**SUPPORTIVE LIFESTYLES, INC.**

**SAFETY MANUAL**

**EMPLOYEE RIGHT TO KNOW**

**AWAIR POLICY**

**1/1/2025**

**EMPLOYEE RIGHT TO KNOW (ERTK)**

Supportive Lifestyles, Inc. is committed to promoting a culture of achieving and maintaining safety for all employees and consumers receiving support. It is the responsibility of all employees of Supportive Lifestyles to promote this culture. Employees are required to report safety concerns immediately upon discovery. A constant awareness of the work environment is an important practice.

Safety practices and reporting procedures will be reviewed on a regular basis, not to exceed annually. All staff, upon hire and annually will be trained on the program hazards and reporting responsibilities.

**PROGRAM HAZARDS**

**A. PHYSICAL PLANT AND VEHICLES**

**Floors and stairs**: Climbing stairs may be required as part of the job. This could also include the need to carry items up and down the steps.

* Employees should use handrails, keep stairways, hallways, and ramps free of storage and debris to prevent tripping hazards. Report loose or broken stair risers, boards, handrails to supervisors and maintenance.
* Employees should request assistance with moving large or heavy items. Lifting items that are too heavy or improper lifting techniques could result in injury to the back and neck.

Interior floors may become slippery after mopping, bathroom floors may become wet after showers, or wet floors resulting from melting ice or snow on the bottom of shoes could result in slips and falls.

* Heavy duty rugs are maintained at entrances of each location.
* Employees and consumers should not walk across wet floors.
* Wet floors must be wiped up with a towel and employees must inform others about the potential wet surface, advising them to wait until dry before walking over them.

**Ramps, sidewalks, and driveways:** In inclement weather, sidewalks, driveways, decks and ramps may become wet, snow covered or icy. These are to be cleared and maintained free from ice and snow build-up.

* Employees must place Ice Melt on icy walkways- sidewalks, decks and driveways and continue to do so regularly to prevent buildup.
* Walkways and driveways consisting of snow that is 2 inches or less, will be the responsibility of the staff on duty to clear. Snowfall greater than 2 inches will be cleared by maintenance personnel. It is important to note that in most cases, maintenance will not be clearing these areas until the snow has stopped. Due to maintenance clearing snow at other locations, there may be a delay until they arrive. Regardless of the inches accumulating, employees are required to frequently clear a walkway path of snow, where others will be walking (driveway, sidewalk and stairs) and place Ice Melt down to prevent snowpack and subsequent ice.

**Lifting/Transferring and Pushing/Pulling:** Lifting and transferring of items or individuals may be part of the job. In addition, pushing and pulling of equipment may also be required. Improper lifting, transferring, pushing, and pulling may result in injury to the back and neck. All staff are trained in lifting/transferring at time of hire and annually.

Lifting

1. Assess the load. Request assistance for lifting items that might be too heavy to lift alone. If alone, lighten the load or call for assistance.
2. When lifting, use a wide base stance, bending at the knees, rather than the waist.
3. Keep the load close to your body.
4. Avoid twisting when pivoting, using your feet to move instead.
5. When placing the item down, use a wide base stance, bending at the knees rather than the waist.

Transferring

1. Do not attempt to transfer an individual until you have been trained specifically in that individual’s needs.
2. Per the individual’s care plan, when adaptive equipment exists (Hoyer lifts, mechanical lifts etc.), employees must use them. Training must be provided before first use, to reduce the likelihood of injury to the consumer or the employee.
3. Request assistance from another trained coworker when you are unsure or unable to transfer the person on your own.
4. Transfer belts should be used when lifting/transferring consumers in the absence of adaptive equipment.

Pushing

* Stand close to the object to be pushed.
* Keep knees slightly bent, one leg slightly behind the other so you can push off.
* Brace your elbows against your sides, tighten abdominal muscles.
* Push the object forward, keep back straight, brace abdominals and keep elbows close to the body.

Pulling

1. Face the object to be pulled.
2. Keep knees slightly bent, and feet close to the object, hip-width apart.
3. Brace elbows against your sides and put hands on the object.
4. Tighten abdominal muscles and take a step backward, pulling object with you.

**Vehicles:** Employees are required to conduct a 12-point safety inspection of the vehicle prior to operation. Report vehicle maintenance issues to your supervisor.

* Seatbelts must be worn by the driver and all passengers.
* Only qualified drivers of Supportive Lifestyles, Inc. can drive company vehicles and transport consumers.
* Staff receive a driver orientation to our company vehicles and wheelchair accessible lifts and vans during orientation with annual refresher training and as needed.

**Sharps:** Handling needles/sharps poses risk of injury and illness from cuts and accidental needlesticks. Examples of sharps that employees may come into contact with include but are not limited to: razors, needles and broken glass. A “contaminated sharp” is defined as any object that can penetrate the skin.

* Contaminated sharps shall be discarded immediately in the appropriate container that is made of puncture-resistant material.
* Broken glass, or any sharp item that could penetrate the skin (including needles) should be picked up using a brush and dustpan and then disposed of in the sharps disposal container. Do not touch the needle or sharp item.

For individuals who are prescribed injectable medications:

1. Follow the individual’s care plan and nursing direction regarding administration procedures.
2. Before handling sharps-ensure the sharps disposal container is easily accessible and near the individual.
3. Ensure a quiet area free of distractions.
4. When it is determined that an individual is capable of self-administering their own injectables, the consumer must do so and also be the one to recap and discard the needle into the sharps disposal container. Concerns in this area must be reported to nursing personnel.
5. If it is deemed that the individual is not capable of self-administering, employees must first receive training on assistance to be given, follow procedures for handling and disposal of the sharps.

**Contaminated sharps must be immediately disposed of in the sharps disposal container and should not be left unattended until properly disposed of.** **Do not shear or attempt to break sharps. Do not touch an uncapped needle, have the consumer recap it.**

Sharps disposal containers are labeled and regularly inspected for structural integrity. When ¾’s full, it should be sealed shut and replaced by the Site Coordinator.

See infection control section for further information on labeling and types of storage for sharps.

**B. HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS**

**Cleaning Products**: All chemicals used in Supportive Lifestyles, Inc. homes are household chemicals that are purchased at retail stores. They are to be used in the manner that a typical consumer would use them, per instructions on the label. Safety Data Sheets are maintained at the Supportive Lifestyles Inc. office and provided to all site coordinators for immediate availability.

Staff may be required to use bleach or ammonia products for the purposes of disinfecting and cleaning. These two chemicals SHOULD NOT be mixed together as doing so could result in a chlorine gas that can result in chemical burns or fatality.

All chemicals must be stored in their original containers.

Immediate Use Containers: Immediate use containers of chemicals that remain under the control of one employee and emptied during the same work shift do not need to be labeled (example: mop bucket containing a floor cleaning solution).

Items that are used for more than one shift, such as a bleach and water mixture in a spray bottle, used for disinfecting, must be labeled as such.

Employees must wash their hands with soap and water immediately after handling chemicals.

**C. INFECTIOUS AGENTS AND INFECTION CONTROL**

Employees providing care to individuals may encounter body fluids such as: urine, feces, vomit, sputum, saliva, blood, and possible wound exchange.

Employees are required to wear personal protective equipment, such as gloves when anticipating any contact with any bodily fluids. Required PPE is available in each site. If it is deemed that additional personal protective equipment is needed, it will be provided for the employee and use is required.

After properly removing and disposing of used gloves in a sealed container, staff must wash their hands with soap and water.

**GENERAL POLICIES:**

Purpose: To minimize the transmission of communicable disease, to prevent infection and to help assure optimum health for all consumers and employees.

All Supportive Lifestyles, Inc. staff who may encounter bodily fluids as part of their job will be trained in infection control procedures. Procedures for hand washing, glove use, cleaning etc. will be explained as part of their orientation.

Hepatitis B vaccination information will be offered to the employee at time of hire. All employees in a position to encounter bodily fluids as part of their job will be encouraged to be vaccinated and their decision will be documented on the appropriate form. If they choose to not participate in the vaccination series, they must sign the waiver of vaccination as a condition of continued employment. The cost of the vaccination is completely reimbursable once the series has been completed. Employees will be provided with yearly training on infection control and sanitary practices.

All exposure to blood and bodily fluid will be reported to the Nursing Department immediately and documented. Procedures for responding to such exposures will be implemented immediately. Documentation will be maintained in the employee’s personnel file.

**PREVENTION OF INFECTION**

Stay home from work if you have an infectious illness. Employees with upper respiratory infections, fever, vomiting, diarrhea, or any communicable disease that could be transmitted to consumers or coworkers should check with a supervisor and/or nursing before reporting to work. Practice good hand washing. Face masks are available for use.

* Wear gloves whenever handling any blood or bodily fluids.
* Employees with any breaks in the skin of their hands will cover the wound and wear gloves. Employees with draining lesions or wounds much be evaluated before working with consumers and their equipment.
* Employees must change gloves and wash their hands with soap and water after each potential contact with blood and bodily fluid and when working with more than one individual.
* Supportive Lifestyles, Inc. will cooperate with state and local authorities to respond to and take steps to prevent the spread of infection in the event of a pandemic outbreak. Employees will receive training on proper protocols.
* Employees will wear masks, hair coverings and/or shoe protectors when directed by a supervisor or nursing staff. Gowns or aprons should be worn when clothing could become soiled with bodily substances.
* Surfaces that become soiled with bodily fluids or blood must be cleaned up and disinfected immediately.
* Liquid and solid waste should be flushed in the toilet. Items that cannot be flushed should be placed in a bio-hazard bag, or a plastic bag and double-bagged, tied securely and placed in a sealed receptable for collection.
* Wear gloves when handling contaminated laundry. All linen exposed to bodily fluids should be washed separately from other laundry, disinfected with 3 parts water to 1 part bleach solution in the washing machine and then dried in the dryer.
* Bins or buckets (such as wash basins or emesis containers) are to be cleaned and disinfected as soon as feasible after use.

Employees who have an accident on the job that causes a break in the skin, must notify nursing immediately and the Worker’s Compensation Supervisor (program administration or on-call designee) via the posted phone number.

**POST EXPOSURE EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP**

Surface Exposure to Blood and Bodily Fluid

Wear gloves. Remove excess fluid with paper towels and place in a plastic bag lined waste basket. Bodily fluid spills that land on the floor, walls or other surfaces should be promptly cleaned with a disinfectant solution of 1:10 bleach (1 part bleach to 10 parts water). Do not rinse and allow the surface to air dry.

Dispose of gloves in a plastic bag-lined waste basket. Wash hands with soap and water.

Exposure to Blood and Bodily Fluids:

Wash hands and affected surfaces immediately and thoroughly. If the eyes, open skin, or other mucous membranes are affected, follow first aid procedures.

Notify nursing and personnel (or designee) of the exposure, and consumer (source individual) involved.

Employees and the source individual may be required to undergo a medical evaluation as directed by nursing and/or personnel.

**FOLLOW UP AND EVALUATION**

The Director of Operations in consultation with nursing and personnel, will review the circumstances of all exposure incidents to determine:

* Engineering controls that were in use at the time,
* Work practices followed,
* The device that was used and involved,
* Protective equipment that was used at the time of the exposure incident,
* Incident location,
* Procedure being performed when the exposure occurred,
* Employee training.

If revisions to current protocols and policies are needed, it will be documented, and staff will receive additional training on implementation.

**NON-ROUTINE TASKS**

When employees are required to perform non-routine tasks that have the potential to be hazardous, a special training session will be provided by nursing staff or the program director. Employees will be informed of the hazards as well as proper precautions and procedures to take to reduce or avoid potential exposure.

**TRAINING**

Training will be provided at time of hire and annually on the Employee Right to Know, Infection Control and Bloodborne Pathogens and the program’s AWAIR plan. Training is required whenever a new hazard is introduced or identified.

This program will be reviewed by the Director or Director of Operations on an annual and as needed basis and make revisions as necessary to maintain current information.

ERTK: 1-2007

12-2012

3-2016

8-2022

1-2024

1-2025

**SUPPORTIVE LIFESTYLES INC.**

**A WORK ACCIDENT INJURY REDUCTION (AWAIR) PROGRAM**

**PURPOSE:**

Supportive Lifestyles, Inc. strives to provide worksites and working conditions that promote health and safety and protect our employees and consumers. This plan reduces the likelihood of injury or illness due to hazardous working conditions.

**GOAL:**

Supportive Lifestyles, Inc. will establish and maintain a company culture that is committed to workplace safety and health.

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. Safety Committee: Each site has a designated Safety Officer, which is the Site Coordinator/DC. Regular communication takes place to review specific workplace safety and health issues, that are brought to the attention of maintenance or the director of operations to research and implement proactive measures to build an overall awareness of employee safety and health.
2. Enforcement of Safety Rules: On an ongoing basis, all employees are expected to comply with all policies, procedures and instructions that might negatively affect an individual employee or consumer’s health and safety.
3. Address Safety and Health Issues: Employee safety and health issues occurring on the job, and violations of applicable policies and procedures will be addressed immediately upon receipt of information.
4. Regular Safety Audits: As part of an ongoing Quality Assurance Program, all sites and

vehicles will receive routine inspections. Corrective action will be implemented that includes long-term solutions for all identified hazards. This will be addressed in a time frame not to exceed 7 business days.

1. Accident Investigations: All accidents and “near miss” events will be investigated and

corrective action will be taken as soon as possible - not to exceed 7 business days.

1. Routine Training: Routine training will be provided on company policies and procedures related to health and safety practices. This includes during employee orientation, regular staff development trainings; prior to implementation of new equipment and procedures for which employees may be unfamiliar; and after significant events, such as accidents and “near miss” events. Documentation will be maintained in the employee training file.

Employees will receive orientation to each individual work site. Training will include orientation to: evacuation routes and emergency procedures, shelter locations, location of site utilities and shut-off valves, smoke detector locations, fire extinguishers, radio, flashlight and first aid kit. Employees must participate in regularly scheduled fire drills.

**EMPLOYEE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Achieving and maintaining a safe work environment is the responsibility of all Supportive Lifestyles, Inc. employees: administration, nursing staff, site coordinators, direct support professionals, maintenance, and volunteers. Promotion of a safe work environment includes training in operations, recognizing and reporting potential health and safety concerns immediately and retraining when unsafe practices are noticed. Upon hire, annually, and as necessary, all employees will receive training in safely carrying out their job duties and safe operation of equipment. All employees are expected to follow policies and always engage in safe work practices.

1. Upon hire and as necessary to ensure continued safe work practices, employees will

be provided training on specific job tasks and duties.

An employee’s priority is to perform each task safely according to procedure. If an employee is unsure on how to perform a specific task, they must bring this to the attention of and consult with their immediate supervisor, program director, program administrator, director of operations or nursing staff prior to performing the task.

1. Employees must wear personal protective equipment required for the specific task, as directed and according to applicable policy and procedure. To minimize exposure to potentially harmful substances, they must be properly handled according to procedure. Concerns of this nature must be reported to a supervisor immediately upon discovery.
2. Equipment must be clean and maintained in working order. If equipment is not in working order, contact maintenance for repair or replacement.
3. Employees must report all accidents and “near miss” events to their site coordinator, program administrator, program director, director of operations and/or nursing immediately upon occurrence. Employees will also follow up with the appropriate paperwork.
4. Immediately upon learning of an accident or “near miss” event, the program administrator, director of operations and/or nursing department will investigate the accident or “near miss”, document the investigation, and submit the paperwork as required by Supportive Lifestyle’s Inc. Worker’s Compensation Provider and OSHA Standards.
5. The director of operations will promptly address all safety concerns raised by employees. An initial investigation will take place to determine the validity of the concern. Consultation will occur with affected departments including nursing, maintenance, program administrator or the director. Corrective action will be implemented where deemed necessary. This can include but is not limited to: repair or replacement of existing equipment, issuing a maintenance work order, additional employee training, and/or consulting with the Director for additional options.
6. To prevent recurrence, recent safety violations and prevention methods will be reviewed at regularly scheduled meetings.
7. As part of our ongoing culture of workplace health and safety, direct support professionals will promptly report all potential safety hazards to the site coordinator, whether the hazard is witnessed or reported by coworkers, consumers, legal representatives, and case managers.
8. This AWAIR Program will be reviewed annually and updated as needed. All employees will receive annual training on Supportive Lifestyles, Inc. Safety Program Manual which includes this AWAIR policy.

**HAZARD IDENTIFICATION, ANALYSIS AND CONTROL**

1. All Supportive Lifestyles, Inc. employees will be trained in step-by-step procedures on proper operation and routine maintenance required of all equipment being used.

2. New equipment, procedures and changes in consumer health or care needs that have the potential to pose a risk to the safety and/or health of employees will be explored. Training will be provided before implementation of the task. The need for personal protective equipment will be evaluated, made available. Employees will be required to use the personal protective equipment as required by Supportive Lifestyles, Inc. Policy and Procedures.

3. All work sites that have a private well will have an annual water test to determine the presence of coliform and nitrates. If either of these are present, the water will be treated and retested. This test is conducted by a certified water testing lab as required by applicable licensing law. Septic systems will be pumped on a regular basis to prevent overflow or back up.

4. All fuel-burning heating sources will be inspected annually by a certified technician.

5. Regular safety inspections of the home will be conducted by the site coordinator or other individuals as delegated by the Program Administrator or Director of Operations. Maintenance will be contacted to complete any identified maintenance needs.

6. All equipment and vehicles will receive regular maintenance, including oil changes, tire rotation and replacement, fluid refills, etc. Wheelchair vans will have their lift equipment, ramps and securement systems serviced at least annually by a certified technician. When maintenance needs are discovered or identified between maintenance visits, the Site Coordinator will report it to maintenance, who will assist with coordinating the needed repair.

Employees will receive training on how to safely use wheelchair lifts and securement systems prior to first use.

6. Fireplaces and wood burning devices will have a protective guard to prevent burns when in use. Only trained staff will be allowed to operate.

7. Staff will receive training on bloodborne pathogens, infection control and standard precautions upon hire and annually. Training will be provided prior to provision of care to individuals that have been diagnosed with an infection or communicable disease where additional precautions must be taken to prevent the spread of infection. Personal protective equipment is available and is required to be used by employees.

8. Supportive Lifestyles will cooperate with state and local authorities, and the Centers for Disease Control to respond to public health emergencies and pandemic outbreaks. Each site has an emergency response plan on file at the site. Procedures will be reviewed as necessary and whenever a potential hazard exists.

**COMMUNICATION**

1. All employees of Supportive Lifestyles, Inc. will receive training on OSHA, “Employee Right to Know”, AWAIR Policies and Procedures and Infection Control/Sanitary Practices upon hire and annually.

2. Management personnel (director, program administrator, designated coordinators, program directors, director of operations, site coordinators and nursing personnel) will observe and coach employees on safe work practices, addressing mistakes as they occur, provide retraining, and reinforce the use of safe work practices.

3. Maintaining a healthy and safe work environment is every employee’s responsibility within Supportive Lifestyles, Inc. Employees are required to work together as a team to communicate and reinforce safe work practices and report potentially unsafe conditions.

4. Employees will not be retaliated against for bringing health and safety-related concerns to a supervisor’s attention.

5. In the event of a public health emergency or pandemic outbreak, all employees will be notified of and required to follow the procedures specified by state and local authorities.

6. Employees will receive annual training on emergency preparedness practices. Each site location is required to maintain an emergency kit and a first aid kit.

7. Employees are expected to follow the Supportive Lifestyles, Inc. policies and procedures related to health and safety practices. The policies are detailed in the Supportive Lifestyles Inc. policy manual.

**ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION/ANALYSIS**

The main goal of an accident investigation is to identify the hazard(s); unsafe behavior or conditions present immediately before and during an accident or near-miss event; the cause of the accident or near-miss event, and development and implementation of corrective action to prevent future occurrences.

1. All events or accidents that cause injury (including near-miss events) to an individual or damage to equipment will be investigated. Near-miss events will be investigated and addressed to prevent injury or damage from occurring.

2. The components of an accident investigation include:

a. Collect Data: Gather facts about the incident.

Interview witnesses.

Examine equipment, materials, and accident site.

Review equipment maintenance records.

Review employee training records relevant to the incident.

Review current operating procedures.

b. Identify the Cause(s): Look for possible causes of the accident/near- miss events.

Equipment

Methods and Procedures

Personnel and Training

Employee behavior and/or consumer-related behavior

Environmental issues at the time of the incident.

c. Analyze the Findings: Based on the information gathered, examine the findings to

determine the immediate and underlying causes of the incident/accident/near-

miss.

d. Develop Corrective Action: Based upon the analysis and findings, to prevent

reoccurrence.

1. At the conclusion of the investigation, a review of the response to

the incident also will be evaluated. “Was response timely and appropriate?”

2. The plan of correction may include additional training for employees on new or revised policies/procedures, and new equipment.

**ENFORCEMENT OF SAFETY AND HEALTH PROGRAM POLICIES**

1. All employees must know their responsibility for maintaining a work environment that promotes health and safety. All employees will be informed of the location of the Supportive Lifestyles, Inc. Safety Manual in each site. Employees will be provided training on this manual at hire and annually.

2. Company policy and procedures related to health and safe practices will be strictly enforced. Employees found to be in violation of these policies and procedures or who engage in unsafe practices while operating equipment and/or performing job duties will be subject to disciplinary action, up to including termination of employment.

**PROGRAM REVIEW**

The program will be reviewed to determine if the company is meeting its goals as described in this AWAIR Program. If objectives are not met, the company will make necessary changes to the program policy and procedures. New objectives may be implemented as needed to help achieve greater goals.

The OSHA 300 Log is maintained at a separate location from the service sites and is completed annually. The “Employee Right to Know” Policy is reviewed annually and updated as needed or required by applicable law.

AWAIR: 1-2007

12-2012

3-2016

8-2022

1-2024

1-2025