

Developing Abilities and Restoring Rights

A Workbook for Persons with Disabilities

(Part of the Developing Abilities and Restoring Rights Series)



This document was commissioned, funded and sponsored by the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, Inc., and produced through funding provided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Intellectual Developmental Disabilities.

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Preface

The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council (FDDC) strongly believes that persons with disabilities should be actively involved in all decisions so as to allow them to live and work as independently as possible within their communities. To fully support people to lead the lives to which they are entitled, the FDDC recognizes the need to raise awareness of ways to develop abilities in the area of legal rights among persons with disabilities. For individuals who are under guardian advocacy or guardianship, the FDDC also recognizes the need to provide information on restoring rights which have been removed by a court.

The FDDC and Guardian Trust are sponsors of the *Developing Abilities and Restoring Rights* series which is designed to support the goal of the FDDC to provide educational materials in the area of legal rights. The series includes:

- *Developing Abilities and Restoring Rights: A Workbook for Persons with Disabilities*
- *Developing Abilities and Restoring Rights: A Guide for Supporting Persons with Disabilities*
- *Developing Abilities and Restoring Rights: A Manual for Legal Professionals*

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
How To Use This Workbook	3
About Me	5
Tools and Strategies for Developing Abilities	7
Section 1 Basic Concepts	7
Self-Advocacy	7
Building Your Circle of Support	12
Protecting Yourself Against Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation	16
Section 2 Your Legal Status	22
Section 3 Developing Abilities by Civil Right	25
Right to Marry	27
Right to Vote	33
Right to Travel	37
Right to Apply for a Driver's License	41
Right to Seek or Retain Employment	45
Right to Apply for Government Benefits	55
Right to Decide Living Arrangements	59
Right to Decide Medical and Mental Health Treatments	65
Right to Manage Money and Property	73
Right to Decide Social Aspects of Life	81
Right to Contract	87
Right to Sue and Defend Lawsuits	93
Restoration of Rights	97
Legal Process in Florida	97
Obstacles and Strategies to Restoring Rights	100
Documents and Activities Checklist	103
Glossary	107



Introduction

The purpose of this *Workbook* is to be a tool to help you build abilities in certain areas of your life so that you may be more involved in decision-making which could lead to greater independence.

A basic freedom for every person is to live as independently as possible. **Civil rights** are laws that protect our freedom to live independently. It is important to understand what each of these rights are and who can legally make decisions about those civil rights.

There are three ways you can make decisions:

- 1) you may make decisions with or without help from others;
- 2) you may give someone the authority to make decisions for you; or
- 3) a court may have given someone else the right to make those decisions for you under **guardian advocacy** or **guardianship**. If you have been placed under guardian advocacy or guardianship, it was determined by the court that you cannot make decisions for yourself in certain areas of your life and some of your rights may have been taken away.

Whatever your situation is, this *Workbook* will give you tools and tips to help you be more involved in decisions that affect you so that you can live a more independent life. The *Workbook* contains:

- a self-assessment tool;
- basic concepts that include self- advocacy, building circles of support, and safeguarding against abuse, neglect and exploitation;
- a review of your current legal status;
- a review of your civil rights including definitions and activities to assist you with developing your abilities in each area, and
- the restoration of rights process in Florida.

The *Workbook* activities may be completed with or without the help of others. If you need help using the *Workbook*, *Developing Abilities and Restoring Rights: A Guide for Supporting Persons with Disabilities* provides instructions to the *Workbook* for anyone you would like to provide you with support and assistance.



How to Use This Workbook



The contents of the *Workbook* are designed to be placed into a three-ringed notebook. The notebook will help you keep all of your information in one place and can be used as a reference and guide when making decisions. You may keep information you have collected and activities you have completed in the *Documents and Activities Checklist* chapter. This information can also be used to document how you are developing your abilities in certain areas of your life.

Here are some helpful tips about icons used in this Workbook:	
	Identifies a question or activity that can be completed.
	Identifies tools and resources for additional information.
	Identifies an important idea or warning.
Bold	Words in bold are defined in the Glossary.

The activities can be completed by yourself or with help from others. If you need help, choose someone you can trust who knows your likes and dislikes and understands your goals for the future.

It is okay to make mistakes! It takes time to learn new things. Mistakes are a chance to grow and to know what to look out for the next time. Over time, you will become more comfortable as you use these new skills in your daily life.

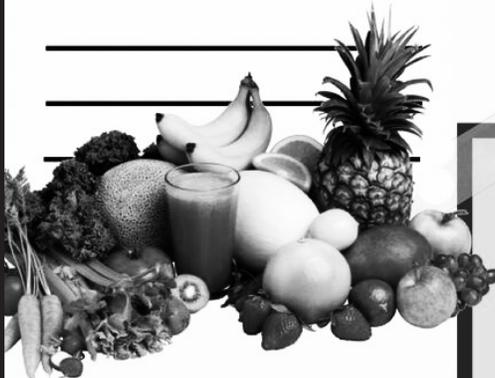


About Me

 Take a few minutes to think about things that you like and are important to you. This is information that you can share with others. This activity will help you begin to make choices and decisions based on your own preferences and interests. Fill out as many boxes as you want.



My favorite foods:



My favorite sports:



My favorite things to do:



What I like to spend my money on:



MY PICTURE



My Favorite Restaurants

Where I Want to Travel

PLACE STAMP HERE

Where I Want to Live

What Job I Want

 Write down any other important information you would like someone to know about you. This may be helpful if someone is assisting you with this *Workbook*.

Tools and Strategies for Developing Abilities and Restoring Rights

This Chapter includes basic concepts to prepare you to communicate your goals, to identify individuals in your life that will help support your desire to be more involved in making decisions that affect you and to provide you with tools to protect yourself against abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Section 1 Basic Concepts

Self-Advocacy

To be a **self-advocate** is to communicate your own desires and rights. Self-advocacy is an important tool you can use to reach your goals, and a skill that supports lifelong success.

Self-advocacy is a way to communicate your right to be treated with respect, and the opportunity and power to make meaningful life choices.

Use your family, friends and others in your **circle of support** to help you build your self-advocacy skills.

Self-advocacy means:



Being able to explain your disability



Knowing your needs, strengths and weaknesses, and the accommodations you may need



Knowing your rights and responsibilities



Speaking up for yourself



Knowing where to get help or whom to go to with a question



Asking for what you need



Using the resources available to you



Being able to listen to opinions of others



Working with others to reach an agreement

 This activity includes two examples of situations where it might be necessary to use and practice self-advocacy skills. The questions in the boxes help identify the issue, understand why it is important, describe the experience, and ways to resolve the problem. After reading these examples, think of another issue that matters to you or a situation where you might need help, and fill in the box.

Example 1

Bob is 25 years old and has been working at his current job for nine months. One of his co-workers keeps calling him names and constantly criticizing his work in front of other people. Bob is not sure how to handle the situation.

What is the issue? Bob's co-worker's behavior is called **bullying**. Bob wants his co-worker to stop bullying him, but is not sure how to handle this situation.

Why is it important? It is important to Bob because the co-worker's bullying behavior hurts his feelings and makes him feel afraid. Bob likes his job, but is concerned he will lose it because of his co-worker's negative comments about his work.

What are my experiences? Bob has a good work ethic and has not been criticized by any other co-workers. He gets to work on time, and is always willing to help when asked. He received a favorable evaluation and was permanently hired after a three-month probationary period.

How can I resolve this issue? Bob can share his feelings with someone he trusts. He can identify people in his circle of support who have work experience to give him tips and ideas to handle this co-worker, as well as his **job coach** or supervisor. Bob can also look for resources that might help him with this work situation.



<p>What is the issue? Bob is being bullied by a co-worker. The co-worker is calling him names and criticizing his work.</p>	<p>Why is it important? Bullying is hurting Bob's feelings and making him feel unsafe. He is also afraid of losing his job.</p>
<p>Bullying</p>	
<p>What are my experiences? Bob has a good work ethic. He has not been criticized by others at his current job. He is always willing to help when asked.</p>	<p>How can I resolve this issue? Bob can share his feelings with someone he trusts. He can talk to others in his circle of support who have work experience and ask for tips and strategies. Bob can look for work-related resources.</p>

Bob used self-advocacy skills to look for information on his rights in the workplace. He also talked with someone in his circle of support and met with his supervisor to discuss his workplace rights. The supervisor talked with the co-worker and resolved the issue.

Example 2

Ann is an 18-year-old woman who is hearing impaired, mildly autistic and has a seizure disorder. Ann wants to move out of her family’s home. Ann’s mother thinks Ann should move into a group home for young adults with developmental disabilities. Ann would like to live in her own apartment.



<p>What is the issue? Ann wants to live in her own apartment. Her mother feels that it would be better to live in a group home setting.</p>	<p>Why is it important? It is important for Ann to have a say in where she lives. She wants to show her mother and others who are providing her with support services that she is capable of living in her own apartment safely.</p>
<p>Ann’s Own Apartment</p>	
<p>What are my experiences? Ann has worked through the <i>Developing Abilities Workbook</i>. Ann has a job at the local bookstore, set up a budget for herself, learned local transportation, and has talked to her support coordinator about services.</p>	<p>How can I resolve this issue? Ann can talk to her mother and her support circle about the additional cost of living on her own, what additional financial resources she has available and support services she may need. She can create a new budget and identify various places where she would like to live that fits within her budget.</p>

Ann used self-advocacy skills by expressing her desire to live on her own. She also identified her existing resources and needs for moving out of her family home. She discussed this information with her mother and circle of support and together they agreed to look at the various places where she would like to live.

Your Current Situation

Pick a subject that is important to you and fill in the boxes. After you fill in the boxes, you can discuss the issue with someone in your circle of support if you need more help.

<p style="text-align: center;">What is the issue?</p> <p>The issue I have is: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Why is it important?</p> <p>It is important to me because: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<div style="border: 2px solid black; border-radius: 15px; width: 150px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>	
<p style="text-align: center;">What are my experiences?</p> <p>My experiences are: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">How can I resolve this issue?</p> <p>I can resolve this by: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

 The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council’s publication titled, *“Planning Ahead”* includes information on self-advocacy (see Chapter Three, *Becoming An Advocate*). To download a free copy, go to Council Resources at: www.fddc.org.

Additionally, the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council annually sponsors a leadership and advocacy training program that teaches self-advocates and parents to be community leaders. The Council also has a taskforce to help self-advocates and future self-advocates develop leadership skills. For more information, go to:

- <http://www.fddc.org/about/partners-in-policymaking>
- <http://www.fddc.org/about/self-advocacy-leadership>

“10 Steps to Effective Self-Advocacy” is a resource provided by Disability Rights Florida. This publication can be downloaded for free. Go to Disability Topics: <http://www.disabilityrightsflorida.org>

Additional websites providing self-advocacy information:

- www.disability.gov/resource/self-advocacy/
- www.apd.myflorida.com/selfadvocacy/

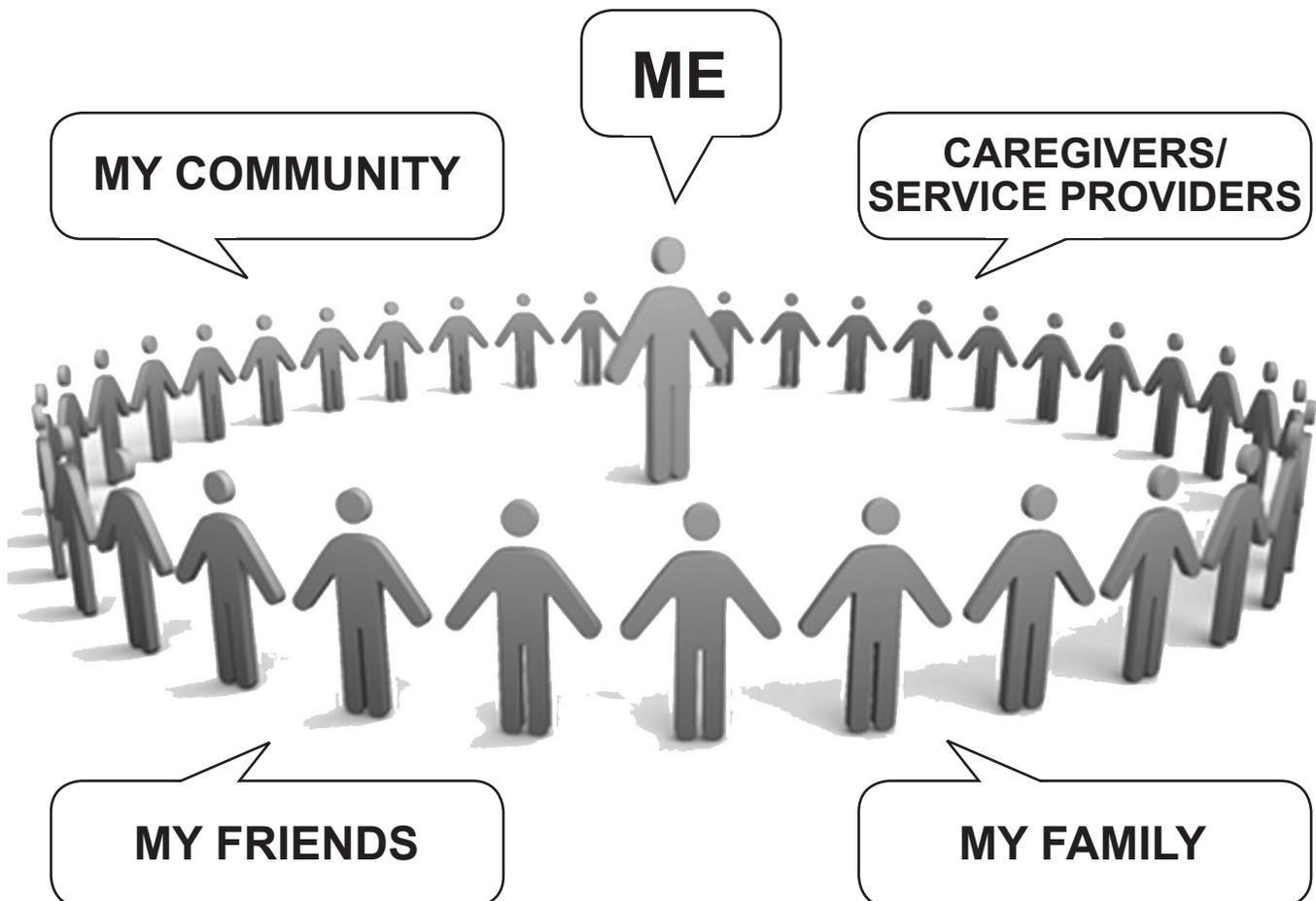
Building Your Circle of Support

All of us have people in our lives to help support us and help us plan for the future. These are the people we go to for advice and ask their opinion. These individuals are called our circle of support.

Your circle of support should include the people you value who respect and honor your individuality and help support your goals.

People in Your Circle of Support should:

- Know you and care for you as a person
- Know your likes and interests
- Know your strengths, capabilities, and contributions
- Support your education to be more independent
- Assist you in protecting your health, safety, and welfare
- Assist you in making personal choices



There are many ways to find people whom you trust. In the next activity, you will be identifying people in your circle of support. Look at the following list to get some ideas.

- Members of your family
- Friends whom you trust and who support your goals
- Someone from your church or other place of worship
- A teacher or former teacher
- A caregiver or service provider
- A **mentor**, **life coach**, or a **support coordinator** if you receive services from the **Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD)**
- Someone from an organization such as Boys and Girls Club, Boy or Girl Scouts, Special Olympics, Rotary clubs, Kiwanis clubs
- Someone from your local university or college who offers services or supports to students with disabilities
- Someone from a private business and/or a professional who understands your needs and has experience assisting individuals with disabilities
- Someone from a program or agency who provides services that might be able to help support you in living more independently, such as Centers for Independent Living or Able Trust
- Someone from a local government agency who provides assistance to persons with developmental disabilities (such as recreation, transportation, or public health services)

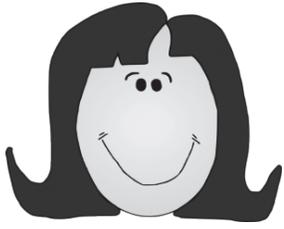


These two websites provide information about circles of support, examples of how others have built circles, and resources that can be purchased:

- <http://trainingpack.personcentredplanning.eu/index.php/en/circles>
- <http://www.inclusion.com/circlesoffriends.html>



List individuals in your circle of support or whom you would like in your circle of support.



Name: Sarah Smith

Phone: (550) 555-1234

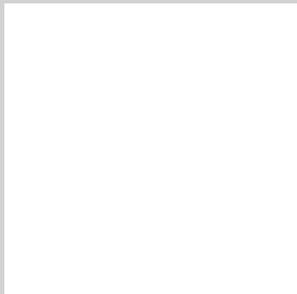
Relationship to me: Sister (Caregiver)



Name: _____

Phone: _____

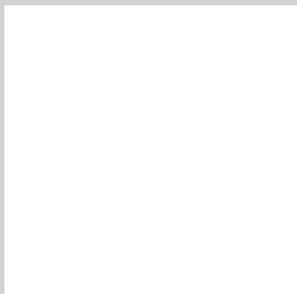
Relationship to me: _____



Name: _____

Phone: _____

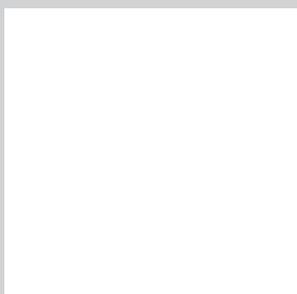
Relationship to me: _____



Name: _____

Phone: _____

Relationship to me: _____



Name: _____

Phone: _____

Relationship to me: _____

Name: _____
Phone: _____
Relationship to me: _____

Protecting Yourself against Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation

When you become more involved in making decisions about your life, it is important to learn strategies that help you recognize and identify signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation. You may want to talk with someone in your circle of support for guidance.

What is Abuse?

Abuse is when a **vulnerable adult** is treated by a relative, caregiver or household member with cruelty or violence that causes or is likely to cause physical harm. There are different types of abuse: sexual, physical, and emotional.

- Sexual abuse is when someone touches you against your will in a sexual way or threatens to do so. Sexual abuse can also be when someone makes you watch or participate in an activity when you do not feel comfortable, such as watching pornography or exposing him or herself. You should never be forced to do anything sexually if you do not want to do it. It is important to remember that you have the right to say no to anything sexual that makes you uncomfortable.
- Physical abuse is when someone hurts you by touching or threatens to hurt you. Some examples of physical abuse are kicking, biting, hitting, or pushing.
- Emotional abuse is when someone attacks or hurts you verbally or threatens to do so. Some examples of emotional abuse are bullying, humiliation, and name-calling. Threats are another form of emotional abuse. A threat is when a person says that they will harm you or someone important to you. Manipulation is a form of emotional abuse where someone tricks or blackmails you into doing what they want you to do – not what you want to do.

 You should always protect yourself by reporting anyone who is abusing you. Reporting information can be found at the end of this section.



Abuse Warning Signs

- ☹ Someone touches you sexually against your will, or makes sexual gestures or comments to you that make you uncomfortable.
- ☹ A person calls you names, bullies, or makes fun of you.
- ☹ Someone convinces you to do something that is not good for you so that they can get what they want.
- ☹ Someone hits you, slaps you, kicks, bites, or punches you.
- ☹ Someone threatens to hurt you.

What is Neglect?

Neglect is when a caregiver refuses or ignores the needs of a vulnerable adult that leads to harm. An example of neglect is if a caregiver refuses to give someone the medicine that they need. Another example of neglect is if a caregiver regularly forgets to buy or prepare food for someone who needs help with cooking and eating.

Another example of neglect, is when a vulnerable adult ignores or refuses their needs in a way that is dangerous or harmful. This is called **self-neglect**. There is a difference between exercising personal choices and preferences versus ignoring or refusing to address a need that can result in danger to you. If you have questions about this, discuss with someone in your circle of support.

 You should always protect yourself by reporting anyone who is neglecting you. Reporting information can be found at the end of this section.



Neglect Warning Signs

- ☹️ Your caregiver who assists you with meals does not buy or prepare food.
- ☹️ Your caregiver ignores your needs and you get hurt.
- ☹️ Your caregiver does not keep your living space clean, safe, and sanitary.
- ☹️ Your caregiver consistently forgets to help you with activities of daily living, such as cooking, giving baths, taking medications, or cleaning.
- ☹️ You are not taking your medicine as prescribed or on schedule.

What is Exploitation?

Exploitation happens when someone pushes you to make a decision that is bad for you and good for them. There are different kinds of exploitation.

- Financial exploitation is when someone asks you to make choices about your money or belongings that are good for them, but are bad for you.
- Emotional exploitation is when a person uses feelings to control you in a way that causes you harm.

 You should always protect yourself by reporting anyone who is exploiting you. Reporting information can be found at the end of this section.



Financial Exploitation Warning Signs

- ☹️ Someone asks you for money to buy them something because they do not have enough money now, but promises to pay you back later.
- ☹️ Someone asks you for your confidential information, such as your bank account number, your social security number, your Medicaid number, or your address.
- ☹️ Someone asks to borrow your things without getting any information in writing about when these items will be returned.
- ☹️ A person asks you to make a money decision and to keep it a secret.
- ☹️ A person encourages you to make risky decisions like gambling or loaning money without a written agreement.
- ☹️ A person asks you for money to buy things for you that you do not need or want.
- ☹️ Someone calls on the phone, sends you a letter, or contacts you online to ask for personal information or money.
- ☹️ A person asks you to sign a document without explaining to you what you are signing or tells you to keep it a secret.
- ☹️ Someone offers you a job, but is not clear about where you will work and what you will be paid, and acts nervous when you ask questions.



Emotional Exploitation Warning Signs

- ☹️ A friend asks you to do something you are not comfortable with and they get upset if you do not do it.
- ☹️ A person tells you very sad or scary stories to get you to help them or do what they want.
- ☹️ Someone encourages you to do sexual acts that you are not comfortable doing.
- ☹️ A person tells you to keep secrets about any behavior that you think is bad.



If you don't know whether or not to trust someone who is asking you to do something, tell them, "No. Let me think about that and get back to you." Talk to someone in your circle of support that can help you make a decision. When in doubt, say, "No!"

Learn from Mistakes

Sometimes we make the wrong decisions with people we thought we could trust. Everyone makes mistakes. Mistakes are an opportunity to learn and grow and know what to look out for the next time someone is trying to abuse, neglect, or exploit you.

Remember, when making choices, it is okay to take your time. If someone asks you for money or to borrow something, it is okay to tell them you will think about it and let them know later. This gives you time to ask someone that you trust if you are not sure. If the person insists, tell them "No." Explain to them that you would like time to think about it, but if they must have an answer now, that the answer is "No."

 Talk to someone in your circle of support about any uncomfortable experiences you may have had or situations where you may have been taken advantage of by someone. Identify what you have learned from these experiences to prevent it from happening again and list below any other concerns about abuse, neglect, or exploitation you would like to discuss:

 You should never give out the following information to friends or strangers:

- Bank account number
- Social security number
- Medicaid number
- Credit card information
- Debit card information

 Florida’s Attorney General’s website has a variety of information about exploitation. Topics featured are “zero tolerance for human trafficking” and “consumer fraud.” For more information, go to: www.myfloridalegal.com and use the search function on the home page (upper right) to access this information.

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) has developed a course on money management which includes information on financial exploitation. The course is titled, “*Money Smart*.” For more information, go to: <https://www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/moneysmart/>

Disability Rights Florida has a resource titled, “*Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation*.” Go to: <http://www.disabilityrightsflorida.org> and click on Disability Topics

What Should You Do?

If you think that someone has abused, neglected, or exploited you, talk to the person you most trust to let them know about your concerns. Discuss whether the police or sheriff, or the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) Florida Abuse Hotline should be called.

- Call 911 to contact your local sheriff’s office or police department if there is an emergency.
- Call 1 (800) 962-2873 and report abuse, neglect, or exploitation to the DCF Florida Abuse Hotline. You can also report abuse, neglect or exploitation online at <http://reportabuse.dcf.state.fl>



 Read the stories below and write down your answers on how to help protect against abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

1. Jenny has a neighbor, Mr. Williams, who sometimes helps her with her yard. One day, Mr. Williams asks Jenny to come over to his house alone. He asks Jenny if he can take pictures of her. Jenny feels uncomfortable, but Mr. Williams says he is her friend. Mr. Williams asks Jenny to take off her clothes and that it will be their secret.

What should Jenny say to Mr. Williams?

Who should Jenny talk to for advice?

What were the warning signs that Jenny was being abused?

2. Johnny's caregiver was scheduled to pick up Johnny at 4:00PM from his day program. The caregiver was shopping that afternoon and forgot to pick him up. The day program had to make alternate transportation arrangements for Johnny.

What should Johnny say to his caregiver?

Who should Johnny talk to for advice?

What were the warning signs that Johnny was being neglected?

3. Nick is at home when he gets a phone call. The person on the phone says she is calling because Nick has been chosen to receive free magazines. All Nick has to do is give his address, name, and a credit card or bank account information.

What should Nick say to the person on the phone?

Who should Nick talk to for advice?

What were the signs that Nick was exploited?

Section 2 Your Legal Status



You may make decisions about your life on your own or you may make some decisions by asking for advice from others. Or other people may have the legal authority to make decisions for you because you gave them the authority or because a court has given someone the authority to do so. This section will help you identify how decisions about you are made and why.



Check the statement below which best describes how decisions about your life are made:

_____ I make all my own decisions with or without help from others.

_____ Someone makes decisions for me.

_____ I am not sure.



If someone makes decisions for you or you are not sure, please read the next two boxes and check which box applies to you. If neither of the boxes applies to you, go to the next activity and complete the “Civil Rights” chart.

Someone makes decisions for me because I gave them the authority to do so.

For example:

- you may have given someone the right to manage the money you get from the government as your **Representative Payee**;
- you may have given someone a **Power of Attorney** or a **Durable Power of Attorney** to take some legal action for you, such as to sell your car;
- you may even have a **Trust** that manages some of your money; or,
- you may have given someone the right to make medical decisions for you as your **Health Care Surrogate**.

Make copies of all documents you may have signed giving someone else permission to make decisions for you and put them in this notebook in the *Documents and Activities Checklist* chapter. Read each paper to make sure you remember what legal authority you have given to whom.



Ask someone in your circle of support to help you if you need it.

- Someone makes decisions for me because a court gave them the authority to do so.

A court may have placed you under guardian advocacy or guardianship and named a **guardian advocate** or **guardian** to make decisions for you. This may have been done for a variety of reasons: your family or others may have suggested that you needed help in making decisions in order to protect your health, safety or welfare and the judge agreed.

If you are under guardian advocacy or guardianship:

- Get a copy of your **Letters of Guardian Advocacy**; or
- Get a copy of your **Letters of Guardianship**, Order Appointing Guardian, and **Order Determining Incapacity** issued by the court and put them in this notebook in the *Documents and Activities Checklist* chapter. These documents will help you understand what rights have been removed and what rights have been given to someone else to exercise for you.



Ask someone in your circle of support to help you if you need it.



After completing the activities above, check the appropriate boxes in the following Civil Rights chart and use as a reference.

CIVIL RIGHTS	Check the box that applies		
	I make my own decisions with or without help	I gave someone the authority to make decisions for me	The court has removed this right
Your right to marry		These rights cannot be delegated to someone else.	
Your right to vote			
Your right to travel			
Your right to apply for a driver's license			
Your right to seek or retain employment			
Your right to apply for governmental benefits or services			
Your right to decide living arrangements			
Your right to consent to medical and mental health treatments			
Your right to manage money and property			
Your right to make decisions about your social life			
Your right to contract			
Your right to sue and defend lawsuits			

It is important to always remember that no one can take all of your rights away. The rights listed below can NEVER be given or taken away so you can always makes decisions about the following rights:

1. To be represented by an attorney
2. To have access to a court
3. To receive a proper education
4. To be free from abuse, neglect and exploitation
5. To remain as independent as possible
6. To receive necessary services and rehabilitation
7. To be treated humanely, with dignity and respect

 The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council provides information about least restrictive alternatives for decision-making including guardian advocacy and guardianship in the publication titled, "*Lighting the Way to Guardianship and Other Decision-making Options.*" To download a free copy, go to: www.fddc.org, Legal & Reference under Council Resources.



Section 3 Developing Abilities by Civil Right

The following section will list activities to help you develop abilities and build independence for the civil rights that may be important to you. The civil rights included in this section are:

Right to Marry

Right to Vote

Right to Travel

Right to Apply for a Driver's License

Right to Seek or Retain Employment

Right to Apply for Government Benefits

Right to Decide Living Arrangements

Right to Decide Medical and Mental Health Right to Manage Money and Property

Right to Decide Social Aspects of Life

Right to Contract

Right to Sue and Defend Lawsuits

The activities for each civil right will help you begin to learn more about these rights so that you can become more involved in making your own decisions. If you need help completing activities, you can ask for assistance from someone in your circle of support.

If you have given someone permission and authority to make decisions for you or a court has taken away some or all of your rights, individuals who are making decisions for you should be encouraging and supporting your desire to become more involved in your decision-making. If you are under guardian advocacy or guardianship, you can demonstrate your skills and knowledge which could lead to some or all of the restoration of your rights.

If you are not sure how decisions are made, or who is making them for you, go to *Section 2 Your Legal Status* on Page 22 and complete the activities.

Right to Marry



Part 1 - Definition



The right to marry is the right to get married after obtaining a marriage license. A marriage license is a legal document that must be obtained from your Clerk of the Circuit Court before the marriage ceremony.

Loving relationships are an important part of our life experience. Everyone shares this basic human desire to have a sense of connection through friendships and romantic experiences. Social and dating skills can be developed through education, guidance, opportunity and ongoing support.

Many adults develop meaningful long-term relationships that may result in marriage.

Part 2 - Activities

If you are interested in learning more about how to prepare for marriage because you are in a long-term relationship, here are some questions you can answer and activities that might interest you.



If there are others you know who are married, talk to them about the responsibilities and commitment of marriage.

List some things you learned after talking with others:



There are many pre-marital (before marriage) counseling courses available. These courses provide instruction on managing disagreements in a marriage, learning about communication skills, managing money as a couple, and children and parenting responsibilities. Counseling can be provided by personal instruction, video instruction or online. There may be a fee for these courses. Counseling may also be provided by your place of worship.

Find a pre-marital course that is of interest to you and complete the course. Keep a copy of the certification of completion in this notebook in the *Documents and Activities Checklist* chapter.

List pre-marital courses you have found:



These websites provide pre-marital courses for a fee:

- www.floridapremaritalcourse.com
- <http://flpremaritalcourse.com>
- www.floridamarriageprep.com



There are many things to think about when you are considering marriage, such as:

- your budget (how much money you receive from jobs, government benefits or other sources, and how you spend your money);
- where you will live;
- preparing legal documents such as a **will** and **advance directives**;
- how marriage might affect your health insurance coverage; and
- support services needed.

Check the boxes after you have completed the activities below. Include your work in the *Documents and Activities Checklist* chapter.

- Create a budget. It is important to know how you will financially support a marriage.
 - To help you prepare a budget, go to Page 73 for more information on managing money and property.
 - Go to Page 55 and complete the questions and activities on government benefits if you are not sure if you receive government benefits.
 - If you receive government benefits, contact the appropriate agencies and ask if marriage will affect your benefits.
 - Think about other financial support that might be available to you (such as from a family member).
- Where will you live when you are married? It is important to know what housing options are available and how you will pay for them. Go to Page 59 and complete the questions and activities about living arrangements and housing options.
- Discuss with someone in your circle of support the types of legal documents you might need (such as a will). Also discuss how to contact an attorney to discuss these documents.

List attorneys you might call:



The Florida Bar provides information on wills and other legal documents. Go to www.floridabar.org and type in “wills” in the search bar.

To locate an attorney:

- Ask someone you know if he or she can recommend an attorney
- Call the Florida Bar Lawyer Referral Service (800-342-8011) or go to the Florida Bar website
- Call your local Legal Aid or Legal Services office, or go to: <http://www.floridalegal.org>, then click on “Lawyer Referral Service Online-Available 24/7”

- List your health insurance policies. Ask someone in your circle of support to help you determine if marriage might affect your health insurance coverages. Include any changes you might have to make.



The federal government’s health care website provides information on health insurance for persons with disabilities. Go to: www.healthcare.gov/people-with-disabilities/coverage-options/

Visit the federal government’s health care blog to get information on reporting life changing events that may affect your health insurance coverage. Go to: <https://www.healthcare.gov/blog/7-things-to-know-about-reporting-a-life-change/>

- List any other support services you might need, such as a life coach to help you resolve concerns before and after marriage:



Sex education including birth control and family planning are very important topics to discuss when considering marriage.

- Locate sex education materials. It is important to have knowledge about your sexuality. Ask someone in your circle of support who you trust to help you locate books or other materials and to discuss these with you. You may find books or other reference material at your library, your doctor’s office, or health clinics. Premarital counseling may also have sex education information. Be careful if you search for sex education materials online. Searching for materials about sex online

could lead to inappropriate and dangerous websites.

List the books or other materials that you found:

- Gather information about birth control options. This is an important topic for both men and women. Ask someone in your circle of support to help you. Your physician, women's health center, or public health care provider will have the most up to date information on these options.

List birth control options:

- Gather information about family planning. Discuss family planning with someone in your circle of support and your doctor. It is important to understand the commitments and responsibilities of having children. It is also important to understand any pregnancy health concerns as well as possible birth defects or hereditary issues.

List individuals who helped you with these topics and any important information or ideas you want to remember:



Be careful if you search for sex education materials online. Searching for materials about sex online could lead to inappropriate and dangerous websites.

The information on the websites listed below have been written by or designed for persons with disabilities:

The Riot is a website for and about self-advocates supported by the Human Services Research Institute. The Riot offers a newsletter, a blog where self-advocates can share opinions, an online art gallery, toolkits, games and services to help individuals become stronger self-advocates. They cover topics such as healthy relationships, safe sex, and setting up peer support networks. For more information, go to: www.theriotrocks.org

The Florida Center for Inclusive Communities offers a resource titled, "*Sexuality and*

Developmental Disabilities Across the Lifespan.” To access this resource, go to:
<http://flfcic.fmhi.usf.edu/resources/materials/health.html>

Activities and resources on sexuality and relationships can be found at the following websites:

- <http://www.connectwc.org/dating-relationships-sexuality.html>
- http://www.srcp.org/for_some_parents/developmental_disabilities/index.html

- Find resources or attend educational opportunities for training in parenting skills.

List books or materials that you found and any training you attend. Keep a copy of any certificates of completion in the *Documents and Activities Checklist* chapter:



Parenting resources and programs can be found on the Department of Children and Families website. Go to: <http://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/child-welfare>

- List supports you will need if you are planning for a family. Ask someone in your circle of support to discuss with you if you need help.



There are requirements for obtaining a marriage license. Contact your local Clerk of Circuit Court for this information and list the requirements:



If you would like to identify your own activities to help you learn more about marriage, list them below:

Part 3 – Restoration of Rights Process

Has your right to marry been taken away by a court?

Yes

No

I am not sure. (Go to Section 2 *Your Legal Status* and your *Documents and Activities Checklist* or ask someone from your circle of support to help you.)

If the right to marry has been removed by a court, you cannot legally marry another person.

If you are in a long-term relationship and want to have your right to marry restored, take the steps that are detailed in the *Restoration of Rights* chapter of this *Workbook*. Restoration of rights is a legal process and must take place through the court system.

If you do not get the right to marry restored, that is okay. Sometimes, it takes time to build up your skills. Continue to do activities that can help you learn more about preparing for marriage. Once you are ready, try to get the right to marry restored again.

Part 4 – Next Steps

Once the right to marry has been restored and you are in a long term relationship, you will now be able to apply for a marriage license.





Right to Vote

Part 1 - Definition



Voting is the process used to elect people for governmental offices such as the mayor of the city, the governor of the state, or President of the United States. Voting also gives us a chance to be heard on important issues and to create and change laws.

You must have a voter's registration card issued by your local county supervisor of elections in order to vote.

Part 2 - Activities

If you are interested in learning more about voting, here are some questions you can answer and activities that might interest you.



Learn about the different political parties and decide which one you might want to belong to. Ask someone in your circle of support if you need help.



These websites provide more information about political parties:

- <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/political-parties>
- <http://www.politics1.com/parties.htm>
- <http://www.ushistory.org/gov/5a.asp>



Find out when the next election will occur. Gather information on the candidates and issues.

List the date of the next election: _____

Research a few of the candidates and issues you will be voting on and write some things about each one that you have learned:



The internet, watching candidate debates on TV, listening to the radio, and attending campaign events are additional ways to learn about and gather information on voting and elections.

Disability Rights Florida provides voting information for citizens with disabilities. For more information, go to: http://www.disabilityrightsflorida.org/resources/disability_topic_info/voting_rights_responsibilities



Get a sample election ballot before each election to help you learn about the candidates and issues. These sample ballots are distributed by the Supervisor of Elections office and should be readily available before each election.



To find your local supervisor of elections office, go to: www.election.dos.state.fl.us/soe/supervisor_elections.asp



Learn about accommodations that are available to you when voting, if you need it, such as someone going to the polling place with you to help you mark your ballot, voting by absentee ballot, or voting where you live if you are in a facility.

List accommodations you may need:



The Florida Department of Elections provides information to citizens who need assistance with voting. For more information, go to: <http://election.dos.state.fl.us/voting/disability.shtml>



If you would like to identify your own activities to help you learn more about voting, list them below:

Part 3 – Restoration of Rights Process

Has your right to vote been taken away by a court?

_____ Yes

_____ No

_____ I am not sure. (Go to Section 2 *Your Legal Status* and your *Documents and Activities Checklist* or ask someone from your circle of support to help you.)

If the right to vote has been removed by a court, you cannot legally vote during elections.

If you want to have your right to vote restored, take the steps that are detailed in the *Restoration of Rights* chapter of this *Workbook*. Restoration of rights is a legal process and must take place through the court system.

If you do not get the right to vote restored, that is okay. Sometimes, it takes time to build up your skills. Continue to do activities that can help you learn more about voting. Once you are ready, try to get the right to vote restored again.

Part 4 – Next Steps

Once your right to vote has been restored, take these steps:

1. Submit a registration application: apply at your local elections office, other voter registration agency, or online.
2. Continue to do the list of activities in Part 2 above to learn about the candidates and issues for each election.
3. Make arrangements for accommodations, if you need it, when voting.



Right to Travel



Part 1 – Definition



The right to travel means the freedom to go from one place to another without asking permission first. This could be taking a trip to another county, to another state, or to another country.

Part 2 - Activities

If you are interested in traveling, here are some questions you can answer and activities that might interest you.



There are many things to consider when you are planning to travel:

- Where do you want to go?
- Why do you want to go there?
- How long do you plan to visit?
- How will you get there?
- How are you returning home?
- How much will your trip cost?
- Who is paying for the trip?
- Is anyone going with you and if so, whom?
- If someone is going with you, who pays the person's travel costs?
- What are you planning to take with you on the trip?
- How will you handle a special diet or meals while you are away from home?
- How would you handle an emergency such as a flat tire, missing a bus, running out of gas, or missing an airline flight?
- Who will you call in case of an emergency?

- Plan a vacation or a visit to out of town family members or a friend. Write down the answers to as many of the questions as you can. Prepare a travel diary.

TRAVEL DIARY

Where do I want to go?	
Why do I want to go there?	
How long do I plan to stay?	
How will I get there and return?	
How much will the trip cost?	
Who is paying for the trip?	
Who is going with me? Who is paying the person's travel costs?	
What I am taking with me?	
Do I have to make arrangements for any special diet or meals?	
Do I have to make any arrangements for medications?	
Who will I call in case of a travel emergency?	



Lonely Planet, a travel publisher, provides travel tips. For information, go to:
<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/travel-tips-and-articles/76192>

There are many websites providing travel information for persons with disabilities. Here are a few links:

- www.travelguides.org
- www.disabled-world.com/travel
- www.independenttraveler.com/travel-tips/senior-travel/disabled-travel

The United States Department of State provides information related to personal security in the publication titled, "*Personal Security--At Home, On the Street, While Traveling.*" For more information, go to: <http://www.state.gov/m/ds/rls/rpt/19773.htm>

The National Crime Prevention Council provides travel safety tips. For more information, go to: <http://www.ncpc.org/resources/files/pdf/neighborhood-safety/Travel%20Safety%20Tips%20Flier%20July%202013.pdf>



If you would like to identify your own activities to help you learn more about travel, list them below:

Part 3 – Restoration of Rights

Has your right to travel been taken away by a court?

_____ Yes

_____ No

_____ I am not sure. (Go to Section 2 *Your Legal Status* and your *Documents and Activities Checklist* or ask someone from your circle of support to help you.)

If the right to travel has been removed by a court, you cannot legally travel outside your county without prior approval from your guardian advocate or guardian and the court.

If you want to have your right to travel restored, take the steps that are detailed in the *Restoration of Rights* chapter of this *Workbook*. Restoration of rights is a legal process and must take place through the court system.

If you do not get the right to travel restored, that is okay. Sometimes, it takes time to build up your skills. Continue to do activities that can help you learn more about travel. Once you are ready, try to get the right to travel restored again.

Part 4 – Next Steps

Once your right to travel has been restored, take these steps:

1. Always identify how you are going to pay for a trip before you begin.
2. Write down your travel plans.
3. Share your travel plans and contact information when you are traveling with someone in your circle of support.
4. Always have a backup plan (and money) in case your plan has to change.

Right to Apply for a Driver's License



Part 1 – Definition



The right to apply for a driver's license means that an individual may apply for a driver's license at a Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles' office.

A driver's license is a card that you must get from the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DMV) that allows you to drive a car, truck or motorcycle on public roads.

Part 2 – Activities

If you are interested in learning more about driving so you will be better prepared to apply for a driver's license, here are some questions you can answer and activities that might interest you. These activities can also be completed if you have had your driver's license revoked and would like to get your license restored.



There are ways to have fun and practice driving that do not require a driver's license. Practice as many of these as you can.



Examples of ways to practice driving skills:

- Video games like Road Racer are fun ways to practice driving on the computer.
- Go to an amusement park and go on rides like bumper cars.
- Go off-road driving on an ATV, dune buggy or golf cart. Make sure to follow proper safety guidelines.
- Driversedguru.com is one of several free online courses that you can use to learn some driving basics.
- Driving schools may have cars for you to practice with. For more information, go to: <http://www.123driving.com>



Get the Florida Driver's Handbook so you can learn the laws and rules about driving. Ask someone in your circle of support to help you study the Handbook if you need it.



You can get the Florida Driver's Handbook at your local Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles' office. For a list of all DMV offices in Florida, go to: <http://www.dmvflorida.org/dmv-offices.shtml>

The Handbook can also be downloaded from the Florida Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles website. Go to: <http://www.flhsmv.gov/resources/handbooks-manual/>



Take practice exams. Print the completed exams and include copies in the *Documents and Activities Checklist* chapter.



The Florida Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles website has a Practice Exam. Go to: <http://www.flhsmv.gov/html/dlnew.html>

The following websites have free practice exams:

- <http://www.highschooldriver.com/practice-test-road-rules>
- <http://freedmvpracticetests.com/fl-florida/teen-permit/fl-permit-practice-test>
- <http://driversprep.com/florida>



Find out what you have to do to get a learner's permit. A learner's permit allows you to drive a car on a public road as long as you have a person with a valid driver's license with you.

List the requirements for obtaining a learner's permit:



Find out what you have to do to get a driver's license.

List the requirements including any courses you have to complete. If you receive certificates of completion for any courses, include copies in the *Documents and Activities Checklist* chapter.



For first time driver information, go to: <http://www.dmvflorida.org/first-time-driver.shtml>



Find a driving tutor who might be available to give you lessons in driving a car on private property. Ask a driving tutor to document your practice sessions on private roads or property (farm) and include this information in the *Documents and Activities Checklist* chapter. If you need help finding a tutor, ask someone in your circle of support to help you.

List any information you find on driving tutors. Include contact information:



If you would like to identify other activities to help you learn more about obtaining a driver's license, list them below:

Part 3 – Restoration of Rights

Has your right to apply for a driver's license been taken away by a court?

Yes

No

I am not sure. (Go to Section 2 *Your Legal Status* and your *Documents and Activities Checklist* or ask someone from your circle of support to help you.)

If the right to apply for a driver's license has been removed by a court, you cannot legally drive a motor vehicle.

If you want to have your right to apply for a driver's license restored, take the steps that are detailed in the *Restoration of Rights* chapter of this *Workbook*. Restoration of rights is a legal process and must take place through the court system.

If you do not get the right to apply for a driver's license restored, that is okay. Sometimes, it takes time to build up your skills. Continue to do activities that can help you learn more about driving. Once you are ready, try to get the right to apply for a driver's license restored again.

Part 4 – Next Steps

Once your right to apply for a driver's license has been restored, take these steps:

1. Decide if you need to continue to study the Florida Driver's Handbook.
2. Go to your local Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles' office and apply for a Florida Learner's Permit.

3. Bring the following papers with you:

- Primary identification (like a birth certificate, passport, or Certificate of Naturalization)
- Proof of Social Security number (like a Social Security Card, paycheck stub, W-2 form)
- Proof of address (like utility bills, rental agreement, mortgage payment booklet)

4. You must pass the test about Florida road signs and road rules to receive a learner's permit.

- Bring enough money to pay for the license.

5. Once you receive your learner's permit, then you can practice driving on public roads!

You must have a person with a valid driver's license to ride with you while you are learning. Ask to see the person's license and check for the expiration date to be sure. That expiration date has to be after the date you are learning to drive.

- Who will that person be? _____
- What car will I use? _____

If you do not have a car or someone to help you, you can go to a driving school. Driving schools have cars for you to practice with. If you need a vehicle that is specific to your disability, ask someone in your circle of support to help you. Do not forget to ask for an accommodation if you need it. For more information, go to: <http://www.123driving.com>

6. When you have studied the driver's handbook, practiced driving on public roads, and feel ready and confident, you can take the written and road tests!

To take the road test, you must bring a car with you. An examiner will sit in the passenger seat and observe your driving skills. To take the test:

- Make an appointment at your local Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles' office.
- Bring your learner's permit with you.
- Bring your own vehicle (or a friend's or a family member's vehicle) to take the test. It must have a valid registration.
- Bring enough money to pay for the license.

Remember, if you do not pass the test the first time, that is okay. Ask your examiner what you need to work on. Continue to practice or consider attending driving school. Once you feel ready again, retake the driver's test.

Right to Seek or Retain Employment



Part 1 – Definition

Employment means having a job that pays you money for your work.

Why is it important to have a job?

- A job provides money to pay for living expenses
- A job provides money to pursue interests
- A job is a way for people to contribute to society
- A job gives a person a higher sense of self-esteem



Part 2 – Activities

If you are interested in learning more about getting a job, here are some questions you can answer or activities that might interest you.



Discuss with someone the types of employment that are available, such as working for yourself, at an office, store, factory or many other places. Think about the things that interest you and how you would apply those interests to where you might want to work. Make a list in the chart below. There are examples to get you started.

Your Interests	Job Opportunity
Example: I like animals	Local animal shelter Veterinarian's office Start my own business walking the neighborhood dogs
Example: I like to take care of children	Preschool or daycare center Start a babysitting business



List the types of transportation available to you for getting to work. List public transportation options such as city bus, special ride services for persons with disabilities, taxis, etc. Identify anyone who might be available to take you to a job.



List any accommodations (including technology) you might need if you were employed:



The U.S. Department of Labor provides information on job accommodations. For information, go to: <http://www.dol.gov/general/topic/disability/jobaccommodations>



Ask someone to help you practice interview skills.



Visit these websites for more information on interview skills:

- <https://www.disability.gov/can-get-help-writing-resume-preparing-interviews/>
- <http://www.regis.edu/About-Regis-University/University-Offices-and-Services/Career-Services/Student-and-Alumni/Interviewing-Techniques.aspx>
- <http://career-advice.monster.com/job-interview/interview-preparation/boost-your-interview-iq/article.aspx>
- <http://www.helpguide.org/articles/work-career/interviewing-techniques.htm>



Identify and list courses you can take to help you with computer skills, vocational training or any other training or educational courses that might help you when seeking employment. Remember to include any certificates of completion in the *Documents and Activities Checklist* chapter.



Know proper attire and grooming skills when interviewing and on the job. What do you think is proper clothing to wear to an interview and proper grooming skills?



Look for volunteer experiences or internships that might help you gain experience in the area you are interested in.

List below what might interest you:



Prepare a resume. A resume is a list of your education and work history. Remember to include all your experiences such as volunteering or organizations you might belong to. Ask someone in your circle of support to help you prepare a resume. A sample resume is included to help you get started.



For more information about preparing resumes, visit the websites below:

- <https://www.disability.gov/can-get-help-writing-resume-preparing-interviews/>
- <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/ERIC-ED466056/pdf/ERIC-ED466056.pdf>
- <http://www.americasjobexchange.com/career-advice/resume-writing-tips-disabled-american>

RESUME

(Your Name)

(Your Address)

(Your Phone Number or TDD)

(Your E-Mail)

Objective:

Education:

Employment:

Professional Development:

Special Skills:

Volunteer or Internship
Positions:

Hobbies:

Honors or Awards:

References:



Identify organizations or events which you want to consider contacting or attending to get more information on employment. Check the ones in the Resources box below that interest you. Remember to keep all information you download or receive from any agencies in the *Documents and Activities Checklist* chapter for easy reference.



Check the agencies that you have contacted or other employment seeking opportunities that you have completed.

- ___ Visit the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council website for free publications on employment. Go to: <http://www.fddc.org/publications>
- ___ CareerSourceFlorida provides job readiness training, incentives to obtain and maintain employment, work experience activities and career exploration. For more information, go to: <http://www.careersourceflorida.com>
- ___ EmployFirstFlorida is a website that provides information about what the state of Florida is doing to make it easier for people with disabilities to work. For more information, go to: <http://www.employmentfirstfl.org/>
- ___ Florida's AbilitiesWork provides resources and a database for job seekers who have a disability and are seeking employment. This information can be found at: <https://abilitieswork.employflorida.com/vosnet/default.aspx>
- ___ Attend job fairs. A job fair is an event where employers meet with job seekers. Companies or organizations have tables or booths where job seekers can visit with their resumes. Job fairs are also held online. Job fairs are usually announced to the public through advertisements on TV, in the newspaper or searching online. Ask someone in your circle of support to help you locate job fairs in your area if you need help.
- ___ Contact Goodwill Industries. Goodwill provides job placement services and works with individuals with disabilities, special needs, or have barriers to employment. They assist individuals to become self-sufficient and more marketable in the community. To find your local Goodwill Industries career center, go to: <http://www.goodwill.org/locator/>. Services offered include:
 - GED Preparation (General Education Diploma)
 - Computer Lab (Basic Computer Skills)
 - Office Skills Training
 - Job Coaching
 - Career Counseling
 - Financial Literacy
 - Transitional Work Experience
 - Employability Skills Instruction

- Resume Writing, Job Applications Completion
- On-line Job Searching, Job Leads
- Interviewing Skills

- Contact Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Florida Department of Education (VR), for help in career guidance, training, education and/or direct placement into employment for persons with disabilities. You may be eligible for VR services if your goal is to become employed and your disability interferes with your ability to become employed, and you need VR's help to find or keep a job. For more information, go to: <http://www.rehabworks.org>
- Learn more about the Discovery Process to help identify potential jobs that might be of interest to you. The Discovery Process is a person centered planning process that involves getting to know you and then developing a plan for employment. If you are a client of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, ask them to assist you with this process. Go to Florida Center for Inclusive Communities website for more information: http://flfcic.fmhi.usf.edu/docs/FCIC_FactSheets/FCIC_FactSheet_Discovery.pdf
- Learn about Able Trust's Florida High School/High Tech program. This program is available to individuals who are still in school. It gives students exposure to high tech careers through mentoring, career and leadership development activities, field trips and paid summer internships in high tech businesses. Find project sites at: www.abletrust.org/hsht/
- Learn about the Project Search program and locate available sites. Project Search is a work-based program that provides career exploration and training opportunities. Go to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services website for more information: http://www.acl.gov/Programs/AIDD/Success_Stories/FA_DevDisabilityCouncil.aspx
- Contact the Division of Blind Services (DBS), Florida's state agency responsible for ensuring that people of all ages who have visual impairments can live independently and achieve their goals. For more information, go to: <http://dbs.myflorida.com/transition/>
- Supported employment is an employment service for individuals with disabilities who require ongoing support services to succeed in competitive employment.
- If you are receiving services from the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD), or you are on the waiting list to receive services, contact APD for information about employment including supported employment coaching, follow-along services for supported employment, transportation for work and paid internships as paths to employment. For more information, go to: <http://www.apd.myflorida.com/customers/supported-employment>
 - Supported employment services are also available through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Florida Department of Education, for individuals who qualify for services. For more information, go to: www.rehabworks.org/supported.shtml

- Supported employment services may also be available to individuals who can pay for these services.

— Learn about the Protection Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS) program if you receive **Social Security Disability Income (SSDI)** or **Supplemental Security Income (SSI)**. This program provides information and advice about obtaining vocational rehabilitation and employment services and advocacy or other services that an individual may need to secure or regain employment. For more information, go to: <https://www.ssa.gov/work/protectionadvocacy.html>

— The Florida Center for Inclusive Communities (FCIC) website has information on programs and activities, materials and resources, webinars and job-development models all related to employment. For more information, go to: <http://flfcic.fmhi.usf.edu/program-areas/employment.html>

— The U.S. Government's Publishing Office offers a handbook titled, "*Job Seeking Skills for People with Disabilities.*" For a copy of this handbook, go to: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/ERIC-ED466056/pdf/ERIC-ED466056.pdf>

— For more information on finding employment resources, go to: <https://www.disability.gov/resource/disability-govs-guide-employment/>



It is important to understand the effects of earning money on public benefits assistance you might be receiving. Go to *Right to Apply for Government Benefits* on Page 55 for help with identifying any public benefits you might be receiving and how earning money might affect those benefits. Include any information you receive or benefits worksheets you have completed in the *Documents and Activities Checklist* chapter.



The Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Program (WIPA), formerly the Benefits Planning Assistance and Outreach Program (BPAO) is an assistance program that provides benefit options to individuals. A Work Incentive Coordinator will assist with understanding Work Incentives, Medicare and Medicaid health care coverage and other programs and issues to ensure more successful employment and financial outcomes. It is important to know prior to calling if you receive Supplemental Security Disability Income (SSDI) or Social Security Income (SSI). For more information, go to: <http://www.chooseworkttw.net/resource/jsp/SearchByStateAction.jsp>

Attend a free Work Incentive Seminar Event (WISE) online webinar. This webinar sponsored by the Social Security Administration provides information about the Ticket to Work Program or Work Incentives which can help individuals achieve financial independence and make it easier to work and still receive health care and cash benefits. Register for a session at: <http://www.chooseworkttw.net/wise/isp/wise.jsp>

Take the on-line course "*The Changing Faces of Benefits: Knowledge of Successful Employment and Asset Development.*" For more information, go to: <http://www.floridabenefits.org/>

The Florida Center for Inclusive Communities (FCIC) provides information on government benefits and employment in a resource titled, “Everybody Works, Everybody Wins.” For more information, go to: <http://flfcic.fmhi.usf.edu/program-areas/employment.html>

 It is important to be aware of anyone who may be recruiting individuals for the purposes of **human trafficking**. If a job offer sounds too good to be true, it is important to speak with someone in your circle of support.

 Volunteering is an important way to obtain experience in areas that are of interest to you. A good volunteer position can sometimes lead to employment. Be careful, however, that your free labor is not being taken advantage of.



If you would like to identify other activities to help you learn more about employment, list them below:

Part 3 – Restoration of Rights

Has your right to seek or retain employment been taken away by a court?

_____ Yes

_____ No

_____ I am not sure. (Go to Section 2 *Your Legal Status* and your *Documents and Activities Checklist* or ask someone from your circle of support to help you.)

If the right to seek or retain employment has been removed by a court, you cannot legally seek or retain employment.

If you want to have your right to seek or retain employment restored, take the steps that are detailed in the *Restoration of Rights* chapter of this *Workbook*. Restoration of rights is a legal process and must take place through the court system.

If you do not get the right to seek or retain employment, that is okay. Sometimes, it takes time to build up your skills. Continue to do activities that can help you learn more about seeking or retaining a job. Once you are ready, try to get the right to seek or retain employment restored again.

Part 4 – Next Steps

Once your right to employment has been restored, take these steps:

1. Review the activities above and contact agencies or organizations that can assist you with finding employment.
2. If you are receiving services from the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) or you are on the waiting list, contact the agency about funding for available services related to employment. Services may include supported employment coaching, follow-along services for supported employment, transportation for work and paid internships as paths to employment. For more information, go to: www.apd.myflorida.com/customers

Right to Apply for Government Benefits



Part 1 – Definition



The right to apply for government benefits means that you are allowed to complete and sign application forms for benefits.

Entitlements are special types of governmental benefits and are guaranteed to a specific group of people who meet certain requirements. Examples of these are food stamps, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and Medicaid. Each of these benefits was established by law and is based on income. Examples of other governmental benefits include Medicare and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). These benefits are not based on income.

Part 2 – Activities

If you are interested in learning more about applying for government benefits, here are some questions you can answer or activities that might interest you.



Learn about the different government programs available and how to apply for them, if you qualify.



The following websites and publications provide information on government benefits:

The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council provides information on government benefits in the following publications:

- “*Changing Face of Benefits*,” Modules 1-4 and Module 6. To download this free workbook, go to:
http://www.fddc.org/sites/default/files/changing_face_of_benefits_2013.pdf.pdf
- “*Planning Ahead*,” Chapter 4. To download a free copy, go to:
http://www.fddc.org/sites/default/files/PA_Book_final_3-5-12.pdf

Go to www.benefits.gov/, the official benefits website of the U.S. Government. This website will help determine what benefits someone is eligible for and provides information on how to apply.



For benefit payments from the Social Security Administration, you can name an individual or agency to apply, receive and manage the benefits if you need support in managing your money. This person or agency is called a “representative payee.”

Name the individual or agency that you would like to appoint as your representative payee to apply, receive and manage benefits, only if you need help managing your money:



If you already qualify and receive government benefits, it is important to know which benefits you have qualified for and how much money you receive.

List the government benefits you now receive. Write down the amount and how often the payment is received and the name of the agency that gives you the benefit.

Type of Government Benefit	Money or Services Received Per Month	Agency

If you receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), do you receive and manage your benefits or have you named a Representative Payee to do this for you?

_____ I manage my own benefits

_____ I named a Representative Payee: _____(Name)

_____ My guardian advocate or guardian is my Representative Payee.



A Representative Payee should involve you in the financial planning and budgeting of benefits received on your behalf. A Representative Payee is required by the federal government to report how your money is spent.



Do you deposit your benefits in a bank account?

_____ Yes, my benefits are deposited in a bank account.

_____ No, I cash my check.



If your benefits are not deposited in a bank account, ask someone in your circle of support or your Representative Payee to help you learn more about bank accounts. Go to Page 73 for more information on managing money.



Do you have a budget for how you spend the benefits you receive?

_____ Yes, I have a budget.

_____ No, I do not have a budget.



If you do not have a budget for how you spend the benefits you receive, prepare one. You can ask someone in your circle of support or your Representative Payee to help you learn more about budgeting. Go to Page 73 for more information on managing money.



If you would like to identify your own activities to help you learn more about government benefits, list them below:

Part 3 – Restoration of Rights

Has your right to apply for government benefits been taken away by a court?

_____ Yes

_____ No

_____ I am not sure. (Go to Section 2 Your *Legal Status* and your *Documents and Activities Checklist* or ask someone from your circle of support to help you.)

If the right to apply for government benefits has been removed by a court, you cannot personally apply for benefits.

If you want to have your right to apply for government benefits restored, take the steps that are detailed in the *Restoration of Rights* chapter of this *Workbook*. Restoration of rights is a legal process and must take place through the court system.

If you do not get the right to apply for government benefits restored, that is okay. Sometimes, it takes time to build up your skills. Continue to do activities that can help you learn more about government benefits. Once you are ready, try to get the right to apply for government benefits restored again.

Part 4 – Next Steps

Once your right to apply for government benefits has been restored, take these steps:

1. Continue to review the benefits you receive and apply for any that you may need, but have not applied for. Ask someone in your circle of support to look over your benefits with you to see if you have missed any.
2. Continue to review your budget.

Right to Decide Living Arrangements



Part 1 - Definition

The right to decide your living arrangements is the right to choose where you live and with whom you live.

There are many places where you can live such as your family home, an apartment, your own home, a group home, **assisted living facility (ALF)** or an institution, such as a nursing home or **intermediate care facility (ICF)** .

When choosing where you live, you will need to consider many things such as how much money you make or what other financial support is available to you, transportation needs such as a bus or a car, whether you would like a roommate, the best location for you, and what supports you will need.



Part 2 - Activities

If you are interested in learning more about choosing where you want to live, here are some questions you can answer and activities that might interest you.



It is important to know how much money you have available for housing and to have a budget before you look at options for living arrangements. You may have to pay for rent, utilities such as water and electricity, food and other housing related bills, such as cable or internet service.

Create a budget. A budget will help you organize all of your bills and plan how you spend your money. You can include in your budget the time that bills are due, what money you receive, such as paychecks or government benefits, like Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Go to Page 73 for more information on budgets. Keep a copy of your budget in the *Documents and Activities Checklist* chapter of the notebook.



Research on your own or ask someone in your circle of support to help you learn about all the different places where someone can live such as your family home, an apartment, your own home, a group home, assisted living facility (ALF) or an institution (such as a nursing home or intermediate care facility (ICF).



The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council publication titled, "*Housing in Florida*" is a workbook that explains housing options, financing for each option and different housing types. To download a free copy, go to: www.fddc.org/publications

The *Housing in Florida* workbook includes a Personal Assessment Tool which can help you develop a housing plan and choose the best housing option. For a free download of this tool, go to: <http://www.fddc.org/sites/default/files/file/Personal%20Assessment.pdf>



Visit the different housing options in your area once you have determined those that might interest you. If you need help, ask someone in your circle of support to help you locate and make arrangements for these visits.

List below the different housing sites you would like to visit:



After you have created a budget and researched and visited the different types of housing options, think about ways you can help pay for expenses (rent, utilities, food), such as having a roommate who can share the costs. Are there other ways that you can get financial support?

List below what other financial support might be available for housing:



There may be sources of financial support available from government agencies.

Section 8 of the Housing Act is a rental assistance program that provides funds for rent or purchase of a home to low-income individuals who qualify. For more information, go to:

- www.needhelppayingbills.com/html/section_8_housing_florida.html
- www.gosection8.com/Section-8-rental-housing-in-Florida/

Florida's housing assistance programs are listed with links at www.myflorida.com (type in "housing" in search box).



There are other things to consider when deciding your living arrangements and the questions below will help you get started with identifying support you may need.

- *Do I think I will be able to live alone?*
- *Do I need someone to help with transportation?*
- *Do I need someone to help prepare meals?*
- *Do I need someone to help maintain my home, such as housekeeping or lawn service?*

Make a list of other supports or services you may need:



It is important to learn about what to do in the event of a disaster such as a fire, flood or hurricane. You should also learn how to prepare your home should a disaster happen, and to develop an emergency contact list. Check the boxes when you have completed the activities below.

- Create a disaster plan for the place you currently live. This could be locating fire extinguishers in your home, where to go in the case of a bad storm or tornado that is away from windows, or who you should call in an emergency. You should also decide where to meet up with family or someone in your circle of support should you have to leave your home during or after a disaster.
- Create an emergency contact list. Your contact list can include important community numbers, such as the police, the fire department, and your doctors. Include a copy of this list in the *Documents and Activities Checklist* chapter. Give a copy of this list to someone in your circle of support.



The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council's publication titled, "*Disaster Ready*," provides information about disaster planning. To download a free copy, go to: www.fddc.org/publications



If you would like to identify other activities to help you learn more about living arrangements, list them below:

Part 3 – Restoration of Rights

Has the right to decide your living arrangements been taken away by a court?

_____ Yes

_____ No

_____ I am not sure. (Go to Section 2 *Your Legal Status* and your *Documents and Activities Checklist* or ask someone from your circle of support to help you.)

If the right to decide your living arrangements has been removed by a court, you cannot choose where you want to live.

If you want to have the right to decide your living arrangements restored, take the steps that are detailed in the *Restoration of Rights* chapter of this *Workbook*. Restoration of rights is a legal process and must take place through the court system.

If you do not get the right to decide your living arrangements restored, that is okay. Sometimes, it takes time to build up your skills. Continue to do activities that can help you learn more about living arrangements. Once you are ready, try to get the right to decide your living arrangements restored again.

Part 4 – Next Steps

Once your right to choose where you live has been restored, take these steps:

1. Determine from the activities above or other activities you have done if the place you are living is the best place for you.
 - If you want to stay where you are currently living, you might want to be more active in making decisions. You can still complete the activities listed in Part 2 in case you decide to change your living arrangements in the future.
 - If you want to find a new place to live, it is important that you visit the various places you are considering moving to, as well as talk with others currently living in those places. Don't forget that for most people the amount of money they have available limits the choice.
 - if you decide to change your living arrangements, do not move until you have all the supports in place that you have identified you need.
 - If you are not sure, that is okay! Making a choice about where you live is a big decision. You might want to do some activities to help you decide if you want to move or stay at the place you live now.
2. Remember, it is important to always update your budget, and reevaluate your supports and any services you need in the event you decide to change your living arrangements.

Right to Decide Medical and Mental Health Treatments



Part 1 – Definition



Medical and mental health decisions include the right to choose a doctor, dentist or mental health professional, to choose to be treated for a disease, injury, or other problem, to choose the kind of treatment you prefer, to go to another doctor or mental health professional for a “second opinion;” or to receive or purchase health insurance.

Part 2 - Activities

If you are interested in learning more about the right to decide medical and mental health treatments, here are some questions you can answer and activities that might interest you.

It is important to take charge of your health and well-being and get involved in your own health care as soon as is possible. When you begin to manage your own health care, there are some things you can do to become more independent.



Maintaining good health is the best way to stay well and to live a healthy lifestyle. You will not need to visit doctors and mental health professionals as often when maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

- Develop good habits, such as eating healthy food and getting as much exercise as you can.
- Avoid smoking cigarettes, using alcohol and other non-prescription drugs.
- Talk to someone in your circle of support or health professionals about how to develop routines that promote good health.

List some things you might change that could lead to a healthier lifestyle:



The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council offers videos, web-based courses and manuals related to health care. These Health Care resources are free of charge. For more information, go to: <http://www.fddc.org/publications>

The Florida Center for Inclusive Communities has a publication titled, “*Being A Healthy Adult: How to Advocate for your Health and Health Care.*” This publication includes information on healthy habits. To download a free copy, go to: <http://www.floridahats.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/TransitiontoAdultHealthcare-EN-complete.pdf>

Floridahealth.gov provides an on-line booklet titled, “*Disability and Health: A Guide for Floridians,*” along with other information and videos about the Disability and Health Program. For more information, go to: <http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/people-with-disabilities/disability-and-health-program/index.html>

The Center for Disease Control has information on healthy living habits for persons with disabilities. For more information, go to: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/healthyliving.html>



Health insurance helps pay for all or part of our medical bills. If you need help, ask someone in your circle of support to help you determine what health insurance coverage you may already have or help you identify and apply for the best medical insurance you can qualify for and afford.

List your current health insurance coverage. Ask someone in your circle of support to discuss the health insurance coverage you currently have, and other options that may be available.



You may be eligible for government-supported insurance, like Medicare, Medicaid, or a medical subsidy under the Affordable Care Act. Any person may apply to purchase private health insurance as well.



The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has an interactive website for the Health Insurance Marketplace that explains coverage options that are now available to you through the Affordable Care Act of 2010.

- You can apply online for private insurance coverage at the Health Insurance Marketplace. Go to: www.healthcare.gov
- You can apply online to see if you qualify for free or low-cost coverage such as Medicaid to persons with limited income. Go to: www.healthcare.gov

The National Disability Navigator Resource Collaborative website is designed specifically

to assist people with disabilities identify insurance coverage options. If you want to talk to someone about your options or need help with your application, trained navigators can assist you. For a list of navigators near you, go to <https://localhelp.healthcare.gov>

Florida Health and Transitional Services has a publication titled, "*Just the Facts: The 411 on Health Care.*" For a free copy, go to: http://www.floridahats.org/?page_id=627



It is important that you have your medical records and current medical information with you every time you visit a health care professional or health care facility.

Create a "Medical Diary" which can also be referred to as a "Health Passport." Ask someone in your circle of support to help you if you need it. Gather the following information and put in a separate three-ringed notebook. Some of this information can be typed or handwritten on paper and inserted into your Medical Diary notebook.

- Your height, weight, and blood type
- A copy of your health insurance card
- A list of your disabilities and what they mean to you and what accommodations you may need
- A list of your doctors including their phone numbers
- A list of all your medications, dosage and why you are taking each one
- A list of medications you are allergic to
- A list of your surgeries and the date when each occurred
- A list of any other important procedures, what they were for, and when they occurred
- Copies of all lab test results and results of procedures
- Other medical documentation that is important
- Any legal health care directives such as Health Care Surrogate, Living Will, or Organ Donation



Here are additional resources that you can use to help you gather your medical information:

- Florida Center for Inclusive Communities developed a sample form to get you started creating your own medical history. For this form, go to: http://flfcic.fmhi.usf.edu/docs/FCIC_Health_Passport_Form_Typeable_English.pdf
- Florida Developmental Disabilities Council's publication, "*Planning Ahead*," Section D, pp 98-103, includes health records planning. Go to: www.fddc.org/about/planning-ahead
- Florida Health and Transitional Services (FloridaHATS.org) is a website designed to assist people transitioning from pediatric to adult health care by providing training and other important medical information. To download medical records forms, go to: <http://www.floridahats.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/TransitiontoAdultHealthcare-EN-complete.pdf>
- Download the "My Medical" app (or any other medical records app) to keep all your medical records on your computer or tablet.



Your medical information cannot be shared with anyone unless you give your permission. This is known as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Wherever you receive healthcare treatment, you will be asked to sign a form asking if you want to share your medical information with anyone.

List the individuals who you might want to have access to your medical information:



The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services provides information on your health care privacy rights. For more information, go to: <http://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-individuals/guidance-materials-for-consumers/index.html>



Communicating clearly is an important skill. Good communication skills help you to take greater control over your health decisions when:

- Telling someone about your diagnosis or disability and how it affects you
- Expressing your need to see a doctor
- Talking to the doctor
- Asking questions
- Scheduling appointments
- Arranging transportation

- Filling prescriptions at the pharmacy
 - Expressing your ability to take medications on your own
 - Expressing your desire to seek another opinion
- Practice communication skills by discussing and role-playing the situations in this activity. Ask someone in your circle of support to help you.

You do not feel well and you need to be able to communicate why you think you need to see a doctor or mental health professional. Tell someone:

- *I am in pain.* Explain where the pain is located and why you need to see a doctor.
- *I feel uncomfortable.* Explain some of the things you are experiencing that you are concerned about and why you need to see a doctor.
- *I have no appetite.* Explain how many days you have not eaten and why you need to see a doctor.

Your doctor writes a prescription for a drug. These are some questions you can ask the doctor:

- *What is the name of the drug you are prescribing?*
- *Why are you prescribing this drug?*
- *What is the dosage I need to take and how often?*
- *How will the drug help me?*
- *How long will it take for the drug to work?*
- *What are the possible side effects?*
- *What are the risks?*

Your doctor recommends that you have a special test or procedure. These are some questions you can ask the doctor:

- *What is the name of the test or procedure?*
- *Why are you ordering the test or procedure?*
- *When will I get the results?*
- *What are the risks?*

- List other ways you can practice communication skills:



It is important to begin to participate in managing your own medical appointments and visits. As you become more independent, you may be able to do this on your own.

Schedule your doctor's appointments. The next time you need to see a doctor, ask someone to assist you while you set up the appointment if you need help. Create a list of doctor's appointments you have assisted with setting up or scheduling yourself.

Doctor	Appointment Date



Here are other things to consider when managing your appointments and visits:

- How will you get to the appointment? Know what transportation is available, if you need it.
- You will be asked for an emergency contact. Decide who you want to be contacted in case of an emergency while in the doctor's office.
- If someone is assisting you with the visit, if possible, spend time alone with your doctor during visits so you get to know each other.
- Make a list of questions to ask your doctor before the visit. Ask someone to help you if you need it.

Know what medications you are taking and why you are taking them. It is important to take your medications as prescribed by your doctor and to refill them, when necessary.

Learn how to reorder your medications and make sure you do not run out. Ask someone in your circle of support to assist you with this activity if you need help. Keep a list of medications you have reordered.

Medication	Reorder Date



If you would like to identify other activities to help you learn more about making your own medical and mental health decisions, list them below:

Part 3– Restoration of Rights

Has the right to make medical and mental health decisions been taken away by a court?

_____ Yes

_____ No

_____ I am not sure. (Go to Section 2 Your *Legal Status* and your *Documents and Activities Checklist* or ask someone from your circle of support to help you.)

If the right to make your own medical and mental health decisions has been removed by a court, you cannot legally make decisions about medical and mental health treatments.

If you want to have the right to make your own medical and mental health decisions restored, take the steps that are detailed in the *Restoration of Rights* chapter of this *Workbook*. Restoration of rights is a legal process and must take place through the court system.

If you do not get the right to make your own medical and mental health decisions restored, that is okay. Sometimes, it takes time to build up your skills. Continue to do activities that can help you learn more about managing your medical and mental health decisions. Once you are ready, try to get the right to make your own medical and mental health decisions restored again.

Part 4 – Next Steps

Once the right to make decisions about your medical and mental health treatments has been restored, here are some things to consider:

1. Continue to maintain a healthy lifestyle.
2. It is important to keep your medical records such as your medical diary up to date. If there are any changes to any of the information, make sure those changes are made.

3. Keep all doctor's appointments and other appointments for medical procedures or treatments.
4. Know what medications you are taking and why. Continue to manage your prescriptions.
5. Think about any changes you might want to make about sharing your medical information with other persons and your emergency contacts.
6. Be knowledgeable about your health insurance options. Look at your coverage each year to make sure you are making any necessary changes.

 The most important person to decide about your medical treatment is YOU. Doctors do not have the right to touch or treat you without your permission, and you should seek out all the information you can to make the best decisions.

Right to Manage Money and Property



Part 1 – Definition

BUDGET



Managing money and property is the right to make decisions about how to spend or save money received from a job, government benefits, gifts, or other sources.

Managing money and property includes making decisions about anything a person owns that has value, including personal belongings.

Part 2 - Activities

If you are interested in learning more about managing your money and property, here are some questions you can answer and activities that might interest you.



Money is an important part of our lives. It determines the things we can do in life. Managing your money is a big step toward being more independent.

You should know how much money you receive every month, which is called your “income,” and how you spend your money each month, which is called your “expenses.” If you need assistance, ask someone in your circle of support to help you gather this information so you can complete the activities below.

- List how much money (income) you receive each month and where it comes from. Remember to include money you receive from a job, government benefits, **trusts**, or gifts.

Income Received From:	Amount Received Per Month

- List how you spend your money each month (expenses). If you are not sure how you spend your money, keep all receipts for bills and purchases for a few months. This will help you put the expenses in different categories and see how much money you spend in each one. Create your own categories, if necessary.

EXPENSES (These are examples of expenses you may have)	AMOUNT SPENT
Household Expenses:	
Rent or Mortgage Payment	
Utilities	
Cable TV	
Insurance for home or furnishings	
General Expenses:	
Food and Snacks	
Cell Phone	
Transportation/Gas	
Entertainment (video games, movies, bowling)	
Clothes	
Haircuts	
Health Insurance	

- Prepare a monthly budget using your lists of income and expenses. This budget will show what you think your income and expenses will be each month. It is important to keep all your receipts so that you can determine what you actually spent. Over time, you may need to make adjustments to your budget.

INCOME	BUDGET AMOUNT	ACTUAL AMOUNT
EXPENSES:		
Household Expenses:		
Rent or Mortgage Payment		
Utilities		
Cable TV		
Insurance		
General Expenses:		
Food and Snacks		
Cell Phone		
Transportation/Gas		
Entertainment		
Clothes		
Haircuts		
Health Insurance		

 Remember, if you have an expense that only happens once a year, you need to budget for that too. For example, if you own a home, you may pay property taxes and home insurance yearly.



“Money Smart” (developed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation) is a financial educational tool that introduces basic personal financial management and is available free of charge.

It has four versions of instructions:

1. An instructor-led curriculum for adults on CD-ROM available in nine languages and print versions for the visually impaired;
2. An instructor-led curriculum for young adults between the ages of 12-20 on CD-ROM: “*Money Smart for Young Adults*”;
3. A self-paced Computer-Based Instruction (CBI) format online for ages 13 and over in English and Spanish; and
4. A portable audio (MP3) version, Money Smart Podcast Network.

For more information about these courses, go to:
<https://www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/moneysmart/>

The Advisory Council on Financial Literacy has designed a course to assist children and adults to learn about money management at various stages in life. The course is titled “*Money as You Grow*” and is available at no charge. For more information, go to:
<http://moneyasyougrow.org/>



Being responsible for the payment of your bills is an important part of managing your money and property.

Do you pay your own bills?

_____ YES, I pay my own bills.

_____ NO, someone else pays my bills.

_____ I am not sure (Go to Section 2 *Your Legal Status* to help you answer this question).

If someone is paying your bills for you, ask that person to talk to you about what those bills are, and if you can pay the bills yourself for a few months.



Banks accounts, such as checking and savings accounts, are a good way to keep track of your money and show how you are managing your money each month.

Do you have a bank account?

_____ YES, I have a bank account. If the answer is yes, answer the following questions:

Does someone help you manage this account?

Yes (Name: _____)

No

Does someone write checks for you?

Yes (Name: _____)

No

Does someone help you balance your account?

Yes (Name: _____)

No

_____ NO, I do not have any type of bank account. Consider asking someone to help you set up a checking account at your local bank. Discuss with someone in your circle of support the ways to manage a bank account, such as:

- a co-signor to help you manage this account (the co-signer should not have any ownership of the money in your account, but is there to help you out if you cannot write a check);
- a joint account that has two or more people depositing and writing checks;
- direct deposit/direct payment which means deposits can be made directly to a bank account. If you receive SSI or SSDI, Social Security prefers this method because it is simple, safe and secure;
- assigning someone as **power of attorney** (POA) or durable power of attorney (DPOA) which grants permission and authority to the person to officially act for you on the account;
- internet/online banking; or
- using a bank debit card (ATM).

- Discuss whether or not to open a savings account for emergencies. If you receive any governmental benefits, discuss if there is a limit to the amount you can save. Go to the Right to Apply for Government Benefits on Page 55 for more information.

 If you manage your accounts, it is your responsibility to make sure you keep records of your account activity and keep track of the balance in every account.



Managing your property includes anything you own that has value (is worth money). It is important to know what property you own, and how to protect it.

- Make a list of everything you own that has value. These items of value can be things like a cell phone, computer, television, camera or other personal items (such as furniture, etc.).

- Sometimes it is important to have insurance for items of value. Do you have insurance for anything you own? Consider asking someone in your circle of support about insurance you might need.

If you have insurance on any property you own, list it below:



If you would like to identify other activities to help you learn more about managing your money and property, list them below:

Part 3 – Restoration of Rights

Has the right to manage your money and property been taken away by a court?

_____ Yes

_____ No

_____ I am not sure. (Go to Section 2 *Your Legal Status* and your *Documents and Activities Checklist* or ask someone from your circle of support to help you.)

If the right to manage your money and property has been removed by a court, you cannot legally manage your money and property.

If you want to have the right to manage your money and property restored, take the steps that are detailed in the *Restoration of Rights* chapter of this *Workbook*. Restoration of rights is a legal process and must take place through the court system.

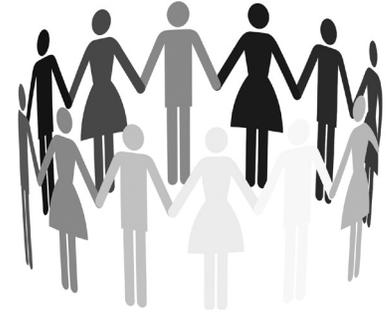
If you do not get the right to manage your money and property restored, that is okay. Sometimes, it takes time to build up your skills. Continue to do activities that can help you learn more about managing money and property. Once you are ready, try to get the right to manage your money and property restored again.

Part 4 – Next Steps

Once your right to manage money and property has been restored, take these steps:

1. Continue to keep the lists that you created in the activities up to date.
2. Continue to keep all receipts for items purchased to make sure you are staying within your budget.
3. Revise your budget as your income or expenses change.
4. Keep all the records for your bills in one place.
5. If you have not set up a checking account or savings account, consider asking someone you trust to help you set up these accounts. Consider setting up online bill pay or automatic deposits and withdrawals to help you manage your money and avoid late fees.
6. If you have any bank accounts, continue to balance your accounts so you can keep track of your money.
7. Talk with someone you trust about saving money for emergencies or vacations.
8. Periodically review your list of property and keep it up to date.

Right to Decide Social Aspects of Life



Part 1 – Definition



We all lead more productive and happier lives if we interact with others.

Social skills are all about good communication: listening, talking, asking questions, and being able to express yourself to the best of your abilities.

Part 2 - Activities

If you are interested in learning more about how to manage your social life, here are some questions you can answer and some activities that might interest you.



Communicating is a way for you to express yourself and to connect with others. It is important to learn how to communicate your values and ideas, to understand others' differences, and to solve problems. It is important to be able to express yourself clearly and to be a good listener.

Practice communication skills by discussing and role-playing the situations in this activity. Ask someone in your circle of support to help you.

When you are listening to another person, here are some things you can do:

- Make eye contact to show you are listening to him or her.
- Nod your head to show you are understanding, or tell the person in different words what you think he or she meant.
- Ask questions if you do not understand what the person is saying.

When you are speaking to another person, here are some things you can do:

- Be as clear as you can.
- Express your feelings: are you happy, sad, angry, or excited?
- Try to understand how you feel and put those feelings into words or signs so that other people can understand you better.
- Let others know what you need from them, or when people are doing things you don't like. Use words to say "*I need you to do this for me...*" or "*I need you to stop doing something.*" or "*I don't understand why you do this when I do or say something.*"



It is important to have friends to share your thoughts, feelings, and experiences with. Good friends brighten up your life, but harmful friends can be a burden or a problem. Always treat others the way you want to be treated yourself. And making friends takes time and effort. If you want to have good friends, you need to make it a priority. Set time aside to meet with people you like and find new people, too.

- List the friends you like to spend time with:

- Ask yourself these questions when you are making friends or about your current friends. Ask someone in your circle of support to discuss these with you:

When you are making friends, ask yourself these questions:

- *Does this person make me feel good?*
- *Is this person happy to see me?*
- *Do we care about each other's feelings?*

If the person does not make you feel good or happy, and does not respect your feelings, it is probably not someone you want as a friend.

Does your friend care about you and is supportive of you and your goals?
Ask yourself these questions:

- Does this person understand what is important to me?
- Does the person encourage me to accomplish the things I want to do?
- Is this person excited for me when something good happens to me?

If you have concerns about how you are being treated by a friend, discuss with someone in your circle of support.



There are some things you should be aware of when choosing the people you want to spend time with. Good friends will take care of you and try to protect you from harm. Just as you will look out for the people you like, your friends should look out for you. It is important to pick your friends wisely. Sometimes, we do not always know someone's true character, so there are certain dangers to be aware of when socializing with others:

- Talk to someone in your circle of support about sexual and physical abuse. When you have close friends and relatives, touching and physical contact – like hugging and kissing – are often an important part of a good relationship. However, here are some things to keep in mind:
 - Know the difference between “good touching” and “bad touching.”
 - If someone touches you and you don't feel good or safe, you should stop the person and ask what they are doing.
 - If a person continues to touch you when you do not want them to, you should immediately find an adult that you trust. Tell them what is happening and why you feel uncomfortable or threatened.

Remember, if you feel that someone is touching you in a bad way, it is not your fault. Tell someone about it.

- Talk to someone in your circle of support about drug or alcohol abuse. There are some drugs that you can buy without permission from your doctor in a drug store, like aspirin or Tylenol, as well as medications your doctor tells you to take. However, there are some drugs that can be harmful to you. Here are some things to think about when someone offers you drugs (marijuana, cocaine, cigarettes) or alcohol (beer, wine, liquor) you are not sure you should take:
 - ☹ You can become very sick
 - ☹ You can get used to it and it will be hard to give up.
 - ☹ It may make you act or do things you do not have control over and create social problems.

- ☹️ Some medications you are taking may react badly with alcohol and other drugs. Be sure to ask your doctor about this.

Remember to ask for medical help if you feel you have a drug or alcohol problem.



Go to Page 16 for more information about protecting yourself against abuse, neglect and exploitation.



It is important to be involved in your community. You can participate in entertainment opportunities (such as going to the movies or a concert). Also, your community has clubs or organizations that appeal to different people and different tastes (such as exercise classes, sports clubs, Special Olympics, or crafting classes). You can also be involved in your community by volunteering (such as your local animal shelter or food bank).

- Look in the newspaper or online to find clubs you might want to join. You can also ask others who have similar interests what clubs or organizations they belong to. When you find a club or organization you think you might like, these are some questions you can ask:

- *How can I join the club?*
- *Does it cost money or not?*
- *How often does it meet?*
- *Where are the meetings?*
- *How will I get there?*
- *Will I need assistance to participate?*
- *Can I attend a couple of meetings to see if I feel welcome?*

- List clubs, organizations and volunteer opportunities that are of interest to you:

Keep a diary of your social activities in the *Documents and Activities Checklist* chapter and include the following information:

1. List entertainment or social activities (movies, parties, concerts) you attended.
 - List the dates and activities
 - List any individuals who attended with you
2. List club or organization meetings or events you attended.
 - List the dates and name of the clubs or organizations

Part 3 – Restoration of Rights

Has the right to decide social aspects of your life been taken away by a court?

_____ Yes

_____ No

_____ I am not sure. (Go to Section 2 *Your Legal Status* and your *Documents and Activities Checklist* or ask someone from your circle of support to help you.)

If the right to decide social aspects of your life has been removed by a court, you cannot make decisions about your social life.

If you want to have the right to decide social aspects of your life restored, take the steps that are detailed in the *Restoration of Rights* chapter of this *Workbook*. Restoration of rights is a legal process and must take place through the court system.

If you do not get the right to decide social aspects of your life restored, that is okay. Sometimes, it takes time to build up your skills. Continue to do activities that can help you learn more about managing your social life. Once you are ready, try to get the right to decide social aspects of your life restored again.

Part 4 – Next Steps

Once your right to manage your social life has been restored, here are some steps you can take:

1. Now you are ready to explore ideas about how to be a part of your community.
2. Join clubs that you are interested in becoming a member.
3. Plan social events or outings with your friends.

Right to Contract



Part 1 – Definition

A contract is an agreement in which someone offers you something and you accept the offer. A contract can be an oral or written agreement.

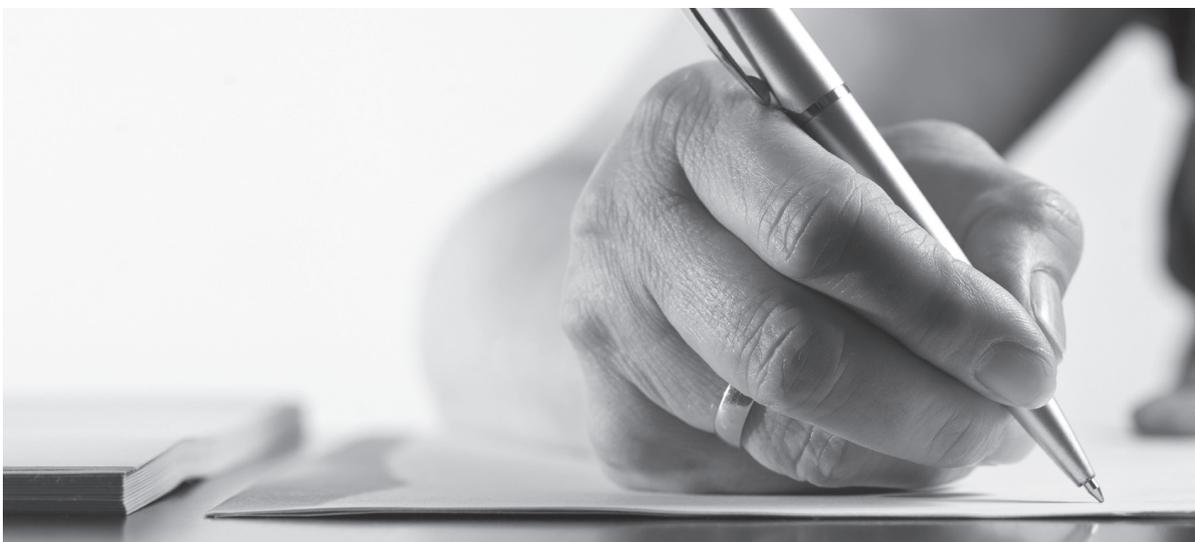
For example, an oral contract is agreeing to mow someone's lawn and the person agreeing to pay you.

Your neighbors offers to pay you \$25 if you will mow their lawn every week and you agree to do it. If you do not mow their lawn, you will not be paid the \$25.

However, contracts are most commonly a written agreement and are used for many things we do every day, such as buying a cell phone or leasing an apartment.

If you have a cell phone (and it is not prepaid), either you or someone else signed a contract for it. The company offered to provide you with service for \$40 per month and you accepted that offer, signed the contract and agreed to pay \$40 each month. The contract will tell you when you can begin to use your cell phone and how much you will pay the company every month and for how long. The contract will also tell you what happens if you do not pay that money including late fees, penalties or service cut off.

Usually there are legal consequences if you do not do what you promised to do in a contract. It can cost you money, affect your ability to contract in the future or you can lose property.



Part 2 - Activities

If you are interested in learning more about contracts, here are some questions you can answer and activities that might interest you.



List all the things in your life now that are covered by a written contract (such as cell phone or apartment lease):



If you have any contracts, who signs your contracts now?

- _____ I sign my own contracts
- _____ Guardian or Guardian Advocate
- _____ Other Representative _____ (Name)

Choose one of your contracts (or if you do not have a contract, look at the sample contract) and answer these questions:

1. This contract is between _____
and _____
(Who made the offer and who accepted the offer?)
2. What is the contract for?

3. Do I have to pay money or promise to do something else?

4. How much money do I have to pay and how often?

5. What happens if I do not pay on time?

6. When does the contract begin?

7. When does the contract end?

8. What are some of the responsibilities under the contract?

Sample House Rental Contract

This contract is an agreement between _____ (your name here) _____, the lessee (who will be renting the house), from JOHN AND MARY JONES, the lessor (who owns the house being rented). The rental will begin on January 1, 2016, and will end on December 31, 2016.

The rent for this house will be \$895.00. This amount must be paid monthly and due on the first of every month. Late payments will incur a fee of \$15.00. A deposit in the amount of \$895.00 will be held for the duration of the lease and will be returned to the renter within one month after the keys are surrendered.

The major rules regarding this house are as follows:

1. No smoking
2. One pet under 30 pounds is allowed.
3. _____
4. _____

By signing this agreement, the renter acknowledges that a complete list of these rules has been provided to him or her, and that the renter has read and understood these rules.

The owner/lessor has a right to enter the house with an advanced notice of 24 hours for any reason. In an emergency, owner may violate this right and enter immediately. Emergencies include those instances in which the property is in immediate danger, such as from a fire or flood.

The renter/lessee will make his or her best effort to keep the house in good condition. No major alterations will be made to the house without prior discussion with the owner. This includes painting, changes to the lawn, and installation of any permanent changes. All maintenance for the house will be taken care of by the owner, and the tenant must notify the owner immediately of maintenance required.

Utilities will be the responsibility of the renter/lessee. The renter will set up and shut down all utilities at the end of the lease. This includes water, electric, and gas. Trash services is provided by ABC WASTE MANAGEMENT and will be paid by the tenant.

Signing this agreement implies full understanding of the above conditions and the rental agreement. This agreement cannot be altered without full informed consent in writing provided by both parties. In certain cases of violation, the tenant may be required to vacate without appeal.

_____ (Date)
Your Name, Renter/Lessee

_____ (Date)
John Jones, Owner/Lessor

_____ (Date)
Mary Jones, Owner/Lessor



If you have more than one contract, answer the questions in the previous activity for each one and place your answers in the *Documents and Activities Checklist* chapter.



DO NOT SIGN A CONTRACT WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES. You should not sign a contract until someone you trust has read it first. There is no need to rush into a contract. You need to feel comfortable with what you are agreeing to do before committing to do it.



Remember, if the offer sounds too good to be true, it may not be true! For example, if products or services are offered for free, talk to someone you trust first before agreeing to sign a contract, or before giving someone your bank account or credit card information.



The Department of Agriculture, Consumer Services, is a clearinghouse for consumer information, protection and complaints. For more information, go to: <http://www.freshfromflorida.com/Divisions-Offices/Consumer-Services/Consumer-Resources-Publications>

Some of the publications include:

- Florida's Landlord/Tenant Law
- Health Studios
- Recognize & Avoid Telemarketing Fraud
- Request Free Consumer Publications Online

The Florida Attorney General's website addresses several different topics related to consumer protection. To access these topics, go to: myfloridalegal.com and type "consumer protection" in the search function on the home page (upper right). Information on the following topics is provided:

- What Florida Law Provides
- Protecting Yourself from Consumer Fraud
- How to File a Complaint or Check on a Business
- Consumer Alerts
- Lemon Law (has to do with motor vehicles)

The Florida Bar's website provides information for the public about:

- Contracts. Go to www.floridabar.org and in the search field type "contracts" then click on "Consumer Tip: Legal and Binding Contracts."
- Consumer Protection. Go to www.floridabar.org and click on "For the Public" at the top of the page, then click on "Consumer Information."



If you would like to identify other activities to help you learn more about contracts, list them below:

Part 3 – Restoration of Rights

Has the right to contract been taken away by a court?

_____ Yes

_____ No

_____ I am not sure. (Go to Section 2 *Your Legal Status* and your *Documents and Activities Checklist* or ask someone from your circle of support to help you.)

If the right to contract has been removed by a court, you cannot legally enter into a contract.

If you want to have the right to contract restored, take the steps that are detailed in the *Restoration of Rights* chapter of this *Workbook*. Restoration of rights is a legal process and must take place through the court system.

If you do not get the right to contract restored, that is okay. Sometimes, it takes time to build up your skills. Continue to do activities that can help you learn more about contracts. Once you are ready, try to get the right to contract restored again.

Part 4 – Next Steps

Once your right to contract has been restored, take these steps:

1. Continue to get help from someone in your circle of support to go over contracts so you understand what you are agreeing to before you sign it.
2. Use the following checklist each time you are ready to sign a contract.
 - ___ I read the contract and I understand what I read.
 - ___ I gave a copy of the contract to someone I trust to read it and he or she explained the contract to me.
 - ___ I understand what is promised in the written contract.
 - ___ If I have to pay money, I understand how much I pay, how long I have to pay, late fee charges, cancellation fees or any other charges.
 - ___ I know how to get out of this contract if I want to cancel it.
 - ___ I know how to return something I bought with this contract.
3. Keep copies of all your contracts in the *Documents and Activities Checklist* chapter so you can refer to them when needed.

Right to Sue and Defend Lawsuits



Part 1 – Definition

The right to sue or defend a lawsuit means you can take someone to court or you can defend yourself if someone else brings a lawsuit against you. This right applies to civil lawsuits, not criminal lawsuits.

People bring civil lawsuits when someone has done something wrong to them and they want a court to make the person pay for the damage done.

Most people hire an attorney to represent them in a lawsuit.

Examples of civil lawsuits are: car accidents, mortgage foreclosures, evictions, nursing home negligence, fees, inadequate conditions in facilities, **American with Disabilities Act (ADA)** compliance.



Part 2 - Activities

If you are interested in learning more about how to sue someone or how to defend yourself in a lawsuit, here are some questions you can answer or activities that might interest you.



Learn about different types of civil lawsuits by researching online or at your local library.



The Florida Bar website has information on civil lawsuits. Go to: www.floridabar.org and type in “civil lawsuit” in the search bar. Click on the pamphlet, “*A Civil Case or a Criminal Case.*”



Finding an attorney who specializes in civil trial lawsuits is important.

List attorneys in your area you have identified:



How to locate an attorney:

- Ask someone you know to recommend an attorney.
- Look for attorneys in your area online or look in the phone book under “Attorneys, Civil Trial.”
- Call the Florida Bar Lawyer Referral Service (800-342-8011) or go to the Florida Bar website: <http://www.floridabar.org/lawyerreferral>
- Call your local Legal Aid or Legal Services office, or to the Florida Legal Services website at www.floridalegal.org and click on Lawyer Referral Service Online-Available 24/7.
- Your local bar association may maintain a listing of attorneys who provide pro bono legal services. Pro bono means that an attorney has agreed to volunteer his or her services for free. For more information, go to: www.FloridaLawHelp.org



Be prepared if you know someone is going to sue you. You will receive a hand-delivered or mailed copy of the papers the person filed with the court.

List someone in your circle of support who can help you identify legal papers when you receive them:



There are strict deadlines to follow when you are involved in a lawsuit or you want to sue someone.

- Understand that legal papers often have very strict deadlines so it is important to immediately find a lawyer to help you answer the lawsuit.
- If someone does something wrong to you and you want to sue them, there are strict deadlines for when you can file the lawsuit. It is important to find a lawyer to help you file a lawsuit in a timely manner.

- List someone in your circle of support who can help you identify and understand the deadlines when you are involved in a lawsuit or when you want to file a lawsuit.

- How would you get the lawsuit process started?



If someone threatens you with a lawsuit, ask someone in your circle of support to help you understand the threat so you do not feel intimidated.



If you would like to identify other activities to help you learn more about your right to sue or defend lawsuits, list them below:

Part 3 – Restoration of Rights

Has the right to sue or defend lawsuits been taken away by a court?

_____ Yes

_____ No

_____ I am not sure. (Go to Section 2 *Your Legal Status* and your *Documents and Activities Checklist* or ask someone from your circle of support to help you.)

If the right to sue or defend lawsuits has been removed by a court, you cannot legally sue or defend lawsuits.

If you want to have the right to sue or defend lawsuits restored, take the steps that are detailed in the *Restoration of Rights* chapter of this *Workbook*. Restoration of rights is a legal process and must take place through the court system.

If you do not get the right to sue or defend lawsuits restored, that is okay. Sometimes, it takes time to build up your skills. Continue to do activities that can help you learn more about lawsuits. Once you are ready, try to get the right to sue and defend lawsuits restored again.

Part 4 – Next Steps

Once your right to sue or defend lawsuits has been restored, take these steps:

1. Have the name and phone number of the attorney you would call ready when you need it.
2. Make sure you check your mail every day and read each piece carefully so that you will not miss important deadlines.

Restoration of Rights

The Legal Process in Florida

If a court has removed any of your rights under guardian advocacy or guardianship, there is a legal process to follow when you ask a court to restore one or more of those rights.

If you have completed activities in one or more of the civil rights in the previous section and you feel confident you have gained the ability to make your own decisions, the next step would be to ask the court to give you the right or rights back.

For example, the court may have taken away your right to manage your money and property. Since that happened, you believe that you have learned more about your finances and identified and developed relationships with people you trust who have helped you develop your abilities in this area.

Therefore, you would ask the court to reexamine your ability to perform this right.

Here is a list of the steps for guardian advocacy and guardianship.

Guardian Advocacy

1. File a petition with the court called a “Suggestion of Restoration of Rights.” You do not need an attorney to file a Suggestion of Restoration of Rights. Anyone, including you, may file a Suggestion of Restoration of Rights with the court where the guardian advocacy was filed.

A Suggestion of Restoration of Rights can be a simple, signed note or letter with your contact information requesting restoration or can include the following:

- the case number (this can be found on your Letters of Guardian Advocacy);
- the name of each right requested to be restored; and
- evidence of your increased abilities for each right requested to be restored (it is a good idea to include a signed statement from a doctor or other medical provider that says you should get your right or rights restored); or
- a statement of good faith explaining why you can now exercise that right without a guardian advocate.

Once the clerk of the court receives the Suggestion of Restoration of Rights, the clerk will send a notice to all interested persons and the judge will appoint an attorney if you have not hired one.

2. Meet with your attorney. You may decide to hire an attorney to file the Suggestion of Restoration of Rights, or the court will appoint one to represent you. Either way, it is important for you to meet with your attorney.
 - You can tell your attorney anything you want because what you tell the attorney is confidential (an attorney cannot share with anyone what you tell them).
 - Tell the attorney why you want your right or rights back. Show your papers and documentation of activities you have completed about the rights – even this *Workbook!* Your goal is to first show your attorney that you can make your own decisions, and then show the court that you can.

3. Court Action:
 - If your Suggestion of Restoration of Rights did include evidence, the judge will review the evidence and either restore the rights requested, or set a hearing to review additional evidence and testimony.
 - If your Suggestion of Restoration of Rights did not include any evidence that supports your increased abilities, the judge will set a hearing to review evidence and hear testimony. Your attorney will help you identify and gather this evidence.
 - If any interested person objects to your Suggestion of Restoration, the judge will schedule a hearing to review evidence and hear testimony.
 - Depending on the judge’s decision after review of evidence or after a hearing, the judge will enter an order denying your Suggestion or will enter an order restoring the right or rights requested to be restored.

Guardianship

1. File a petition with the court called a “Suggestion of Capacity.” You do not need an attorney to file a Suggestion of Capacity. Anyone, including you, may file a Suggestion of Capacity where the guardianship was filed. The suggestion can be in the form of a letter.

A Suggestion of Capacity can be a simple, signed note or letter with your contact information requesting restoration or can include the following:

- the case number (this can be found on your Letters of Guardianship);
- the name of each right requested to be restored; and
- a statement that you are currently capable of exercising each right listed.

Once the clerk of the court receives the Suggestion of Capacity, the clerk will send a notice to all interested persons about the Suggestion of Capacity. The judge will appoint an attorney if you have not hired one. The judge will also appoint a physician to examine you. The physician will talk to you to see if you have the ability to exercise your right or rights and the physician will make a recommendation to the judge.

2. Meet with your attorney.

- You can tell your attorney anything you want because what you tell the attorney is confidential (an attorney cannot share with anyone what you tell them in confidence).
- Tell the attorney why you want your right or rights back. Show your papers and documentation of activities you have completed about the rights – even this *Workbook!* Your goal is to demonstrate you can make your own decisions.

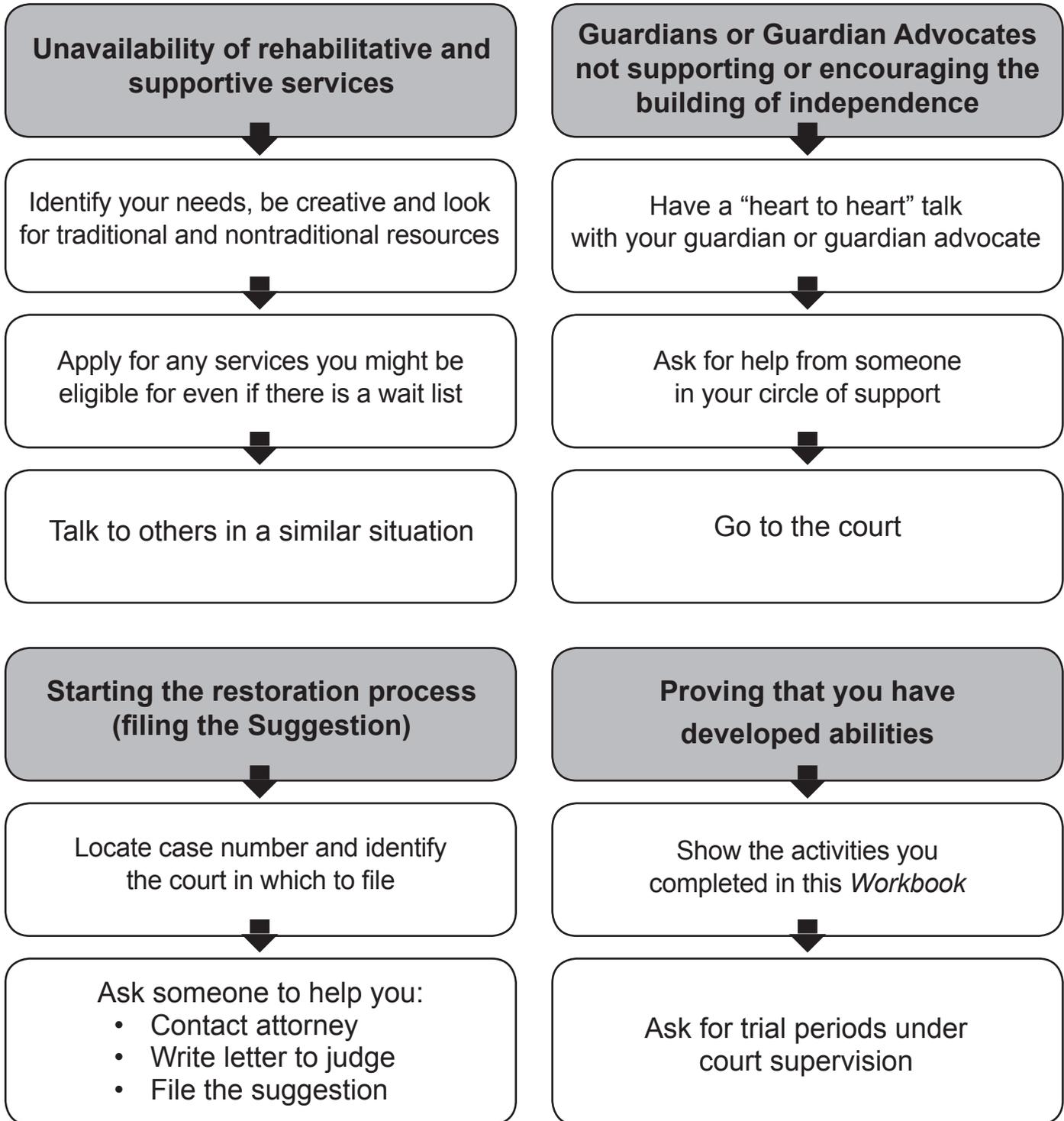
3. Meet with the physician. The physician will evaluate whether you have regained **capacity**. This means the physician will perform an examination to determine if you have gained enough ability to exercise the right or rights by yourself. You should talk with your attorney about consulting with the physician about the activities completed in your *Workbook* and what information you should share with the physician. After the examination, the physician will file a report with the court.

4. Court Action:

- If the physician recommends the restoration of the right or rights and no objections from any interested persons are filed, the judge will accept the physician's recommendation and the right will be restored with no hearing.
- If the physician recommends no restoration, or someone files an objection (such as your guardian or a family member), the judge will set a hearing where you, your lawyer, and any other individual can appear to discuss your situation. After the discussion, the judge will make a decision to either restore your right or rights, or not.

Obstacles and Strategies to Restoring Rights

Individuals under guardian advocacy or guardianship may encounter barriers to restoring rights. Below you will find some of these barriers as well as strategies to overcome these obstacles:



What If I Do Not Get My Rights Restored?

If your petition to have your rights restored is not approved by the judge, it is okay. The judge might want you to improve on your skills to exercise your rights. It takes time to learn new skills to be able to exercise your rights without the assistance of others. Remember, you do not have to wait until you are able to exercise all your rights to begin the restoration process. You might want to work on one right at a time.

If the judge has determined that you are not ready to exercise your rights without the help of your guardian advocate or guardian, you can go back to the activities in the *Developing Abilities by Civil Rights* section of this *Workbook*. Work with your guardian advocate or guardian and your circle of support to develop a plan. You might want to include who will work with you to make sure that you continue to learn skills in the area of the rights you want restored. Your plan can include steps and activities specifically designed to show your greater independence and capacity. You can ask the guardian advocate or guardian and the court for trial periods where you are more involved in decision-making, but can also be supervised.

Make sure you keep a record of all of your activities and accomplishments. Showing what you have learned will help the court understand how well you are able to make your own decisions. Use the *Documents and Activities Checklist* chapter to keep track of your accomplishments.

Documents and Activities Checklist

Keeping important documents, information collected and a record of completed activities safe and organized will help serve as a reference and guide to help you make better and more informed decisions.

There are many different types of documents that you can keep in your three-ringed notebook. Any legal documents which you have signed that delegates the right to others to make decisions for you or Letters of Guardianship or Guardian Advocacy should be added. These Letters and any other legal documents will help you communicate with your attorney and to understand which rights have been given to your guardian (or guardian advocate) to exercise. If you need more space to complete an activity, put your activity notes in this section.

Remember, it is important to keep all of your documents safe and secure, especially if they include any personal identification information, such as your Social Security number, bank accounts, or Medicaid number.



Identify and include any documents, resource information or additional activities completed for each area of the *Workbook*.

About Me

Include any additional information about yourself that you would like others to know. For example, this can be copies of certificates of accomplishments in sporting activities or awards you have received in other areas of your life.

Basic Concepts

Self-Advocacy

If you have any additional self-advocacy activities completed, include them in this section. Add any information you may have obtained from resources about self-advocacy.

Your Circle of Support

Add any additional information about your circle of support that you think might be important. Include any information you may have obtained from resources about building support circles.

Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

Add any additional information after talking with your support circle about abuse, neglect and exploitation. Include any information you may have obtained from resources about warning signs and reporting.

Your Legal Status (Legal Documents)

After completing the activities in the *Your Legal Status* section, add any legal documents that show you have given authority to someone else to make decisions for you. If a court has removed some of your rights under guardian advocacy or guardianship, include a copy of these documents in your notebook. Include any information you may have obtained from resources about legal options for decision-making.

Developing Abilities by Civil Right

Right to Marry

Information and documents that can be added to this section include pre-marital counseling information or certificates of completion, a completed budget as well as additional information about living arrangements, health insurance, sex education and family planning or any other information you may have obtained from resources about marriage.

Right to Vote

Information and documents that can be added to this section include election information, sample ballots and voting registration information obtained from resources.

Right to Travel

Information and documents that can be included may be other resources for travel information, other support services that may be available to you when traveling, as well as additional sample travel diaries.

Right to Apply for a Driver's License

Document any driving courses or other related driving activities, add driving manuals or include written or online practice driving tests, list of driving tutors available and information from resources.

Right to Seek or Retain Employment

Add to this notebook your resume, copies of certificates for any courses you have completed that are related to employment, such as computer training, vocational training or any other training, and a list of those agencies you have contacted for employment opportunities. Include any information you find from resources related to employment.

Right to Apply for Government Benefits

If you qualify to apply for government benefits, include all information you have received from the resources provided. If you have a budget for the benefits you will receive, include a copy in this section.

Right to Decide Living Arrangements

Include a copy of your budget as well as any information received about housing options. Include any other resource information received or reviewed online.

Right to Decide Medical and Mental Health Treatments

It is important to take charge of your health, and additional information relating to your healthcare can be included in this section. Resource information can be kept in this section or a part of your “medical diary.”

Right to Manage Money and Property

You can add to this section, a copy of your budget and any support services you are using. A list of your assets can also be included, as well as any resource information you have received regarding managing your money and property.

Right to Decide Social Aspects of Life

Add your diary of social activities, as well as organizations in which you participate or are a member of in the past or currently.

Right to Contract

Make copies of any contracts you currently have and include in this section of your notebook. Include the activity questions and your answers for each of your contracts.

Right to Sue and Defend Lawsuits

It is important to identify someone in your circle of support who can help you in this area, as well as finding an attorney who is knowledgeable about civil lawsuits. Include in this section any resource information you have found about the right to sue and defend lawsuits.

Restoration of Rights

If a court has removed any of your rights, the activities in this *Workbook* will help you document how you are developing abilities. If you are interested in restoring any of your rights and need help with beginning the process, talk with someone in your circle of support. Include any documents or activities that you have completed in order to restore your rights.

GLOSSARY

This glossary should serve as a quick reference guide to terms used throughout this *Workbook*. For some terms, you may want to consult state law for more specific definitions.

Abuse – is any willful act or threatened act by a relative, caregiver or household member with cruelty or violence that causes or is likely to cause harm to a vulnerable adult. There are different types of abuse: sexual, physical, and emotional.

Advance Directive – a witnessed written document or oral statement that provides instructions and preferences should the individual be unable to make decisions. Examples of a written document may include a health care surrogate and living will.

Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) – a state agency working in partnership with local communities and private providers to assist people who have developmental disabilities and their families; provides assistance in identifying the needs of people with developmental disabilities for supports and services.

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) – a federal law that prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in employment, public services, transportation, public accommodations, and telecommunications services.

Assisted Living Facility (ALF) – a residential facility that provides personal care services to meet an individual's personal needs. These are less restrictive than nursing homes. ALFs are licensed and regulated by the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration. See: www.fdhc.state.fl.us/MCHQ/Long_Term_Care/Assisted_living/alf.shtml

Bullying – Bullying is considered an activity of repeated, aggressive behavior intended to hurt another individual, physically, mentally or emotionally. Bullying is characterized by an individual behaving in a certain way to gain power over another person. It can be classified into four types:

1. Physical (hitting, punching, or kicking)
2. Verbal (name-calling or taunting)
3. Relational (destroying peer acceptance and friendships)
4. Cyber-bullying (using electronic means to harm others)

Capacity – an individual's physical or mental ability; a legal status presumed to apply to all adults and is generally defined in law in reference to a specific task (e.g., capacity to execute a will). When used by legal practitioners, capacity may be used to refer to the ability to understand the nature and the effects of one's acts.

Circle of Support – people you value in your life who help you to achieve your goals and understand your dreams.

Civil Right – a fundamental power or privilege that is defined in state and federal law and that can be exercised by each citizen. Examples of civil rights are freedom of speech, press, and assembly, as well as freedom from disability discrimination for employment, education, housing, etc.

Developmental Disability – in Florida, a developmental disability is defined as a “disorder or syndrome that is attributable to retardation, cerebral palsy, autism, spina bifida, or Prader-Willi syndrome; and that manifests before the age of 18; and that constitutes a substantial handicap that can reasonably be expected to continue indefinitely.” (Section 393.063(9), Florida Statutes)

Durable Power of Attorney (DPOA) – a legal instrument used to delegate authority to another. The person who signs (“executes”) a power of attorney is called the “principal,” and the person to whom authority is delegated is called the “agent.” A “durable” power of attorney enables the agent to act for the principal even after the principal loses capacity to make decisions, and is effective until revoked by the principal or until the principal’s death. A durable power of attorney generally refers to financial decisions, and can be an effective alternative to guardianship, allowing an individual to plan for the control of his or her affairs in the event of incapacity.

Exploitation – is when someone who stands in a position of trust and confidence with a vulnerable adult or knows the vulnerable adult lacks capacity, and knowingly, by deception or intimidation, obtains or uses, or endeavors to obtain or use, a vulnerable adult’s funds, assets, or property with the intent to temporarily or permanently deprive a vulnerable adult of the use, benefit, or possession of the funds, assets, or property for the benefit of someone other than the vulnerable adult. Exploitation is also when a person uses emotional manipulation to control an individual in a way that causes harm.

Guardian – a person who has been appointed by the court to act on behalf of the person under guardianship in accordance with Chapter 744, F.S.; may be the guardian of the person or property, or both.

Guardian Advocate – a person appointed by the court to act on behalf of a person with a disability in accordance with Section 393.12, F.S. This appointment occurs without an adjudication of incapacity of the person with a disability.

Guardian Advocacy – the process under §393.12 of the Florida Statutes for family members, caregivers, or friends of individuals with a developmental disability to obtain the legal authority to act on their behalf. The individual with a developmental disability is not declared incapacitated.

Guardianship – the process designed to protect and exercise the legal rights of individuals whose functional limitations prevent them from being able to make their own decisions.

Health Care Surrogate – a witnessed written document or oral statement that provides health care instructions and names another person to health care decisions should the individual be unable to make decisions.

Human Trafficking – organized criminal activity in which human beings are treated as possessions to be controlled and exploited.

Job Coach – an individual who helps people with career development, professional goals and long-term workplace success strategies.

Letters of Guardian Advocacy – a legal document issued by the court designating a person to act as guardian advocate on behalf of another person. These letters will specify the powers and duties of the guardian advocate.

Letters of Guardianship – a legal document issued by the court designating a person to act as guardian on behalf of another person. These letters will specify the type of guardianship as well as the powers and duties of the guardian.

Life Coach – a person who helps others in achieving their personal goals such as choosing or changing careers, improving relationships, and determining priorities; helps others with problems and decisions.

Mentor – is a person or friend who guides a less experienced person by building trust and modeling positive behaviors. An effective mentor understands that his or her role is to be dependable, engaged, authentic, and tuned into the needs of the mentee.

Neglect – the failure or omission on the part of the caregiver to provide the care, supervision, and services necessary to maintain the physical and mental health of a vulnerable adult, including, but not limited to, food, clothing, medicine, shelter, supervision, and medical services, which a prudent person would consider essential for the well-being of a vulnerable adult. The term “neglect” also means the failure of a caregiver to make a reasonable effort to protect a vulnerable adult from abuse, neglect, or exploitation by others.

Order Determining Incapacity – a legal document issued by the court determining the incapacity of an individual and contains the following: (1) the exact nature and scope of the person’s incapacities; (2) the exact areas in which the person lacks capacity to make informed decisions about care and treatment services or to meet the essential requirements for her or his physical or mental health or safety; (3) the specific legal disabilities to which the person is subject; and (4) the specific rights that the person is incapable of exercising.

Power of Attorney (POA) – a legal instrument used to delegate authority to another. The person who signs (“executes”) a power of attorney is called the “principal,” and the person to whom authority is delegated is called the “agent.”

Representative Payee – an individual or organization that receives Social Security and/or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments for someone who cannot manage or direct the management of his or her money. Payees should use the funds for the current and foreseeable needs of the beneficiary and save any remaining funds for the beneficiary’s future use.

Self-Advocate – a person who effectively communicates, conveys, negotiates or asserts his or her own interests, desires, needs, and rights. It involves making informed decisions and taking responsibility for those decisions.

Self Neglect – is the failure or omission on the part of a vulnerable adult to provide the care, supervision, and services necessary to maintain his or her physical and mental health including, but not limited to, food, clothing, medicine, shelter, supervision, and medical services, which is considered essential for the well-being of the vulnerable adult.

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) – a federal insurance program administered by the Social Security Administration and funded by deductions to workers’ wages (Federal Insurance Contributions Act - FICA) which pays benefits to workers and certain members of their family if they are “insured,” meaning that they worked long enough and paid Social Security taxes. The SSDI payment is based on the earning of the worker and the number of people receiving benefits. If a worker has a child with a disability, the child may receive SSDI benefits based on his or her

parent's FICA if one of three events occur: the insured parent dies, the insured parent becomes disabled, or the insured parent retires. For more information about SSDI, go to: www.ssa.gov/dibplan/index.htm

Support Coordinator (or Case Manager) – a person providing a specific service to persons receiving services through the Agency for Persons with Disabilities; assists clients in assessing and matching their service needs with service providers in accordance with services approved for the clients; also responsible for assisting clients in better utilizing community supports and building circles of support.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) – a federal income supplement program funded by general tax revenues (not Social Security taxes) and administered by the Social Security Administration; designed to help persons who have little to no income and are blind, elderly or have a disability; provides cash to meet basic needs (food, shelter and clothing). For more information about SSI, go to: www.ssa.gov/ssi/

Trust – a legal instrument in which the owner of real or personal property (the trustor or settler) gives ownership of the property to a trustee to hold and to manage for the benefit of a third party (the beneficiary); can be a useful device for planning for the financial security of an incapacitated individual.

Vulnerable Adult – is a person 18 years of age or older whose ability to perform the normal activities of daily living or to provide for his or her own care or protection is impaired due to a mental, emotional, long-term physical, or developmental disability or dysfunction, or brain damage, or the infirmities of aging.

Will – is a legal document which names a person(s) to manage the estate of a deceased person and provides for the distribution of property.

