouraged to collect more during their stay in the residence.

Staff must protect these vulnerable people from people who would extort, steal or dilapidate their possessions.

Procedure

1. Assigned responsibility to Staff

The Supervisor will assign each adult to an employee who will be responsible for managing the resident's finances in accordance with this policy and procedure. This employee will receive the training and supervision required to properly perform this task. A member of the adult's natural family will be the authorized co-signer on the adult's bank account, or if this is not possible, the assigned employee or the resource person.

On one hand, Valoris must support, encourage and protect the rights of adults to make decisions regarding their expenses and the purchase of culturally valued possessions, in quantities and of a nature that are age appropriate. On the other hand, the assigned

employee and/or the co-signer is/are also responsible for helping the adult to make good decisions about his expenses and for ensuring that the basic needs allowance is used to improve their quality of life.

2. Admission and verification of eligibility for financial assistance

Once an adult has been admitted, the employee is responsible for opening a bank account, and he must confirm that the adult's revenue and assets do not exceed the maximum limit of \$5,000 in order to be eligible to the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP). The employee will complete Request Form A for the ODSP application for financial assistance by providing complete, precise information, including relevant documentation from the adult's file.

Once an adult has reached 65 years of age, staff will follow the required procedure to obtain Old Age Security from the Government of Canada.

Upon admission, adults are encouraged to bring their important personal belongings and to keep them in their room or in the residence, as space permits and provided it does not compromise the safety of the residents. However, the possession or storage of weapons in the residence is strictly forbidden, including firearms, air pistols, hunting bows, crossbows and arrows.

3. Basic Needs Allowance for Adults

Recipients of the ODSP program or of the Old Age Security pension are entitled to a basic needs allowance from ODSP or the Government of Canada. The supervisor's approval is required when the adult wishes to withdraw money from his bank account and for purchases above two hundred (\$200) dollars.

The employee must ensure that the adult uses the money for personal expenses and services, and not for goods and services that are normally the responsibility of the Agency. Further, with approval from the employee, an adult may use his or her personal allowance to cover personal expenses to entertain or visit family members, friends or volunteers or when the adult asks these people to join them on outings.

Upon consultation with the assigned employee, adults may keep a certain sum of money in their possession for personal expenses. Adults are encouraged to make their own purchases and bank transactions, with or without supervision, according to their abilities.

4. Acquiring and Developing Skills

Staff will help adults acquire and improve money management skills using different tools and methods (role-play, supervising actual transactions, teach the use of calculators). These activities are aimed at encouraging adults to progress along a developmental continuum, while respecting their abilities and limitations.

Money management and the acquisition of goods and possessions promotes the development of other abilities, such as developing the money sense required to make large purchases, as well as how to store, put away, clean and care for these goods. The

ability to properly manage money increases the adult's independence and improves social integration.

5. Bank account and expense statements

Staff members must ensure that funds in all bank accounts do not exceed the limit of \$5,000 in order that the adult remains eligible for the ODSP.

Other sums of money from different sources (family members, friends, employment) are transmitted to the employee responsible for managing the adult's finances for deposit into the adult's account.

The supervisor will ensure that designated staff members are efficiently and honestly managing the adults' money. All deposits to and withdrawals from the bank account must be well documented with the appropriate back-up. The monthly deposits and withdrawals record SA-14 F1 in Matrix is kept up to date as required; all receipts for expenses are retained in the adult's file.

Upon consultation with the adult's natural family, the employee and the supervisor may decide to invest a portion of the adult's funds in safe investments such as short term bank notes, in the adult's name.

6. Personal Purchases

The Basic Needs Allowance must be used for personal purchase such as refreshments, cigarettes, gifts, home furnishings and objects (television, radio, camera, computer, decorations, movies), clothing in addition to that supplied by the Agency, and activities in addition to those organized by the residence. Every adult may express his personal interests and needs and/or make his decisions. Adults are encouraged to participate in activities or purchase objects that are culturally valued, of good quality and age appropriate.

An adult may contribute to the purchase of a collective good or service, such as recreational equipment, or a trip.

7. Authorization and supervision by the Adult Developmental Services Supervisor

Adults and the employee assigned to them cannot make withdrawals exceeding \$200 from the adults' bank account without prior approval from the supervisor. The assigned employee must explain and document the reasons for the planned expense.

The supervisor must pre-approve any collective purchase or other collective expenses proposed by staff members that would use the adults' basic needs allowance, regardless of the amount of the purchase. Salary expenses or other personal expenses of staff, such as participating in a trip, may not be approved except under exceptional circumstances. Supervisors must ensure that each adult will benefit proportionately from their contribution to the expense or purchase for a group. Supervisors must determine a buy-back amount or reimbursement for an adult upon the purchase of a collective good, in the event that the adult leaves the residence.

Supervisors must pre-approve certain reimbursable expenses for members of the adult's family, friends or volunteers who do not have the means to participate in activities that are important to the adult; the employee must properly document these expenses and the decision and include all supporting documentation in the file.

Supervisors must review monthly withdrawal and expense forms (Form SA F1 in Matrix) to ensure that funds are being used appropriately. They will review unusual expenses and may question the employee, as required. Both employee and supervisor sign form SA-14 F1 in Matrix on a monthly basis. Any staff member who fraudulently spends an adult's money will be subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal.

8. Annual Planning

During the first three months following an adult's admission, a budget is developed in conjunction with the adult and the meaningful people in their lives in order to set personal goals for improving the adult's abilities and skills. An assessment and objectives regarding the adult's ability to manage money must figure among the commitments for anticipated results according to the Plan of Service or planning focused around the person. This document is completed annually.

9. Verification by the Ministry and the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee

The Ministry may perform a review of the expenses and practices of the Basic Personal Needs Allowance.

The Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee may randomly review adults' expenses.

The supervisor is responsible for preparing and participating in these reviews.

10. File and Inventory of Personal Possessions

All items purchased by or for the adult with his personal money must be clearly identified as belonging to the adult and documented in his file.

11. Access to Information

Family members involved with the adult may consult the documentation about the adult's expenses and bank account.

Definitions

Annex(es)

- Monthly Report: Bank Account and/or money of Adults in various residential services
- Assistance with the Management of Finances

References

- Verification protocol for the use of the Basic Needs Allowance in establishments in Annex I of the MCSS (October 1998);
- Guidelines governing the use of Basic Needs Allowance within establishments in Annexes I and II of the MCSS (October 1998);
- PASSING, Wolf Wolfensberger and Susan Thomas;
- Policy RH-401 Code of Ethics for all staff members of Valoris;

- Policy S-107 Reports of Abuse of a Child or an Adult by Employees, Volunteers or Other Agents of Valoris ;
- Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008 – Ontario Regulation 299/10 – Quality Assurance Measures