

## Bergen County Special Services

### Adult Services Program Policy

#### Title: Attendance Policy

The Board of Education believes consistent programming is the hallmark of lifelong learning, skill development and increased independence. Further, the Board of Education believes the BCSS Adult Programs provide a valued and integral service for many individuals with intellectual challenges. Consistent attendance is an expectation and key component of continued enrollment in the BCSS Adult Continuum.

To provide guidance in this area the Board of Education has developed a policy which states the attendance rate that is expected on an annual basis.

#### **Definition**

For the purpose of this policy, “individuals with intellectual challenges” will be interchangeable with individual, program participant and individual being served.

Full time attendance will reflect attendance in a program five days a week for 6 hours a day.

Part time attendance will reflect attendance in a program less than five days a week for 6 hours a day. It is highly recommended that all individuals with a part time schedule attend at a minimum four to five hours a day.

#### **Full Time Attendance**

Individuals enrolled in a BCSS adult programs full time are expected to maintain a 92% attendance rate for the year. Full time enrollment is five days a week, six hours per year. The BCSS Adult Programs typically provide an average of 235 service days annually. Our year begins July 1<sup>st</sup> and ends June 30<sup>th</sup> of the following year. This attendance rate permits an individual to be absent up to 19 days in a given year.

Every quarter, attendance rates will be calculated. In the event an individual's absence rate is high, BCSS representatives will advise individual, legal guardian and Support Coordinator to discuss any issues that may be interfering with attendance. If absenteeism continues through the second quarter, potentially impacting the 92% expected attendance rate, BCSS will request a meeting with the individual, legal guardian(s) and Support Coordinator. If a determination is made that attendance will most likely not improve, the individual will be offered the opportunity for a modified program schedule. If this is not desired by the individual or legal guardian(s) discharge planning will take place.

Requests to be absent more than 19 days consecutively or in a given year will be reviewed on a case by case basis by the Coordinator of Adult Services, his/her designee, Manager and Clinical

Specialist. Any request that involve illness, medical concerns and/or hospitalizations will involve the parties above and the Program Nurse or Health Care Professional. BCSS understands that there may be times when an extended period of absence may be unavoidable, such as illness and hospitalizations, and attendance criteria may not be met. The expectation and policy, however, is that vacation requests will adhere to the attendance rate detailed in this policy.

### **Part Time Attendance**

Individuals enrolled part time in a BCSS Adult Program are expected to maintain a 92% attendance rate based on number of days per week scheduled (i.e. one day per week, three days per week etc.) and number of service days per year (i.e. 235 service days per year).

Rates will be calculated every quarter. In the event an individual's absence rate is high, BCSS representatives will advise individual, legal guardian (s) and Support Coordinator to discuss issues that may be interfering with attendance. If absenteeism continues through the next quarter, potentially impacting the 92% expected attendance rate, BCSS will request a meeting with the individual, legal guardian and Support Coordinator. If a determination is made that attendance will most likely not improve, the individual will be offered the opportunity to further reduce the number of days in their program, transition to another program and/or service.

Requests to be absent will be prorated based on number of days in the individual's schedule and number of service days per year. Requests to go beyond this amount will be reviewed on a case by case basis by the Coordinator of Adult Services and his/her designee, Manager and Clinical Specialist. Any requests that involve illness, medical concerns and/or hospitalizations will involve the parties above and the Program Nurse/Health Care Professional. Similar to full time program participants, BCSS understands that there may be times when an extended period of absence may be unavoidable, such as illness or hospitalization. On these occasions attendance criteria may not be met, however, other than extenuating circumstances meeting a 92% attendance rate is expected.

### **Attendance Hours**

Enrollment requires attendance for 6 hours per day. Attendance less than 6 hours per day will be discussed and evaluated on an case by case basis, which may include availability of transportation, personal care, health, occasional medical appointments, by request of legal guardian(s), illness and approved service units.

If an individual attends the program for part of the day on repeated basis, but is approved to attend the full day, the program will notify the individual, legal guardian(s) and Support Coordinator to request a meeting to discuss issues that may interfere with the individual spending the entire day in program. If this pattern of attendance continues with no foreseeable resolution, the individual may be asked to reduce his/her schedule or leave the program.

