

POLICY ON THE PROHIBITION OF CLIENT ABUSE

POLICY

NO EMPLOYEE MAY, AT ANY TIME, COMMIT AN
ACT OF PHYSICAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE
AGAINST ANY CLIENT.

It is inherent in the nature and dignity of each individual that they be accorded certain human rights. A handicap in no way lessens these rights. As employees of Pennhurst Center, it is our duty to recognize the rights of all those whom we have been hired to care for, instruct, and supervise. Accordingly, we must at all times deal with each client in the most humane manner possible.

ABUSE DEFINED

AN ABUSIVE ACT IS ANY ACT WHICH CAUSES
OR MAY CAUSE PHYSICAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL
PAIN TO A CLIENT AND WHICH IS DONE FOR
THE PURPOSE OF WRONGFULLY CONTROLLING
HIM, INAPPROPRIATELY PUNISHING HIM OR
INSTILLING FEAR IN THE CLIENT.

Questions may arise as to what actions constitute abuse of a client. A common-sense application of the definition outlined above should answer most questions. Actions such as striking or kicking a client, restraining a client improperly or without authorization, and other such actions can be seen as causing physical pain to a client. As such, they are strictly forbidden! Acts such as teasing, humiliating or degrading a client, while not physical in nature, are no less painful; they constitute psychological abuse and will be dealt with no less severely.

SELF-DEFENSE

THE EMPLOYEE WHO FEELS IT NECESSARY TO
DEFEND HIMSELF IN AN AGGRESSIVE MANNER
SHOULD BE VERY MINDFUL OF THE REQUIREMENT
PLACED ON HIM, TO PROVE CONCLUSIVELY THAT
NO OTHER COURSE OF ACTION REMAINED OPEN
TO HIM.

Occasionally employees might be called upon to defend themselves from disturbed clients. This is a time when each employee must show maximum self-control and discipline to insure that he or she use only the minimum amount of force necessary in a given situation. An aggressive lashing out at a disturbed client will, in most cases, only worsen the situation. When called upon to restrain a client, in accordance with proper restraint procedures, the least amount of force necessary, applied intelligently, will insure that a client's rights are not violated.

EMPLOYEE OBLIGATION

ALL EMPLOYEES ARE OBLIGED TO REPORT ANY
INCIDENT OBSERVED THAT MAY BE CONSIDERED
ABUSE.

We have a responsibility to protect the rights of the clients from others who may seek to violate those rights. This is a prime responsibility for us all, as many clients cannot or will not speak up for themselves. Simple human decency dictates that we do not allow anyone to perpetrate actions upon clients which we know are wrong. With cooperation from all employees at all levels, we will be able to guarantee the clients of Pennhurst Center the respect and dignity that is their right as fellow human beings.

EACH EMPLOYEE HAS AN OBLIGATION TO BE
FAMILIAR WITH THE POLICY ON ABUSE AND
TO ADHERE TO THE REGULATIONS CONCERNING
ABUSE.

EMPLOYER OBLIGATION

The employer has an obligation to see that the rights of both the client and employee are protected by following established policies and procedures and carrying out actions in a fair and consistent manner without undue delay.

The employer also has an obligation to provide thorough training and opportunities for discussion to assure understanding of the policy by all employees.

THIS POLICY IS BASED ON DPW REGULATION #8489
AND ADHERES TO ALL FACETS OF THAT STATUTE.
VIOLATIONS OF THIS POLICY WILL RESULT IN
SEVERE DISCIPLINARY ACTION WHICH COULD INCLUDE
DISMISSAL FROM STATE SERVICE.

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Superintendent