APTUS
TREATMENT CENTRE
FOR COMPLEX DISABILITIES
Embracing Potential since 1979

Reporting and Investigating Allegations of Abuse (Adults)			
Section	Client Services	Policy Owner(s):	Director of Services
Authorized by	Board	Date	Apr 21, 2026
Applies To	All Staff, Students	Archive versions	Apr 8, 2025 Apr 9, 2024; Sept 27, 2023; June 2012; October 2011 April 5, 2004 May 14, 2002 May 21, 1997 May 29, 1996 July 13, 1995
Reference:			

General Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following terms shall be defined as follows:

- The term “person(s) supported” shall be taken to refer to any person who is a direct user of any Aptus Treatment Centre Program
- The term “staff” shall be taken to mean all employees, volunteers, placement students and all other persons that provide a service to the persons supported at Aptus Treatment Centre’s programs and/or property and premises.

Objective

- The following regulations are the policies and procedures of the Aptus Treatment Centre related to abuse of Aptus Treatment Centre persons supported.
- These policies and procedures are intended to give clear procedural guidelines in identifying and reporting abuse of persons supported by any person, including the staff of the Aptus Treatment Centre.
- At all times the Aptus Treatment Centre will strive to maintain the confidentiality of all persons involved within the context of the investigation.
- The population supported at the Aptus Treatment Centre has a unique set of challenges as related to abuse. Any suspicion and/or allegation of abuse must be reported and dealt with immediately and appropriately, as detailed in the following Policy.
- All Aptus Treatment Centre staff are expected to read, understand and abide by these regulations, policies and procedures regarding abuse.

Definition of Abuse

Aptus Treatment Centre has a zero tolerance to any form of abuse and/or neglect of the persons supported.

For the purposes of this policy, abuse is defined as the unwarranted and/or inappropriate use of:

- physical action and/or force
- psychological manipulation
- sexual involvement/exploitation/molestation, and may include the requirement of, but not the provision of, medical attention
- verbal abuse and/or psychological abuse, including but not limited to:
  - threats and intimidation
  - taunting, deriding, belittling and insulting
  - swearing, cursing and/or other obscene language directed at a person supported

Abuse is further defined as when the person supported has suffered physical harm, either inflicted by the person having charge of the person supported, or caused by the person's failure to adequately:

- care and/or provide for the person supported, or
- supervise the person supported, or
- protect the person supported

Abuse is further defined as an incident where the person supported suffered an unwarranted verbal assault, causing emotional or psychological stress.
Abuse is further defined as any activity, which exploits a person supported and/or subjects a person supported to any form of degrading treatment.

Please also refer to Aptus Treatment Centre's Abuse Policy for further information.

Reporting Suspected Abuse

It is mandatory that all staff witnessing, suspecting or having knowledge of an incident of abuse occurring must call 911 immediately.

- In order to ensure the safety of the People We Support, it is mandatory that all staff witnessing, suspecting or having knowledge of an incident of abuse occurring must notify the supervisor/on-call supervisor so as to remove the People We Support from the staff and keep them separated until further action is taken.
- If the person supported is capable of providing consent, we need to obtain consent prior to notifying the Parents/Guardians about the alleged, suspected or witnessed incident of abuse.
- Parents/Guardians will be advised once 911 is called that there has been an alleged, suspected or witnessed incident of abuse in relation to the person supported.
- Any staff person failing to immediately report knowledge of an incident of abuse by calling 911 will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
- The action taken against a staff person who fails to report will be determined by the President and CEO based on the facts and circumstances of the offence. The President and CEO shall report to the Board of Directors.
- Only once the police have completed their investigation and made a conclusion will Aptus Treatment Centre commence an internal investigation of the incident reported.

Investigation Procedures

Once the police have completed and concluded their investigation, the staff person witnessing, suspecting or having knowledge of an incident, will fully complete an Aptus Treatment Centre Abuse Incident Report Form. The said form must be signed and submitted to the said supervisor.

The supervisor, upon being informed, will immediately:

1. Contact the appropriate authorities and report it to the President/CEO or designate;
2. Conduct a preliminary inquiry; and
3. Complete a preliminary written report.

The supervisor conducting the inquiry may require that all staff having knowledge of the incident are to remain on duty until they are excused by the supervisor conducting the inquiry.

The supervisor's preliminary inquiry and written report should contain the following:

- description of incident
- date and time incident occurred
- when and who reported the incident
- who was involved (including witnesses and others who may have direct/indirect knowledge of incident)
- where incident occurred
- to the best of the reporting person's knowledge, why it happened
- action taken
- current status
- a copy of the reporting employees Aptus Treatment Centre Incident Report Form
- any other significant information having a bearing on the incident.

If the person suspected of abuse is available, the supervisor may choose to interview the said person and include the results of the interview in the supervisor's written report to the President and CEO or designate.

If on the basis of the inquiry, there is a reason to suspect that **physical** or **sexual** abuse occurred, then;

- The alleged victim will be required to undergo a full medical examination within four (4) hours of the incident as soon as practicable thereafter, and if the person supported has been deemed incapable of providing informed consent, the supported person's guardian or substitute decision maker will be asked to provide the consent for the examination.

Information regarding the reporting of the incident to the Police Services will be provided to the adult person supported and to their guardian. As well, information regarding legal support resources will be provided by staff.

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A written report and an opinion as to the probable cause of the injury shall be obtained from the attending physician.

Administrative Action When an Employee is Suspected of Abuse

Based upon the finding of the Supervisor's preliminary inquiry, the President and CEO or designate, shall determine:

- whether reasonable grounds exist to support the probability of abuse as defined
- whether further investigation is required to support a finding of abuse
- whether or not to involve the Police and/or other appropriate authorities in further investigation, thereby providing the person supported with the protection affordable in such Acts as the Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act (2008)(former Developmental Services Act) and the Criminal Code.
- whether an assessment for the person supported should take place
- whether any other actions should be taken

Following the results of the preliminary inquiry conducted under this policy and any other investigations, in all cases where the President and CEO or designate, has reasonable grounds to believe that abuse may have occurred, the following administrative procedure should be followed:

  - The President and CEO or designate, will call a formal meeting with the employee and his/her immediate supervisor. The employee will be informed of the allegations and given an opportunity to explain his/her actions. The employee shall have the right to have a representative of his or her choice present. The President and CEO or designate, shall determine who else should be attending this meeting.
  - As a result of all the evidence presented, including that of the employee's explanation, the President and CEO or designate, will determine the course of action.
  - If there are reasonable grounds to conclude that the abuse probably occurred, the appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. A summary of the incident and the disciplinary action taken will be placed in the employee's personnel file.
  - If there are insufficient grounds to reach a conclusion, then further investigation will continue until resolution is possible.
  - If the President and CEO or designate, is satisfied that no abuse has occurred, all documentation of the evidence shall be given to the President and CEO and no such documentation or allegations of abuse will be placed in the employee's personnel file.
  - After each incident, an investigation into the cause will take place, focusing on how to prevent further occurrences.

- In all cases, the President and CEO or designate, will complete a written summary of the incident and all action taken as a result and shall table a copy of the same at the next Board of Directors meeting.

- In all cases where reasonable grounds exist to support an allegation of abuse, the President and CEO or designate, must:
  - notify the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
  - ensure that appropriate emotional and physical support is provided

- In all cases where an allegation or a report of abuse is made, the President and CEO, or designate, must:

- ensure that parents or guardians of the person supported involved are notified and advised of all incidents covered by this policy after the President and CEO, or designate, has made a determination
- whenever possible, the persons supported should be consulted and/or informed about the notification

Administrative Action When a Person, Other than an Employee, is suspected of Abusing a Person Supported

- Based upon the finding of the supervisor's preliminary inquiry, the President and CEO or designate, shall determine:
  - Whether reasonable grounds exist to support the probability of abuse as defined
  - Whether further investigation is required to support a finding of abuse
- In all cases where reasonable grounds exist to support an allegation of abuse, the President and CEO or designate, must:
  - Notify the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
  - Must ensure that appropriate emotional support is provided
- Parents or Guardians must be advised of all incidents covered by this policy after the President and CEO or designate, has made a determination. Whenever possible, the person supported should be consulted and/or informed about the notification.
- The President and CEO or designate, shall take whatever administrative actions are necessary to protect the welfare of the persons supported.

Disciplinary Action Resulting from a Finding of Abuse of a Person Supported by an Employee

All disciplinary action resulting from a finding of abuse of a person supported by an employee will follow the outline process herein. In all cases where the President and CEO or designate, has reasonable grounds and sufficient evidence to believe that abuse probably has occurred, independent of other ongoing investigations, the employee shall be subject to disciplinary action as follows:

- Any employee who abuses a person supported will be dismissed.
- Any retaliation by staff, relatives, or peers will not be tolerated.
- Should the evidence be inconclusive and no resolution reached, the employee will be monitored until the rights of all parties are protected.

Employee's Rights

The rights of the employees are safeguarded by the following:

- Management is responsible for ensuring that the employees have received a copy of the Aptus Treatment Centre's Policies and Procedures, and that the employees have signed a form stating that he/she understands and will abide by these Policies and Procedures.
- Within seventy-two (72) hours after the Treatment Centre has received a report of a suspected incident of abuse, the employee in question has the right to be advised of the allegations and be given the opportunity to explain his/her actions to the President and CEO or designate.
- The employee shall have the right to receive a copy of any recorded material from the meetings between the President and CEO or designate and the employee in question under the auspices of this policy and procedure.
- During the investigation, in order to protect the rights of all parties involved, the Treatment Centre may require that the employee in question be reassigned or suspended with pay.
- Within forty-eight (48) hours of being advised of the allegations, the employee has the right to be heard, and request in writing a meeting involving any or all of the following people
  - the employee
  - the President and CEO or designate

- the Employee's Supervisor
- any individual selected by the Employee

Such meetings will occur within five (5) working days of the request.

Media Inquiries

All media inquiries should be directed to the President and CEO of Aptus Treatment Centre.