



Justice Center for the Protection of People With Special Needs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 09, 2016
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Justice Center Develops Sample Abuse Prevention Policy *Optional New Resource for Provider Agencies Serving People with Special Needs*

In an effort to support the abuse prevention efforts of the more than 3,000 provider agencies that serve vulnerable individuals across the state, the NYS Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs (Justice Center) has developed a model abuse prevention policy for their use.

The template contains elements that are widely recognized as being vital components of a comprehensive and effective abuse prevention strategy. The elements include general definitions, personnel screening and selection, monitoring and supervision, training and reporting requirements, conduct expectations and additional resources.

The sample policy is intended to be used as an optional template that can be modified to best fit a service provider's needs and the individuals they serve. Provider agencies are advised to consult with their legal counsel to resolve any questions on the legal implications of specific provisions.

"We hope this template will help provider agencies that don't have a formal abuse prevention policy to develop one and to implement corresponding practices that promote abuse-free environments," said Justice Center Chief of Staff Davin Robinson. "This model policy can serve as a starting point from which a provider can develop their own prevention strategies that are applicable to their needs."

The sample policy can be found on the Justice Center's website, on its Abuse Prevention Resource Center page and viewed [here](#).

The model policy was developed in cooperation with the Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), the Office of Mental Health (OMH), the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS), the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) and the State Education Department (SED).

The template serves as a supplement to a voluntary Self-Assessment for an Abuse-Free Environment (SAAFE) tool that was created by the Justice Center and customized for provider agencies by their state oversight agency. The tool can be used to self-evaluate a program or

facility for risk of abuse and neglect. It also includes resources to mitigate the identified areas of risk. The SAAFE tools also can be found on the Justice Center's website and viewed [here](#).

About the Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs

Established by Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the Legislature, the Justice Center is dedicated to supporting and protecting people with special needs and disabilities. The Justice Center serves as an advocate for people with disabilities and special needs. It is also a law enforcement agency that has concurrent jurisdiction with state and local law enforcement agencies and District Attorneys to investigate and, when appropriate, prosecute allegations of abuse and neglect committed against people with special needs in New York.

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