

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

1 Physical Contact Policy

1.1 It is the philosophy of OPTIONS that all staff members will maintain professional relationships with all persons served, as well as their co-workers while working. It is understood that the persons who receive services from OPTIONS may have diminished or limited opportunities to develop natural relationships with others that involve physical contact. It is further understood that staff members must provide training, support and intervention that may be compromised if professional boundaries are not established. As such, professional boundaries are recommended regarding the relationships between staff members and persons served.

1.1.1 Hugging and appropriate physical contact, such as a pat on the shoulder, is not prohibited, but should be brief, limited and within generally accepted social norms.

1.1.2 Spontaneous hugs or physical contact will be allowed, but only when permission is requested and granted by the staff member and only if the supported person does not have behavioral issues outlined in 1.1.4 below.

1.1.3 Staff are expected to set clear and professional social boundaries with persons served and alternative greetings such as handshakes, "side hugs", "knuckle bumps" or "high fives" are encouraged as a friendly greeting.

1.1.4 Persons with sexual acting out behaviors may have physical contact limited to "high fives" or "knuckle bumps" with other persons served. Staff will role model appropriate social interactions as identified and stated in the person's Individual Service Plan (ISP).

POLICY DATE: August 2007
REVISED: May 2012
REVISED: September 2014
REVISED: July 2015
REVIEWED: September 2016
REVIEWED: October, 2017
REVIEWED: October, 2018