

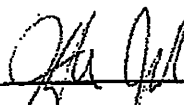
Goal & Policy Statement

of

ABILITIES FIRST

Revised and Approved

August 20, 2020



Kyle John, Chair

GOAL & POLICY STATEMENT

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DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY is defined in Section 205.968 RSMo., as:

A) A disability which is attributable to intellectual disability (also called mental retardation), cerebral palsy, epilepsy, head injury, autism, or a learning disability related to a brain dysfunction or a similar condition found by comprehensive evaluation to be closely related to such conditions, or to require habilitation similar to that required for persons with intellectual disability;

- a) Which originated before age eighteen; and
- b) Which can be expected to continue indefinitely.

OR

B) A developmental disability as defined in Section 630.005 RSMo., as a disability:

1.) Which is attributable to:

- a) Intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, head injury or autism, or a learning disability related to a brain dysfunction; or
- b) Any other mental or physical impairment or combination of mental or physical impairments; and

2.) Is manifested before the person attains age twenty-two (22);

3.) Is likely to continue indefinitely;

4.) Results in substantial functional limitations in two (2) or more of the following six (6) areas of major life activities:

- self-care;
- receptive and expressive language development and use;
- learning;
- self-direction;
- capacity for independent living or economic self-sufficiency;
- Mobility; and

5.) Reflects the person's need for a combination or sequence of special, interdisciplinary, or generic care, habilitation or other services which may be of lifelong or extended duration and are individually planned and coordinated.

I. STATEMENT OF GOALS

As the Developmental Disability SB40 Board for Greene County, Missouri, established under RSMo Sections 205.968 to 205.972, Abilities First is a resource which, in cooperation with other public and private agencies, develops and/or provides community-based services of high standards for the citizens with developmental disabilities of Greene County.

The Board, with the assistance of its staff:

- Examines priority areas
- Develops and implements strategic plans
- Demonstrates new approaches
- Facilitates outreach and training
- Supports communities' interagency collaboration and coordination
- Coordinates with related agencies, committees, and programs
- Promotes barrier elimination, systems design, and citizen participation
- Provides public education and coalition development
- Informs policy makers
- Provides information on prevention of conditions or situations known to negatively and/or disproportionately impact people with Developmental Disabilities.

Mission

Turning Abilities into Opportunities.

Our Niche

Expanding inclusive opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities.

Vision

All people with developmental disabilities live the life they choose.

Target:

Inclusion: 100% of individuals we serve have opportunities to experience full-inclusion.

- Everyone has opportunities to experience acceptance as a community member.
- People can choose where they live, learn, work, and play.
- People are supported for success.
- All people have opportunities for meaningful relationships and experiences.
- People recognize that inclusion benefits everyone involved by bringing together different abilities and perspectives to make a greater whole.

Our Core Values

- Selfless Respectful Service.
- One Team, One Mission.
- Inspire Others.

- Be Resourceful, Never Give Up.
- Seek Knowledge and Embrace Change.

How We INSPIRE

1. We are committed to creating and implementing innovative opportunities so that 100% of individuals we serve have the opportunity to experience inclusion.
2. We show people that inclusion is a way of life which benefits everyone.

The Abilities First Difference

1. We are a leader in advancing inclusion with persons with developmental disabilities.
2. We track unmet needs and provide creative solutions.

Our Promise

- We recognize abilities first.

II. Philosophy

A. GUIDING PRINCIPLES TO WHICH AGENCIES RECEIVING FUNDING SHALL ADHERE

A person with a developmental disability shall:

- Be provided with opportunities to have reciprocal roles in families, build friendships and relationships, develop personal networks, utilize social capital and participate in leisure activities how he or she chooses.
- Be provided with support to develop a vision for a good, quality life and to develop capacities that allow for the least restrictive interventions supporting as much independence as possible.
- Have opportunities to make choices and support the right to take reasonable risks that are respected and valued while maintaining safety and health.
- Have the opportunity to communicate his or her fears and have them addressed, and not be subjected to fear of harm or reprisal in connection with the provision of supports and services.
- Receive supports and services that are effective, are driven by the person, are as self-determined as possible.
- Have inclusive opportunities to live, learn, work, and play in their community.
- Develop an increased level of self-esteem to promote good judgment and decision-making.
- Be provided opportunities to have reciprocal, meaningful roles in their home and community environment.

B. MISSOURI QUALITY OUTCOMES.

Abilities First supports the concepts included in the Missouri Quality Outcomes and expects that these concepts are employed by entities and programs funded by Abilities First.

WHAT ARE THE MISSOURI QUALITY OUTCOMES?

The Missouri Quality Outcomes were developed as a result of listening to people with disabilities, their families, and advocates. The outcomes were designed to encourage personal quality of life outcomes with individual focus on leading a self-determined life; including personal values, choice, health, safety, inclusion and self-advocacy.

The Missouri Quality Outcomes are intended to be a guide to assist the user with facilitating discussion around key areas of importance to the individual and supporting their personal goals, dreams and other areas of interest to the individual that defines quality of life. Improving quality requires continuous efforts on getting to know the person in the settings and situations where they are supported, as well as, consistent interaction and involvement with the individual and their support systems for on-going assessment of their quality of life.

The Missouri Quality Outcomes will be measured through annual data collected by the Division of Developmental Disabilities. Based on the data, the Division of Developmental Disabilities will address areas of enhancements to services and supports through policies and practices, with the goal of providing continuous improvement for people with developmental disabilities.

All Missouri Quality Outcomes are accompanied with a description of the outcome along with “talking points” that assist users in determining if the outcome has been met and identify areas for improvement. These “talking points” are not all inclusive, but are used to aid in conversation with the individual and family members when applicable.

ABOUT THIS OUTCOME:

This outcome is designed to support individuals to make informed choices and encourage self-determination in pursuing daily activities of their choice while exploring the full range of options; including employment, volunteering, use of free time and participating in activities of their choice. Outcomes/Supports should be individualized to assist in achieving maximum potential.

Talking Points:

- Do you have people who explain options and choices in a way that makes sense to you?
- Do these explanations help you make informed decisions about your options?
- When was the last time you tried something new?
- Would you like to try something new? What needs to happen in order for you to try something new?
- Have you had the chance to explore a variety of opportunities to determine areas of interest?
- How do you spend your day?
- What do you like most/least about your day? Is there anything you would like to change?

ABOUT THIS OUTCOME:

This outcome emphasizes individuals being leaders in selecting the community and home of their choice. The home is designed to meet the individual's unique needs. Individuals actively choose who they live with and where.

Talking Points:

- Did you choose this community? Did you choose your home? Did you choose who you live with (if applicable)?
- What made you choose this community? What made you choose this home?
- Are you satisfied with your home? Does it reflect who you are and what is important to you?
- Are there adaptations in your home to fit your needs? If not, are they needed? (examples may include lighting that is sensitive to seizures, or other things that make the home accommodating to the individual's needs)

ABOUT THIS OUTCOME:

This outcome is about presence and participation in the community, based on interests determined by the individual. Individuals are integrated into their community, including community service, in the same way as neighbors and fellow community members. Individuals have natural supports in their lives and relationships that are not based on their disability.

Talking Points:

- Do you know about community activities and choose which ones to participate in?
- Do you have the support you need to participate in these community activities?
- Are you able to get to community activities of interest?
- Do you have the support you need to develop and maintain relationships with other community members?
- Are you a regular member of a church, social group and/or community organization that is not related to having a disability?
- Do you spend time with people in your community who are not paid to provide you with support services?
- Do you enjoy community activities (such as shopping, going out to eat, etc.) and are you able to do these activities?
- Are you supported to explore and practice your religious beliefs?

ABOUT THIS OUTCOME:

This outcome emphasizes the individual's right to receive physical, emotional and mental health care from the practitioner of their choice. Individuals receive information and education on ways to maintain their health and well-being. Individuals are supported in making healthy choices.

Talking Points:

- Who are the doctors you go to? Are you comfortable talking with your doctors?
- Does your doctor help you understand issues about your health? Does your doctor listen to your concerns?
- How did you go about deciding which doctors to go to?
- Do you have someone who goes to the doctor with you? Do you have someone who helps you remember your doctor appointments?
- Do you make a list of questions for the next time you see your doctor?
- Do you take any medicines? If so, do you know what each medicine is for?
- How do you let others know when you are not feeling well?
- What do you do to stay healthy?
- Do you have an exercise you enjoy? How often do you exercise?
- Does anyone talk with you about making healthy choices in what you eat or getting exercise?

ABOUT THIS OUTCOME:

This outcome emphasizes individuals living free from harm, being educated about their rights and living in healthy environments where safety and security are a high priority, while supporting the individual's rights to live independently, make personal choices and take some risks.

People are Educated about Their Rights and Practice Strategies to Promote Their Safety and Security**Talking points:**

- Do you feel safe in your home? If not, what would make you feel safe?
- Does your home have safety equipment like smoke alarms, fire extinguishers and Co2 detectors? Do you participate in emergency drills/plans?
- Do you feel safe in your neighborhood? If not, what are some of the things you do to keep safe in your home?
- What are some of the things you do to keep safe in your community?
- Do you understand your rights? (Example: Can you share what your rights are? Has the DDD Rights brochure been shared with you?)
- Are there any restrictions on your life that you feel are not fair, like not being able to use the phone, or have friends over or being by yourself when you want to? If so, are you aware of due process?
- If there is a problem, who do you tell? What is the person you tell is part of the problem?
- Have you ever felt mistreated? Did you report it? Was the problem solved?
- Do you have privacy in your home? Is your personal business kept private?

ABOUT THIS OUTCOME:

This outcome emphasizes the importance of self-advocacy. Training and ongoing support are often time require to assist an individual in developing their self-advocacy skills.

Talking Points:

- Have you participated in People First, Project STIR or other self-advocacy groups?
- Do you attend self-advocacy trainings?
- Do you attend meetings related to causes you support?
- Have you voted in an election? If not, why not?
- If you have a guardian, do you feel he/she includes you in decisions?
- If not, do you feel capable of making your own choices and exercising your rights without any support?
- If needed, do you have people around you who you trust to help you make choices and exercise your rights?

ABOUT THIS OUTCOME:

This outcome focuses on information presented to family members to educate them in the process of self-determination. Families provide support and insight that will assist their family member in leading a self-determined life including making choices, setting goals, assuming responsibility, and driving how one's own life is lived. Families are integral in the development of a person's independent and interdependent capacities.

Talking Points For Families:

- What are the strengths you see in your family member?
- Do you have the information you need to promote self-determination for your family member?
- What are your family member's future goals?
- How do you promote independence in the life of your family member?
- Do you have a long-term plan in place if you are unable to provide care for your family member?

Talking Points For Individuals:

- Do you have the information you need to promote self-determination in a way that is meaningful to you?
- How does your family encourage you to find and keep friendships?
- How does your family encourage you to make your own life decisions?
- How does your family encourage you to set personal goals that are meaningful to you and follow through on them?
- Share at least one story of a time your family allowed you to take a risk or try something new without interfering?
- What chores do you have within your home?
- What other responsibilities do you have in your home?

III. POLICY FOR FUNDING SERVICES

- A. The Abilities First Board, as a general rule, will attempt to contract with not-for-profit corporations (providers) to provide services relating in whole or in part to the services which the Board itself may provide as defined by the law. Such contracts

shall be written business agreements. Existing contracts may be amended by the Board.

- B. The Board recognizes that said providers are autonomous and their programs are administered by separate and independent Boards of Directors. At the same time, the Abilities First Board has a responsibility to evaluate certain aspects of the not-for-profit corporations' programs consistent with its legal mandate to administer the expenditure of county tax revenues and its obligations for the well-being of individuals with developmental disabilities. The Board may also choose to enter into business agreements with independent contractors or consultants on a case-by-case basis as fits within the priorities developed by the Board. If the Board chooses to enter into a business agreement with an independent consultant, those services must be clearly defined and shall fall within the IRS guidelines for independent contracting.

- C. The Board may choose to directly provide a service or services.

- D. The Board shall prioritize its funding decisions based on how efficiently and effectively the program/service supports individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and how closely it aligns with the goals and philosophy of Abilities First.

- E. The Board shall only enter into contractual or business agreements with not-for-profit corporations that are operated by an independent board of directors. Indicators of an independent board of directors shall include but may not be limited to the following:
 - 1) No person serving on the board of directors shall be employed or receive financial compensation by the organization, unless that employee is an Ex-Officio, non-voting member.
 - 2) No member of the board of directors shall be related within the third degree by blood or by marriage to any staff member of the organization.
 - 3) No individual board member of the not-for-profit organization shall be eligible for employment by the not-for-profit organization until his/her termination of service as a member of the board.
 - 4) The Board shall not enter into any contractual or business agreement with any not-for-profit corporation or other eligible entity which does not prohibit nepotism amongst employees. The following is the expected standard to be followed by agencies or entities contracting with the Board:

No person shall hold a job while a member of his/her immediate family has authority to order personnel actions affecting his/her job. No person shall hold a job over which a member of his/her immediate family exercises supervisory authority. For purposes of these policies, a member of the immediate family shall be defined as any of the following: husband (and any relatives by marriage), wife (and any relatives by marriage), father, mother, brother, sister, son, daughter, uncle, aunt, grandfather, grandmother, grandson, grand-

daughter, father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law.

- F. The Board reserves the right to modify funding requests for any not-for profit agency whose employees receive salaries and/or benefits which in the judgment of the Board, are not commensurate with local standards for similar positions in similar organizations. On an as needed basis the Board will obtain rate of pay information from local organizations to determine the pay standards.
- G. The Board may fund staff training for agency personnel. Funding that is provided by the Board may be used to assist agencies in paying hourly wages to staff who must attend trainings and for whom the agency has no other funding source. The Board may provide funding for an agency to contract with a professional trainer for specific training which is unavailable through the agency's staff. The Board shall not provide funding to agencies to pay regular or salaried staff to conduct training. Any funding that is provided by the Board for staff training must be used for training which directly enhances the staff's knowledge and skills in working with individuals with developmental disabilities. Some examples of appropriate types of training would include sensitivity training, training on developmental disabilities, and training on working with individuals with challenging behaviors.
- H. If a provider can demonstrate to the Board that any provision in Section III constitutes a hardship for the individuals it serves, the Board may, by a two-thirds vote, grant waivers or exceptions.
- I. The Board may choose to fund services or supports for individuals, whether or not such individuals are receiving services through a provider. The Board will only fund individual services when there is documentation that other payor sources, such as the Department of Mental Health and any other community resources, have been sought and denied. All known avenues for funding must be exhausted prior to the Board funding any service or support for individuals. Clear documentation of need must be provided, preferably in a personal plan, and clear assessment of the need must be provided (such as a utilization review score). Prioritization for funding services will be based upon need with an emphasis on prevention. For example, if providing a support in a natural home will prevent a person from requiring more intensive and more costly residential care, then this would be a need considered by the Board for funding. Another example would be the Board funding the purchase of adaptive equipment for individuals who have a documented need and who have no other funding source. Board funds cannot be used to supplant State or other Government funds, so if State or other Government funding becomes available, then those costs must go back to the State or other Government. Only services that fall within the scope of the Board's statutorily-mandated authority and mission may be considered.
- J. If the Board chooses to enter into a business agreement with an independent consultant, those services must be clearly defined and shall fall within the IRS guidelines for independent contracting.
- K. It is not the policy of Abilities First to support or participate in religious activities.

IV. BOARD PHILOSOPHY AS TO THE FUNDING OF SERVICES

This Board endorses the provision of service on an individualized and person-centered basis to the person/family with a developmental disability. In arriving at funding decisions, the Board gives preference to inclusive community settings. Settings in which services are provided should be included in the community, rather than segregated or isolated community-based models and natural supports should be utilized. The term natural supports describes the engagement of people in the community who operate outside of, but parallel to, the established professional habilitative system. The term natural supports refers to the resources inherent in community environments that can be used for habilitative and supportive purposes. Natural Supports means personal associations and relationships typically developed in the community that enhance the quality and security of life for people with disabilities, including, but not limited to, family; friends; fellow students or employees in regular classrooms and work places; and associations developed through participation in clubs, organizations, and other civic activities. Services should be provided in the least restrictive environment.

All service provider agencies receiving funds from Abilities First agree to adhere to the following concepts related to “Choice of Provider” and to present such information to every individual/family to whom the entity is providing a service which may be in any way connected to Abilities First:

- i. Every consumer must choose to receive the service being provided.
- ii. Every consumer must certify that during the process of selecting the service/services, he or she was offered a choice of providers from whom they wish to receive the service/services.

Entities receiving funding from the Board should clearly demonstrate commitment to people with IDD, their families, the professional staff who support them, their neighbors, their friends, and anyone dedicated to supporting and advocating for individuals with IDD.

V. GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY #1 – SERVICES TO CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 16

It is the general policy of this Board that every effort should be made to maintain children under the age of sixteen (16) years in their natural homes, and to seek supportive services from existing agencies that are legally required to serve children with developmental disabilities or severe developmental delays.

However, if it is determined that it is essential that a child be removed from his/her natural home for treatment or residential purposes, then that child may be eligible for any services this Board may offer.

Further, a child under sixteen (16) years of age with a developmental disability residing in his/her natural home, and who, for some reason, is not eligible for services from any other resources in the community, may seek assistance from this Board.

POLICY #2 - RESIDENTIAL REQUIREMENTS

1. All persons with developmental disabilities who are voluntarily residing or whose parents or guardians reside in Greene County shall be eligible to apply for any services funded by the Board.

POLICY #3 - TRANSPORTATION

It is the policy of this Board to encourage all agencies or corporations having contracts with the Board to do their best to assist families and individuals with developmental disabilities to obtain adequate transportation.

POLICY #4 - CONSUMER REPRESENTATION

It is the policy of the Abilities First Board to encourage all agencies and corporations who contract with this Board to show representation on their boards of consumers or consumer representatives, i.e., parent, guardian, or relative.

Consumers or consumer representatives are able to contribute to the corporation insight into the feelings of those with developmental disabilities and, as stated in another Board Policy, one of the basic rights of persons with developmental disabilities is to have a voice in the decisions that are made concerning their health and welfare.

POLICY #5 - PAYMENT FOR SERVICES OF CLIENTS OUTSIDE GREENE COUNTY

It is the general policy of this Board not to pay for services for Greene County persons with developmental disabilities outside of Greene County unless it can be documented that there is no vocational program, residential program, or related service available in Greene County, and, further, any corporation receiving support from the Abilities First Board in any way, must give priority for vacancies in its program to Greene County residents, and if clients are admitted from outside the county, that such clients must be charged the same fees that are being charged to Greene County residents.

Exception to this Policy may be necessary due to statutory or humane considerations but must be made on an individual basis and reviewed by the Board. Advisory services of persons hired by or consulting to the Board will generally be exempted from this Policy.

POLICY #6 - CORPORATIONS' BUSINESS ARRANGEMENTS WITH OTHER CORPORATIONS

It is the policy of this Board that when an agency contracting with the Board has a relationship with another corporation or association, that such relationship be

described in a business contract that clearly states what the relationship is and what financial reimbursement is being made for the arrangement.

Abilities First encourages the establishment of foundations that are organized to support, financially and otherwise, specific Greene County organizations serving persons with developmental disabilities. Abilities First recognizes that a foundation may provide a mechanism to access funding sources that may not be the clear separation of public and private funds that a foundation can foster.

Available services for persons with Developmental Disabilities have rarely, if ever, met the actual need. This is generally true across the United States and Greene County, Missouri has been no exception. Service systems for persons with developmental disabilities have relied upon a combination of private and public funding, with the relative ratio between the two sources of funding varying across time. Beginning in the middle part of the 20th Century, reliance upon public funding through various Federal and Local programs grew. Yet, there remained unmet service needs. Private funding has been an important source in attempts to address the gap between available services and service needs. The Board will recognize and reward an agency's efforts to attain private funding to support activities related to services for persons with developmental disabilities and their families as part of the process for considering requests for Abilities First funding. Applications for funding are first considered based on the Board's priorities for services, and then preference will be given to applications which make use of private funds.

If an agency which makes an application for funding to the Board has a related foundation, the service agency applying for Board funds must make the distribution policy and the IRS form 990 (or other financial documentation if a 990 is unavailable) of the related foundation available as part of its application to the Board for funding.

Abilities First encourages and gives preference to applications for funding which indicate that funds from other sources are being accessed. This is particularly true for foundation funds.

Abilities First encourages all efforts on behalf of organizations supported by Abilities First which lead to the development of funding streams from sources other than government.

Abilities First believes that appropriate safeguards must be in place to avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance of conflicts of interest, both within an agency and with respect to relationships between agencies. The Board will not provide funds to an agency which is operating under a conflict of interest as determined by the Board. The Board will not provide funds to an agency operating under the appearance of a conflict of interest unless the Board receives documentation from the agency which fully satisfies the Board that the arrangement resulting in the appearance of a conflict of interest is necessary to the operation of the agency and is NOT an actual conflict of interest.

It is the responsibility of Abilities First to ensure that funds provided by Greene County taxpayers are used to the best effect for residents with developmental disabilities and their families. The Board's priority is to facilitate a comprehensive system of supports through an array of community-based services for consumers in

Greene County. While Abilities First recognizes the importance of foundations and encourages the development of such, Abilities First will not provide funds to foundations organized to support organizations which receive Abilities First funds or are otherwise a part of the system of support services for Greene County residents with developmental disabilities and their families. To that end, if an organization has a relationship with a foundation or other corporation and wishes to receive funds from or through Abilities First said organization must at a minimum meet the following standards:

- Separate Boards of Directors
- Separate operational and administrative functions such as planning, budgeting, accounting, policies and procedures, meetings, record keeping, fundraising, promotional materials, etc.
- Separate identifiable funds and bank accounts
- Clear delineation in all materials as to the separation and individuality of the two organizations
- Any use of staff and/or other resources by an organization receiving funds from Abilities First, for any activities related to an outside foundation, must be clearly accounted for and separate from the service activities of the Abilities First supported organization.

POLICY #7 - CORPORATIONS' USE OF FUNDS

Funds provided by the Abilities First Board are not intended to constitute a permanent or recurring portion of the annual budget of any recipient. Funding by the Abilities First Board to not-for-profit service providers shall be used to augment rather than supplant funding received from other sources. It shall be the policy of the Abilities First Board to give preference to funding requests which, if approved, are intended to go beyond the provider's current program so as to enable the expansion, improvement and /or upgrading of services offered by the provider to persons with developmental disabilities. However, the Board may make exceptions to this policy if the service provider can demonstrate significant need for assistance in operational funding.

POLICY #8 - OWNERSHIP OR ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS EXPENDED ON BUILDING, EQUIPMENT, AND RENOVATION

1. All buildings built or purchased by the Abilities First Board will remain the property of the Abilities First Board, except as otherwise specified in a written contract.
2. At the discretion of the Board, the buildings will be leased to corporations for specific purposes which will be outlined in an appropriate lease agreement.
3. All leases shall be net leases, that is, lessee will pay all expenses of the property including satisfactory upkeep of property, except major renovation, refurbishing, and repairs on the property. The Board shall determine what constitutes "major" renovation.

4. All requests for funds for equipment or building renovation in the amount of \$5,000.00 or more shall be subject to inspection and approval by the Executive Director and/or the Board's Executive Committee or other such committee as may be appointed by the Chairman, before presentation to the Board.

POLICY #9 - BUILDING PROPOSALS

1. When the Board receives a proposal for the construction, purchase, renovation, or expansion of a facility, the Board will:
 - a) Endorse the proposal.
 - b) Not endorse the proposal.
2. If the Board endorses a construction proposal, a committee will be formed made up of board members and representatives of the corporation requesting the facility.
 - a) At the recommendation of the committee, the Board may employ the services of an architect to ascertain the specifications needed and the cost of the facility.
 - b) The Board would set aside the suggested amount for a specified term.
 - c) The architect would then come up with sketches for approval. If the sketches meet with the committee's approval, the joint committee would present the project to the Board. If the Board approves the project, it will authorize the architect to complete construction drawings and advertise for bids.
 - d) The architect, with the Board, would open the bids.
 - e) The Board will accept and approve a contractor.
 - f) The architect shall be responsible, with the contractor, for completion of the facility according to the requirements of the Board.

POLICY #10 - RENOVATION OR EXPANSION OF EXISTING PRIVATELY OWNED FACILITIES OR BOARD OWNED FACILITIES

1. The project proposal will be presented to the Board.
2. If the Board endorses the proposal, it may appoint a committee to work with the private corporation in developing the plan for the renovation or expansion.
3. The Board may employ an architect who would carry out all the normal architectural functions as to designing a plan to implement the project with the specifications outlined by the joint committee.
4. The committee may then take the architects recommendations and bids to the Board for final approval of funding.
5. The Board could ask for collateral in the way of second mortgages or lien on the existing structure that would be judicially enforceable.

6. The improvement on the privately owned structure would be amortized over an appropriate period of time and at any time the facility would cease to be used for the purpose the renovation was done, the owner would have to satisfy the lien with the County Board as to the remainder of the agreed amount.
7. If a renovation proposal is judged by the Board to be a relatively small project, the Board need not seek the services of an architect.
8. General maintenance of Board-owned facilities shall be overseen by the Board's Executive Director.

POLICY #11 - PROCUREMENT POLICY

The Board of Abilities First is vested with independent authority per RSMo 205.968 to “engage in and contract for any and all types of services, actions or endeavors, not contrary to the law, necessary to the successful and efficient prosecution and continuation of the business and purpose for which it is created, and may purchase, receive, lease or otherwise acquire, own, hold, improve, use, sell, convey, exchange, transfer, and otherwise dispose of real and personal property, or any interest therein, or other assets wherever situated and may incur liability and may borrow money at rates of interest up to the market rate published by the Missouri division of finance.” RSMo 205.968.1.

The Board Members of Abilities First take seriously their role as public officials and establish this policy in order to ensure that the public funds entrusted to the Board are used prudently.

Abilities First maintains written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the actions of its employees engaged in the selection, award, and administration of contracts. Refer to the Conflict of Interest policy.

Abilities First's procedures aim to avoid acquisition of unnecessary or duplicative items. Where appropriate, an analysis will be made of lease versus purchase alternatives, and any other appropriate analysis to determine the most economical approach. Abilities First will maintain records sufficient to detail the history of procurement. These records will include but are not necessarily limited to the following: rationale for the method of procurement, selection of contract type, contractor selection or rejection, and the basis for the contract price.

Consistent with Missouri law and court decisions, Abilities First does not require competitive bidding for professional services that require unique skill, knowledge and experience for their proper performance. Examples of such professional services contracts would be a contract with an attorney, physician, CPA, engineer, MAI appraiser, teacher, consultant or other persons possessing special skills, experience or technical knowledge necessary to perform a particular service.

For all other procurements of goods or non-professional services, Abilities First shall use solicitations (RFQ's). Abilities First solicitations shall:

- Contain a clear and accurate description of the technical requirements for the material, product, or service to be procured.
- Identify all requirements which the offerors must fulfill and all other factors to be used in evaluating bids or proposals.

Abilities First will include enough qualified sources to ensure maximum open and free competition.

Abilities First will take necessary affirmative steps to assure that minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are used when possible.

Abilities First will use one of the following methods of procurement for goods or non-professional services:

Procurement by small purchase procedures. Small purchase procedures are those relatively simple and informal procurement methods for securing services, supplies, or other property that do not cost more than \$6,000 made from any one person, firm or corporation during any period of ninety days. If small purchase procedures are used, price or rate quotations must be obtained from an adequate number of qualified sources.

Procurement by sealed bids (formal advertising). For purchases exceeding the \$6,000 limitation above, bids are to be publicly solicited and a firm fixed price contract (lump sum or unit price) is awarded to the responsible bidder whose bid, conforming with all the material terms and conditions of the invitation for bids, is determined to be the lowest and best bid.

- Requests for proposals will be publicized and identify all evaluation factors and their relative importance. Any response to publicized requests for proposals must be considered to the maximum extent practical.
- Proposals will be solicited from an adequate number of qualified sources.
- Abilities First will have a written method for conducting technical evaluations of the proposals received and for selecting recipients.
- Contracts will be awarded to the responsible firm whose proposal is most advantageous to the program, with price and other factors considered.
- A firm fixed price contract award will be made in writing.

All bids for any contract or purchase may be rejected and new bids advertised for.

Procurement by competitive proposals. The technique of competitive proposals is normally conducted with more than one source submitting an offer, and either a fixed price or cost-reimbursement type contract is awarded. It is generally used when conditions are not appropriate for the use of sealed bids.

- Requests for proposals will be publicized and identify all evaluation factors and their relative importance. Any response to publicized requests for proposals must be considered to the maximum extent practical.
- Proposals will be solicited from an adequate number of qualified sources.
- Abilities First will have a written method for conducting technical evaluations of the proposals received and for selecting recipients.

- Contracts will be awarded to the responsible firm whose proposal is most advantageous to the program, with price and other factors considered.

Procurement by noncompetitive proposals. Procurement by noncompetitive proposals is procurement through solicitation of a proposal from only one source and may be used only when one or more of the following circumstances apply:

- The item is available only from a single source.
- The public exigency or emergency for the requirement will not permit a delay resulting from competitive solicitation.
- After solicitation of a number of sources, competition is determined inadequate.

Emergency procurement, waiver of competitive bids or proposals.

In the event the Executive Director determines that there exists a threat to life, property, public health or public safety or when immediate expenditure is necessary for repairs to property of Abilities First in order to protect against further loss of, or damage to, property, to prevent or minimize serious disruption in services or to ensure the integrity of records, the requirement of competitive bids or proposals for supplies or services may be waived on an emergency basis with approval of the Board President, or Vice-President (in the event of unavailability of the President). Such emergency procurements shall be made with as much competition as is practicable under the circumstances, such as calling at least three vendors in the area for pricing for emergency availability, and a log being kept of such contacts for record-keeping purposes.

Funded Entities' use of Board funds for purchasing equipment or services:

Corporations receiving Board funds for purchase of equipment and/or services must adhere to the Board's procurement policy as stated above as well as to the following:

1. Upon request for equipment from specific eligible corporations, and upon approval of the purchase of the equipment, and/or services, the Board could authorize the Executive Director to work closely with the representative(s) of said corporations in purchasing the equipment and/or services.
2. Purchased equipment would become the property of the aforementioned eligible corporations. Exceptions could be made to this policy for any reason that the Board would deem appropriate.
3. An inventory of Board-owned property will be maintained by serial number or whatever is appropriate by the Board's office, and annual inventory would be conducted by the Board's office of all equipment owned by the Board.
4. Any Board property would be considered permanent property and not expendable. If such equipment becomes inoperable, the using agency could not dispose of such equipment without authority granted by the Board. Such specific arrangements would be outlined in the lease agreement.

5. It is the general policy of the Board not to purchase consumable items for a corporation, such as operational supplies, etc. Exceptions could be made to this policy for some reason that the Board would deem appropriate.
6. All property and equipment purchased by County Board funds shall be documented, inventoried, and accounted for semiannually by the Board's staff.

POLICY #12 - BOARD SURPLUS (UNBUDGETED) FUNDS

1. The Board should ascertain there are a minimum of unbudgeted funds in the original yearly budget plan.
2. At least five percent (5%) of projected levy revenue should be allocated for "contingency" line items.
3. If financial reports do show surplus funds during the year, these funds should then be subject to the Board's application process beginning with the next regularly scheduled Board meeting.
4. If there are surplus funds from a previously budgeted item, then these funds become part of the contingency funds.
5. The Board shall strive to maintain an "operations reserve fund" equivalent to three months operating expenses. Operations reserve funding should be used in the event that the Board does not receive funding from program revenue sources.

V. POLICIES REGARDING RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

It is the policy of this Board that all residential services/facilities should be organized under the concept of quality of life. Implicit in this concept is the belief that individuals with developmental disabilities should be a part of their community and have experiences that are similar to those of members of their age groups.

Some examples of the experiences that will be available to individuals receiving residential services include individual choice in daily routines, such as rising and retiring at a time appropriate in his/her age group; and a lifestyle which permits persons with developmental disabilities to observe holidays and other family days of personal significance.

The residential service provider should present the opportunity for each individual to maximize his/her abilities and independence. More specifically, the residential facility should provide:

1. A home environment specific to the needs and the lifestyles of the individuals who live there.
2. Space for each individual to have some privacy.
3. Barrier-free construction throughout and any modifications or adaptations necessary to ensure the safety and the freedom of movement of individuals with disabilities in the home.

4. The number of residents shall be small enough so as to insure that the individual needs of the residents are met and to insure the development of meaningful interpersonal relationships among individual residents and between the individuals with disabilities and the staff providing supports for the individuals.
5. The architectural environment should take into consideration some factors such as the need for privacy in toileting and bathing and the need in the facility for storing personal belongings. There should not be any restrictive devices such as bars on windows, nets over beds, etc.
6. The service provider and/or facility shall meet all State licensing requirements and applicable Federal requirements including but not limited to the DDD Medicaid Waiver Program Certification requirements.
7. The service provider shall adhere to the principles outlined by the DMH DDD Quality Outcomes Discussion Guide which is available to all DMH contracted providers.
8. Since working with individuals with developmental disabilities is extremely demanding and the responsibilities are great for those employed in this field, recruitment and training of personnel in residential services is a crucial consideration. No staff should be assigned responsibility for the care and training of residents without proper orientation and pre-service training in the area of residential care for persons with developmental disabilities.
9. Restraints should be used as per DMH regulations, including only utilizing restraints on an individually-prescribed basis with a behavior support plan. Restraints or seclusion shall never be used for the convenience of the staff or as punishment for the resident, or as a substitute for a program.
10. The Board does not favor having persons with developmental disabilities receiving residential services in the same home as persons with mental illness simply by virtue of the fact that said individuals have disabilities, except in the case of individuals with co-occurring diagnoses or when an individualized decision has been made specific to the persons involved.
11. The Board may make exceptions to the above policies regarding residential services.

In summary, all people respond to and benefit from meaningful relationships with other people. Such relationships are particularly important in respect to residential services where the size of the staff maximizes the possibility of individualizing the care of each resident, and providing the resident with the feeling that he/she is a part of a family who cares.

It is the general policy of this Board to encourage the development of residential services which provide individuals with developmental disabilities the support that they need to live in their own home with as much independence as possible, while maintaining their safety and emotional well-being.

The Board does not encourage the development of so-called residential centers, which, by Missouri Statutes, are those with more than nine (9) residents.

VI. POLICIES REGARDING SHELTERED WORKSHOPS

It shall be the policy of this Board to endorse the concept of the extended employment workshops as outlined in Sections 178.910 through 178.960 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri. Such workshops are referred to as “Work Activity Centers” under the laws of the United States (29 U.S.C. §214 (c)) and are issued special certificates by the U.S. Department of Labor.

Sheltered workshops should have physically separate facilities with an identifiable program which is designed exclusively to provide work activity for workers with developmental disabilities whose physical and/or mental limitations are so severe as to make their starting productive capacity extremely low.

Sheltered Workshops should strive to develop job skills necessary for competitive employment in every employee. The ultimate goal of the Sheltered Workshop should be to assist employees to develop skills to be employed competitively in the community. The Board does not encourage segregated settings for persons with disabilities unless there is no better option. Individuals who are employed by a Sheltered Workshop should always be there by choice as per the United States Department of Justice.

The Board believes, according to RSMo. 178.910, the primary purpose of a sheltered workshop is to serve its employees with disabilities rather than to emphasize productivity and that a sheltered workshop shall coordinate and integrate its services with other entities which support individuals with developmental disabilities. While production has a role in the successful operation of sheltered workshops, and provides a means of service to employees with disabilities, production requirements must always be kept subordinate to the needs of individual employees. To this end the Board may from time to time adopt funding policies intended to foster and encourage what the Board judges to be the proper operation, management and employment practices of sheltered workshops.

The Board also endorses the concept of normalization in sheltered workshops such that normal fringe benefits enjoyed by the management of the workshop are also enjoyed by the employees in such areas as sick leave, paid vacations, holiday pay, regular breaks, etc., that are common in regular industrial enterprises. The physical facilities of sheltered workshops should offer attractive working conditions and, above all, provide a safe working environment for the employees.

VII. POLICIES REGARDING THE BOARD’S APPLICATION PROCESS

When a not-for-profit corporation or other service provider wishes to request funds from the Board, a representative must first request an appearance at a regular Board meeting. The representative must state clearly the purpose and amount of the request. The Board’s staff person shall consult with the chair.

If the Chair of the Board agrees, the request will be placed on a future agenda and an application must be made via the Board’s electronic format on the website. The following information must be included as well as any other information indicated on the web application or by the Board:

- a) A statement and documentation of need for the proposed project;

- b) A feasibility study, if applicable (i.e. new projects).
- c) A description of the proposed program which should include the objectives, who will be served (age, group, type of developmental disability, and a general assessment of the level of functional impairment incurred by the individuals proposed to be served), what services will be offered, and a list of prospective clients; if applicable.
- d) A budget for the proposed program;
- e) A current financial statement from the not-for-profit agency submitting the proposal. Each agency shall be required to submit such a statement once each quarter, in its applications. If a not-for-profit agency is submitting an application, it shall have a copy of its current 990 with all schedules and attachments on file at the Board's administrative office. If the not-for profit agency is not required to file a 990, the Board may, at its discretion, request other financial information it feels is pertinent to the application process.
- f) Projected financial support of new programs after one year of operation; if applicable.
- g) Number of individuals with developmental disabilities served in all programs and number of staff and faculty employed by the agency.

Not-for-profit corporations submitting applications to the Board must limit their requests for occupancy costs (i.e.: rent, utilities, maintenance: insurance, etc.) to 12% of the total cost of any specific program for which funds are requested. All requests for capital expenditures must include specific documentation as to why the agency is unable to utilize other funding sources and shall provide documentation of rejections from all other known sources of funding for such expenditures. The Board funding priority is to provide for the direct services and needs of individuals with developmental disabilities prior to funding capital expenditures and/or occupancy or administrative costs.

Each agency which requests funds from the Board shall file an annual budget and an annual audit with the Board's office.

Completed applications must be presented to the Board's staff person at the time designated by the Board's staff. The Board's Executive Committee may waive this requirement if it determines an emergency exists.

At the appointed Board meeting, a representative of the not-for-profit corporation or qualified entity shall present the application to the full Board. Applicants shall be given adequate time to present the application and answer questions from Board Members.

Board Members shall take the following factors into consideration when considering which projects to fund:

- a) Availability of funds.
- b) Is the need for the project adequately documented?
- c) Does the project meet the conditions stated in the Board's Goal & Policy Statement?

- d) How does the project conform to the priorities listed in the annual budget and the Board's Strategic Plan?
- e) How does the project fit within the priorities set by the applicant agency, and the appropriate State agencies?

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

It is critical for the Board to protect Abilities First's interests when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement with another entity. The Board must assess any situation that might benefit the private interest of an officer or director of an applicant entity or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. The Board may consider many factors when making the determination as to whether or not an applicant entity is operating under a conflict of interest. The information below is meant to clarify, but does not describe every possible conflict of interest or every possible means by which the Board will determine whether or not a conflict exists. Entities which are deemed by the Board to be operating under a conflict of interest, shall not be eligible for funding from Abilities First.

1. Interested Party

Any entity or its director, principal officer, or member of a committee with governing board delegated powers, who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an interested party.

2. Financial Interest

A party has a financial interest if the party has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:

- a. An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the applicant entity has a transaction or arrangement,
- b. A compensation arrangement with the applicant entity or with any entity or individual with which the applicant entity has a transaction or arrangement, or
- c. A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the applicant entity is negotiating a transaction or arrangement. Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial.

3. Duty to Disclose

In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested party must disclose the existence of the financial interest and disclose all material facts Abilities First.

4. Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists

After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested party, the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. Abilities First shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

5. Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy

a. If Abilities First has reasonable cause to believe an applicant entity has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the applicant entity of the basis for such belief and afford the applicant entity an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.

b. If, after hearing the applicant entity's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, Abilities First determines the applicant entity has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, Abilities First shall take appropriate corrective action.

VIII. BUDGET PROCESS

The Board's fiscal year shall be the calendar year (January 1 - December 31).

All not-for-profit corporations or other eligible entities which wish to provide input to the Board's Budget must submit in writing in accordance with communications provided by the Board's staff, but no later than September 1, their preliminary estimates of funds they will request during the following year. The Board's staff person shall use this information to prepare the budget recommendations, which will be submitted to the Budget Committee (consisting of the Board's Executive Committee) for approval/recommendations. The Budget Committee recommendations will be presented to the Board no later than its October meeting. The Board shall submit a Budget Summary to the County Budget Officer by November 15 of each year as required by Missouri Statute.

This budget plan shall be constructed to allow maximum flexibility for the Board and the agencies or entities with which it contracts during each fiscal year and shall in no event constitute a commitment by the Board for funding of aforementioned requests.