

Blue Earth and Nicollet Counties Provider Agencies Handbook

*Prepared by
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- Questions to Ask the Provider Agency

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Hiring From Provider Agencies:

If you choose to hire your support from a company or an agency, the first step is making contact. This handbook provides a listing of providers located in Blue Earth and Nicollet Counties that may offer the kinds of services you are looking for. Of course, many provider agencies cannot only manage your support but can also help identify your needs and assist you with a variety of services.

If hiring from a provider seems right for you, first you must find out what is available. Asking the following questions may give you a place to start:

- X Who are my long-time friends and social contacts? Do they know of some agencies?
- X What organizations have been helpful in the past?
- X Have I heard any good “word-of-mouth” advertising about particular agencies?
- X Do I already know someone who works at a local agency?

When talking to potential provider agencies, take notes. List the date of your conversation, the agency’s name, who you spoke with, their telephone number, and any comments that might help you make a decision later.

At the end of this handbook, you will find checklists of questions you might want to ask while talking to potential providers. Provider agencies are happy to give you information about their services. So don’t be afraid to ask questions!

What to Do if You Have Complaints or Concerns:

Before you enter into a relationship with a provider agency, ask about their complaint process. Most agencies are required to have procedures in place to investigate and resolve complaints. Understanding how and to whom to address your concerns may save you from future frustration.

If you have a complaint, your first step should be to inform the agency. Give them a chance to resolve the problem. More often than not, they will work hard to address your concerns and find a solution.

If, however, you have informed the agency of a concern and are dissatisfied with their response, you may contact one of the following three organizations for help:

State Office of Ombudsman for Mental Health and Mental Retardation

121 Seven Place, E., Suite 420
Metro Square Building
St. Paul, MN 55101-2117
Phone: (612) 296-3848 or (800) 657-3506

Minnesota Office of Health Facility Complaints

393 North Dunlap
P.O. Box 64970
St. Paul, MN 55164
Phone: (612) 643-2520 or (800) 369-7994

Minnesota Department of Human Services

Community Support for Minnesotans with Disabilities
444 Lafayette Road, N.
St. Paul, MN 55155-3857
Phone: (612) 296-6117 or (800) 627-3529

Alliance Health Care, Inc.

Address: Madison East Center 1400 Madison Avenue, #212 Mankato, MN 56001	Contact: Deb Williams, R.N.
Phone: (507) 386-1953	Fax: (507) 386-1692
Internet: www.alliancehealthcare.com	

"We strive to maintain a progressive, nurturing environment with a team that is dedicated to fulfilling the highest standards of quality care."

In 1989, a parent needed home-care services for her 7-year-old daughter who has Down's Syndrome. Both personal care and therapy personnel were hired to work in the safety and comfort of their home. The parent's personal knowledge of home-care needs and business led her to incorporate Alliance Health Care in October 1990 as a personal care provider organization. In 1992, Alliance Health Care began providing in-home family support and, in July 1993, became a Class "A" licensed home health agency and state-enrolled medical supplier. Since our first PCA and therapist in 1989, Alliance Health Care has grown into a home health care network with approximately 1,000 clients; nearly 2,000 employees annually; and 4 regional offices throughout Minnesota.

Philosophy

Alliance Health Care believes health care is a basic human right. It must be available and provided in a comprehensive manner that enhances the quality of life for individuals in need. Home health care is an important part of the health care system that helps to ensure quality of life. We strive to maintain a progressive, nurturing environment with a team that is dedicated to fulfilling the highest standards of quality care. Alliance Health Care and its staff shall operate and furnish services in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations and accepted professional standards and principles.

Goals and Objectives

- To provide all levels of home care service, allowing the client to be in their home and involved in establishing, implementing, and evaluating services.
- To provide a coordinated team approach to therapeutic and rehabilitative health care services utilizing nursing, home health aides; medical social services; physical, occupational, and speech therapy; nutritional consultation; and a system of referral, follow-up, and evaluations.
- To provide home health care services and training sufficient to ensure the client and their caregiver the assumption of personal responsibility for health and personal needs.
- To provide educational opportunities within the health care system for employees through an ongoing participation in professional organizations.

- To provide coordinated liaison with health and welfare agencies to meet the needs of the community through joint efforts, meetings, and community awareness programs.

Health and Personal Care Services

We provide skilled nursing/case management, home health aides, personal care attendants, homemaking, therapies, respite care, housing with services, medical supplies, and durable medical equipment and companion services. We accept all major insurance in addition to county waivers, Medicare, Medicaid, and private pay.

Rule 42/Supported Living and Waivered Services Provided

In addition to our home health care services, Alliance Health Care also operates a small number of waivered service sites. These homes allow individuals maximum independence and participation in society. We believe in going beyond ordinary services and customize our homes to meet each resident's needs. Alliance Health Care understands that each resident is a special and unique individual. In addition to having their own rooms, residents are encouraged to make their own decisions. From grocery shopping, meal preparation, and home decoration to chores and leisure time, each person chooses his/her participation level. Family members are also encouraged to become involved in activities such as outdoor picnics or trips to the shopping mall. We strive to help everyone feel truly at home. As with all of our services, Alliance Health Care provides our clients with qualified, compassionate staff. Our QMRP's and house coordinators are pivotal in the care of our residents.

Licensure/Accreditation

- Personal care and assisted living providing including housing with services and foster care. Enrolled by the Minnesota Department of Human Services.
- Medicare-certified/Medicaid-enrolled Class A licensed home-care provider.
- Medicare, Medicaid, and private insurance provider of quality home medical supplies and equipment – delivery and setup throughout Minnesota and western Wisconsin.

Amber House, Inc.

Address: 317 Cardinal Drive Mankato, MN 56001	Contact: Lois A. Palmer, Administrator
Phone: (507) 388-9964 (corporate office)	Fax: (507) 388-2426 (corporate office)

or

Address: 317 Cardinal Drive Mankato, MN 56001	Contact: Peggy Brucker, Program Director; or Liz Tabor, Program Coordinator
Cell Phone: (507) 381-0983	Phone/Fax: (507) 344-0209

Mission

To support individuals to discover, develop, and grow their talents, abilities, and relationships in order to live their life to the fullest.

Description of Services

Amber House, Inc., provides waived and adult foster care services in a new home-setting for people with developmental disabilities and related conditions in Blue Earth County. We are a small provider who remain committed to our mission and the people involved. Our programs are developed for individualized and group activities. We always focus on the reason we are here.

Licensure

Amber House, Inc., is licensed through the Minnesota Department of Human Services to provide 245B Home- and Community-Based Waiver Services (WS) and through Blue Earth County Human Services to provide 203 Adult Foster Care (AFC).

Christian Concern, Inc. (CCI)

Address: 421 S. Front Street Mankato, MN 56001	Contact: Steve Schoener, Executive Director
Phone: (507) 345-8590	Fax: (507) 345-3771
Email: steve.schoener@christianconcern.org	

CCI has been providing quality services to people with developmental disabilities since our incorporation in 1970. We are a private, nonprofit organization currently employing 110 staff and serving 50 consumers. CCI operates two ICF/MR homes in upper North Mankato and three supportive living services (SLS) homes in Mankato and North Mankato. We also provide in-home services in the Mankato/North Mankato area and the surrounding communities.

Mission

The mission of CCI is to enhance quality of life by providing diverse services for persons with independent living challenges.

Vision

The vision of CCI is to be the preferred provider of progressive individualized services for persons with independent living challenges.

Intermediate Care Facility (ICF/MR) Services

We operate two ICF/MR homes in a quiet residential area in upper North Mankato. Each spacious home provides services to eight consumers who have their own rooms and share the common areas. Each facility allows the eight people living there to express their individuality and increase their independence in a comfortable, home-like setting. Our dedicated staff provides 24-hour supervised care. They also provide support in the areas of self-care, daily living skills, and recreational activities and community integration. The full-time LPN nursing staff adds a high level of care for consumers who have medical challenges.

Supportive Living Services (SLS)

CCI currently operates three waived services SLS sites that provide consumers with all the comforts of home. They are located in residential neighborhoods in Mankato and North Mankato.

Independence is encouraged and life is enriched by a variety of activities. Adaptive equipment is available to make life more enjoyable. The qualified staff schedule and accompany each consumer to all appointments they may need to attend.

In-Home Services

This service provides staff support to consumers and their family members while the consumer lives at home. There is a variety of support services that our staff can provide, including teaching and assistance with life skills, communication, self-care, activities of daily living, community integration, respite, and personal support.

Recreation/Leisure Activity Services

As a complement to our other services, CCI provides organized recreational activities for the consumers we serve as well as others in the community. Currently, CCI rents a large space at a local church, which includes a large activity area, kitchen facilities, and a gym. We organize attendance and participation in a large variety of community activities and events which are of interest to the consumers. The activities are designed so the consumers have fun while building skills in all areas of their lives. CCI also places an emphasis on providing a collection of quality-filled activities over the summer break from school.

Licensure/Accreditation

The ICF/MR homes are licensed by both the Minnesota Department of Human Services (Consolidated Rule 245B) and the Minnesota Department of Health.

The SLS homes and in-home services are licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services (Consolidated Rule 245B), and the SLS homes have the added license of adult foster care by the counties in which they are located.

ELM Homes

Address: P.O. Box 489 Waseca, MN 56093	Contact: Gene Miller, Administrator
Phone: (507) 835-1146	Fax: (507) 835-4574

or

Address: 206 W. Ninth Street Mankato, MN 56001	Contact: Gene Miller, Administrator
Phone: (507) 625-8905	Fax: (507) 625-8413

Other Contacts

Mavis Klein, Administrative Assistant
Shannon M. Peters, LSW, Director of Program Services, QMRP
Amy Smith, LSW, Program Resource Supervisor, QMRP

Philosophy

ELM Homes' philosophy is to provide a variety of residential settings and training within the community; to ensure individualized quality of programs, quality of life, independence, and self-determination within each individual.

Services

ELM Homes has been providing residential services to individuals with developmental disabilities in Waseca since 1979. Since the early 80's, ELM Homes has expanded to provide numerous residential-based services to approximately 250 consumers with disabilities and their families in nine south-central Minnesota counties: Nicollet, Le Sueur, Scott, Blue Earth, Waseca, Steele, Dodge, Faribault, and Freeborn.

ELM Homes provides a continuum of services which include the following:

- Residential homes – ICF/MR – Class A
- Residential homes – ICF/MR – Class B
- Supervised living services (SLS)
- Semi-independent living situations (SILS)
- Traumatic brain-injured program (TBI)
- In-home family support programs
- CADI
- Adult foster care homes
- Child foster care homes

- Personal care attendant (PCA)
- ELM Care Day Care Center, Waseca

Many of our homes are handicapped-accessible. We provide vehicles that accommodate wheelchairs and physically-challenged consumers. Furthermore, ELM Homes encourages each individual to take part in their community including, but not limited to: use of the library and shopping malls, bowling and theater, dances, community education classes, church, and dining out. Staff are trained in providing community integration/access and recreational activities. We are proud of the communities we serve, proud of our consumers, and feel community access is beneficial to both.

ELM Homes hires the best qualified staff for its positions. At the present, we have approximately 400 employees, including programmatic/QMRP, administrative, and maintenance staff. Additionally, ELM Homes has registered nurses and licensed practical nurses on staff in order to provide medical care for our consumers. Orientation and ongoing training for all employees ensures the best quality care and services. Training includes such topics as behavioral problem-solving, recreation activities, Rule 40 and other regulations, data privacy, and medical topics such as CPR and first aid.

Licensure

ELM Homes and its services are under a number of licenses, rules, and regulations. They are:

- DHS Rule 10
- DHS Rule 17
- DHS Rule 185
- DHS Rule 40
- DHS Rule 203
- Department of Health
- Department of Public Safety
- Adult residential habilitation
- Vulnerable adults/children
- Admission rule
- Case management
- Aversive and deprivation procedures
- Adult/child waiver
- Adult/child foster care
- State and federal ICF/MR
- State and local fire inspection

Griffin Housing Services, Inc.

Address: 117 Capri Drive Mankato, MN 56001	Contact: Barrie Evans, Owner and Program Manager
Phone: (507) 420-7855 or (507) 388-6434	
Email: barrieev@hickotrytech.net	

or

Address: 108 Tundra Court Mankato, MN 56001	Contact: Jamie Schmidt, Program Manager
Phone: (507) 327-4702 or (507) 388-4545	
Email: jamietundra@charter.net	

or

Address: 109 Swan Lane Mankato, MN 56001	Contact: Leslee Trio, Owner and QMRP
Phone: (507) 345-4948 or (507) 351-2418	

Mission

We support consumers in their home and community.

Values

- A safe and relaxing home
- Community opportunities
- Trained and professional staff
- Support from and communication with the individual and his/her team
- Health and safety, providing training for staff and consumers.
- Flexible and creative supports and programs
- Education
- Self-advocacy and self-determination
- Staff retention/staff consistency

Services

Currently, we have two waived group homes. We support individuals with a variety of support needs, including: developmental disabilities, TBI, autism, Asperger's, and mental health issues.

Licensure

We are licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services (Consolidated Rule 245B) and Blue Earth County Adult Foster Care (Rule 203).

Habilitative Services Inc.

Address: P.O. Box 776 New Ulm, MN 56073-0076	Contact: Devin Nelson, Program Coordinator
Phone: (507) 233-4400	Fax: (507) 354-7574
Email: devinn@newulmtel.net	
Internet: www.habsvinc.com	

or

Address: 1400 Madison Avenue Suite 348 Mankato, MN 56001	Contact: Karen Eisenbacher, Program Manager
Phone: (507) 625-6047	Fax: (507) 625-8867
Email: karene@gotocrystal.net	
Internet: www.habsvinc.com	

"Providing value-based services that enhance an individual's quality of life by developing, maintaining, or restoring skills, modifying environment, or applying adapted technology."

Habilitative Services was incorporated in April 1984. Our administrative office is located in Lakefield, Minnesota. We have satellite offices in Windom, Luverne, New Ulm, Marshall, Mankato, and Fairmont. We currently employ 385 staff and serve approximately 300 clients in a 17-county area in southwestern Minnesota, including Blue Earth and Sibley Counties.

Habilitative Services is a proprietary agency that serves individuals with challenges that currently limit their domestic, employment, educational, and leisure opportunities. We provide value-based services that enhance an individual's quality of life by developing, maintaining, or restoring skills; modifying environment; or applying adapted technology. We have the ability to assess people's needs and develop a service delivery system to meet those needs. We do not limit our services by geographical boundaries.

Mission

"Quality of life is achieving potentials."

Vision

- Our organization focuses on participant values and encourages employee ownership, while being profitable and financially sound.

- Our organization serves individuals with challenges that currently limit their domestic, employment, educational, or leisure opportunities.
- We provide value-based services that enhance an individual's quality of life by developing, maintaining, or restoring skills; modifying environment; or applying adapted technology.

Case Management Services

Types of case management services available are monitoring and evaluating services a client is receiving, protecting the rights of a client with mental retardation, qualified mental retardation professional, developing an individual service plan, and completing client assessments.

Child Foster Care/Child Respite Services

We provide specialized foster care and child respite services for children 18 years or younger who have physical and developmental disabilities. These services can be provided on an hourly basis. Families are licensed through our agency according to DHS Rule 1 and receive training through our education department.

Education Department

We provide value-based training programs to assist service providers in developing the attitude, values, and skills essential to enhance the consumer's quality of life. We offer customized training tailored to meet specific client or agency needs.

Equipment/Supply Vendor

We are approved by Medical Assistance to repair or adapt equipment such as wheelchairs, seating systems, AFO's, communication aids, etc. We can assist with coordinating therapy appointments and ordering rehab equipment and/or adapted technology. We can provide training on lifting/transferring or consult on making a home accessible for a client.

Guardianship/Conservatorship

We provide guardianship/conservatorship services to vulnerable adults or elderly individuals who can no longer make the decisions necessary to care for themselves or their finances. Services are provided on an hourly basis with a discount available. Fees may be paid privately or by a county agency.

Home Health Agency

Licensed by the Minnesota Department of Health as a Class A home health agency. Services are provided in the person's residence and may include nursing care, speech therapy, social services, home health aide tasks, or provision of medical supplies and equipment. Services are supervised by a registered nurse or therapist.

Personal Care Assistant Services

Services are designed to assist an individual to live as independently as possible and remain in their home. Personal care services are ordered by a physician and supervised by a registered nurse. Services include monitoring of medical conditions, personal cares such as dressing and grooming, and assistance with medications. Personal care is not babysitting or homemaker services. Services are paid through the Medical Assistance Program.

Semi-Independent Living Services

Services are designed to assist persons with mental retardation who do not need 24-hour supervision found in a residential setting yet are not ready for independent living. Each client is provided necessary support to enable them to be as independent as possible in the community.

Speech Language Pathology

Speech therapy services include the evaluation, treatment, and management of communication disorders for people of all ages. Those who could benefit from speech therapy include persons who have had a stroke, head injury, hearing loss, developmental delay, cancer, or other disorder affecting communication, chewing, or swallowing. Services must be ordered by a physician and are reimbursed through Medicare, Medical Assistance, or private insurance.

Supported Living Services

Persons who are diagnosed as mentally retarded and have received approval from their county family service agency are eligible for services. This residential-based service is provided on a daily basis to persons who require 24 hours or less of supervision, assistance, or training. Services may be provided on an hourly or daily basis in the client's home or in a licensed foster home.

Licensure/Accreditation

- DHS licensure to provide waived services and semi-independent living services in 16 counties in southwestern and south central Minnesota.
- DHS licensure as a child placement agency to place children in foster care.
- Licensed by the Minnesota Department of Health as a Class A professional home care agency.
- Approved as a personal care assistance provider organization through DHS.
- Licensed by DHS and Medicare to provide speech therapy services.

Harry Meyering Center

Address: ICF/MR 109 Homestead Drive P.O. Box 302 Mankato, MN 56002-0302	Contact: David Ross, Program Director; Carol Lee, Executive Director
Phone: (507) 387-8281	Fax: (507) 387-8237

or

Address: SILS/SLS Downtown Office 709 Front Street Mankato, MN 56001	Contact: Mary Bloodgood or Donna Drganc (Program Directors)
Phone: (507) 625-7398 (Mary) (507) 625-7392 (Donna)	Fax: (507) 625-9277

"HMC utilizes state-of-the-art principles and technology coupled with 30 years of experience to meet complex issues presented by persons we serve."

For 30 years, HMC has remained a nonprofit organization committed to helping people with developmental disabilities to lead full lives in the Mankato community. To do that, HMC has responded to the changing needs and expectations that consumers and their families have of service providers.

HMC utilizes state-of-the-art principles and technology coupled with 25 years of experience to meet complex issues presented by persons we serve. HMC has remained committed to supporting people in their chosen lifestyle as described by the values. The HMC values guide the decision-making and interactions throughout the agency.

Values

- A home which is safe and relaxing; offers privacy; and reflects the interests, routines, and personalities of those living there.
- Respectful communication which promotes and protects the interests of individuals served, employees, and the agency.
- An emotionally-safe environment which promotes security and a sense of well-being for all.
- Physical safety with a carefully-determined balance of individuality, security, protection, and choice.
- The right of choice, recognizing that individuals have differing abilities to choose, comprehend, and experience the consequences.
- Teaching and/or supporting individuals served in the accomplishment of their goals.

- Practices which promote socially-valued roles of all individuals served as a way to enhance acceptance, self-esteem, and relationships.
- Proactive leaders/managers who demonstrate competency and integrity and who are responsive to and supportive of the persons they mentor and empower.
- A well-trained, diverse workforce committed to person-centered services and the contributions they make as team members.
- Fiscally-sound practices which reflect a commitment to our mission statement and preserve the integrity of the organization.
- Planning for and responding to challenges with creativity and innovation.
- The best health possible given the unique characteristics of each individual served.
- The exercise of legal and civil rights afforded to each citizen.

The Harry Meyering Center is made up of several service models.

Intermediate Care Facility

The intermediate care facility at 109 Homestead Drive, Mankato, consists of ten apartments with generally three persons living in each apartment. Apartments are designed to meet the needs and preferences of adults learning and living in the community. Each person has a private bedroom with shared living, dining, and bathroom.

The program is staffed 24 hours each day in a manner which effectively supports persons residing there. Staff are trained to proactively work with issues of behavioral intervention and education, physical disabilities, health maintenance, speech and language development, deafness, blindness, aging and retirement, and community integration.

A team of nurses compliments the direct-service staff to ensure necessary medical oversight and communication with the medical community.

Semi-Independent Living Services (SILS)/In-Home

The semi-independent living services program, one of the oldest in the state of Minnesota, was created in 1975. SILS provides counseling, training, and support needed for people to live alone, with a roommate, or a spouse in their own apartment or home or in the family setting as they prepare for greater independence.

Areas of focus include: meal management, shopping, financial management, personal appearance, apartment maintenance, accessing resources, right and responsibilities of community living, social and leisure skills, and general medical supervision. The amount of staff support varies based on need. The SILS service serves many people with mental retardation and developmental disabilities.

A unique feature of HMC's semi-independent living service is the availability of on-call services, allowing a SILS staff response on holidays and weekends. Services can be modified to support individuals utilizing nontraditional mechanisms.

Under the CADI and TBI Waivers, a similar service is designed for people with traumatic brain injury and for others who are elderly, physically disabled, or have mental health issues.

Supportive Living Services (SLS)

Supportive living services started in 1985 with our first house in the community.

SLS services are specifically designed to the individual's unique needs and desires. Some persons live alone or with their families. Others live with two or three roommates in 24-hour supervised homes scattered throughout the Mankato community.

The focus of services is the support necessary for people to be successful in the community. We are proud of the individual, self-directed lives that people live. Supports include training skills in all areas of daily living and community living, counseling, monitoring and supervision, and whatever supports are needed for people to carry out their dreams and desires.

Licensure/Accreditation

- The SILS Program is licensed by DHS under Consolidated Rule 245B.
- The SLS homes are licensed by Blue Earth County under Adult Foster Care. Services provided by the program are licensed by the Department of Human Services under the Consolidated Rule 245B.
- The ICF/MR is certified by federal regulations administered by the Department of Health and licensed by the Department of Human Services under Consolidated Rule 245B.

HaugBeck Homes, Inc.

Address: 325 S. Broad Street, Suite 201 Mankato, MN 56001	Contact: Paul Haugesag
Phone: (507) 385-1805 (office)	

Mission Statement

It is the mission of HaugBeck Homes, Inc., to provide the best quality services possible to persons with developmental disabilities and/or related conditions. At HaugBeck Homes, Inc., we believe that every person is important and has the right to opportunities, growth, and fulfillment in their lives. We are committed to providing individual, customized services that focus on an individual's strengths rather than their weaknesses.

Description of Services Provided

HaugBeck Homes, Inc., provides 24-hour residential services in an SLS (group home) setting for both adults and minors with developmental disabilities and related conditions in Blue Earth, Nicollet, and Le Sueur Counties.

HaugBeck Homes remains a smaller provider that emphasizes very personal direct care and program management services. HaugBeck Homes management continues to have regular contact and be personally involved in each consumer's home and lives.

Licensure

HaugBeck Homes, Inc., is licensed through the State of Minnesota to provide waived services under the Consolidated Rule as well as Adult Foster Care under Rule 203. All HaugBeck Homes, Inc., residential sites are dual-licensed.

Intrepid USA Health Care Services

Address: 12 Civic Center Plaza Suite 2085 Mankato, MN 56002	Contact:
Phone: (507) 625-1553	Fax: (507) 625-4792

*"Providing the highest quality nursing and rehabilitative services available
in home, hospital, and long-term care settings."*

Intrepid USA was founded in 1994. Our administrative office is located in Edina, Minnesota. We have branch offices in Austin, Burnsville, Edina, Fairmont, Mankato, Rochester, Roseville, and St. Cloud, Minnesota. We have 200 offices throughout 32 states in the United States.

Services

Intrepid USA offers a full range of home-care services which include:

- Skilled nursing – visits and extended hours; R.N., LPN; and IV therapy.
- Medical social services.
- Paraprofessional staff – home health aides, homemakers, personal care attendants, companions, live-ins.
- Respite care.
- In-home conferences.
- Extended hours.
- Discharge conferences.

Licensure/Accreditation

- Medicare-certified.
- State-certified.
- Joint commission accredited.
- All staff fully bonded.

L.E.E.P. (Leisure Education for Exceptional People)

Address: 929 N. Fourth Street Mankato, MN 56001	Contact: Becky Kroc, Director
Phone: (507) 387-5122	

"Providing opportunities for people with developmental disabilities so that they might achieve optimal levels of socialization and independence in the community."

Goals

- To provide recreation opportunities for people with disabilities.
- To teach lifelong leisure skills.
- To assist with integrating people into existing community activities.
- To increase community awareness of the abilities of all people.

Clientele Served

LEEP provides services to approximately 600 people with developmental disabilities in the greater Mankato area. The average participant is around 45 years old, works at MRCI, and lives with assistance in the community.

Adventures Program

The goal of this program is to provide recreational opportunities that offer more risk and greater challenge than other LEEP programs. Possible activities include ropes course, hiking, snow-shoeing, canoeing, camping.

Classes

Classes are offered for a seven-week period. During this period, concentration is placed on learning new skills required for the class or improving skills already developed. Possible classes may include fitness for life, reading club, walking club, horseback-riding, arts and crafts.

Day Program

Day program is geared toward the retiring/retirement age participants. It is held twice a week at various locations in and around Mankato. An emphasis is placed on providing constructive and meaningful activities while maintaining an appropriate social environment. Activities may include: fitness, arts and crafts, tours, card games, and fishing.

Drop-Ins

Drop-ins are loosely-structured activities that provide social opportunities on Monday and Wednesday evenings. Various activities include crafts, movies, parties, and educational tours.

Special Events

Each month, an average of three special events to various places are offered. Possible activities include: Valley Fair, Mall of America, picnics, plays, and concerts.

Special Olympics

LEEP sponsors ten different sports for participants to compete in throughout the year. Some examples would be basketball, volleyball, softball, and bowling.

Summer Rec Program

Designed to provide structured activities for teens with disabilities who are high school age. The program runs for ten weeks during the summer from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. everyday. Activities include swimming lessons, anger management classes, grocery shopping, meal preparation, and volunteerism.

Teen Rec Club

Monthly activities held year-round (except during the summer) designed to provide structured social activities for teens to participate in. Activities include sledding, Christmas shopping, pizza parties, and swimming.

Vacations

LEEP provides participants with the opportunity to explore other parts of the country through vacations. Each year, between 14-18 possible vacations are offered. The cost of the vacation is divided among the participants. Destinations have included: Arizona, Florida, Okoboji, Toronto, and the Twin Cities.

Lifeworks

Address: 1804 Commerce Drive North Mankato, MN 56003	Contact: Kristi Powers, Service Team Leader
Phone: (507) 625-7522	Fax: (507) 625-1552
Email: kpowers@lifeworks.org	

Lifeworks services helps students and adults with disabilities define their dreams, make career and life plans, build networks of support, and then reach their goals one step at a time. We are passionately committed to fostering a new understanding of people with disabilities so they are included and their contributions welcomed.

Mission

Our mission is to serve our community and people with disabilities as we live and work together.

Lifeworks is a private nonprofit organization serving 1,000 adults with disabilities in the Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Mankato areas. It was founded in 1965 by families of children with special needs. In 2000, we began services in the Mankato area in response to requests from families, case managers, and school staff who wanted more options for young people living in the area.

People Served

The people we serve have mental retardation and related disabilities such as cerebral palsy, epilepsy, and autism. We also serve people with traumatic brain injury and mental health diagnoses. They want to work, participate in recreational activities, make friends, and plan for an exciting future.

Services

Community Employment:

- Lifeworks job coaches provide as much on-the-job support as the person and the employer need. That support ranges from full-time supervision of a small work group to daily or monthly checks of an individual who is more independent.

Life Enrichment:

- We offer opportunities to learn, discover interests, build relationships, volunteer, and connect with their neighbors.
- We regularly gather with the individual, their family members, and others close to them to create a life plan that is tailored to the individual and grounded in their values, with firmly established commitments to action.

- If the person is not able to communicate or has challenging behavior, experts in alternative and augmentative communication or positive behavioral support help develop a plan for effective, consistent support.

School-to-Work Transition:

- We help students explore career options and get real-work experience in a variety of industries so they are ready for a job or already hired at graduation.
- We help them identify their skills, interests, and support needs through careful career planning.
- They learn about different jobs through tours of businesses, presentations, and counseling sessions and gain work skills through job trials and internships.

Visual Arts:

- We offer a visual arts studio where artists with disabilities can pursue art on a full- or part-time basis and explore art as a possible vocation.
- Instructional discussions, demonstrations, and incorporation of three-dimensional art mediums are available daily with gallery and studio visits regularly scheduled.
- DreamWork hosts a series of weekend workshops, special events, and annual art show and sale.

Licensure

Lifeworks is licensed as a day training and habilitation service by the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

MBW Company

Address: 1200 S. Broadway New Ulm, MN 56073	Contact: Brenda Wiger Program Director
Phone: (507) 354-3808	Fax: (507) 354-2168
Email: mbw@newulmtel.net	

*"To provide individual support in..
achieving valued social roles... discovering and contributing gifts and talents...
growing in relationships... having community presence... and making informed choices."*

Services

- MBW on Center serves four adults who are at least age 16 or older.
- MBW-Monument serves four adults with developmental disabilities as well as significant physical and medical needs, ages 18 or older, from Brown County or the surrounding area.
- MBW-SLS provides up to 24-hour supervision or plans of care to individuals in their own homes or ages 18 or older in a smaller setting (two to four individuals per house or apartment). The service often includes a live-in roommate.
- MBW-Waiver serves both children and adults in their family home for a specified number of hours per week based on individual service plan needs targeted, including CADI Waiver, In-Home Waiver, CAC, Personal Support, TBI, and Elderly Waiver.
- MBW-SILS serves both men and women ages 18 or older who are capable of living on their own and require only part-time training and supervision. The services also include assistance with locating an apartment and finding a roommate, if desired.
- MBW-Extended Care Home Health Services provides basic daily health care that can be provided in the home up to 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Consumer-Directed Services - employer of record.

Goals and Objectives

- Support each individual to the greatest degree in order that they might be members of and active participants within the community by:
 - providing and encouraging opportunities for and conditions that foster healthy relationships with families, peers, and support people in their lives and opportunities for intimate relationships.
 - providing and encouraging opportunities for personal growth through contact and involvement with the activities of the community educational, recreational, and cultural events; a means of communication (speech, signing, communication devices, etc.) to interact and socialize; and the right to make responsible decisions concerning relationships, careers, and lifestyles.

- Enhance the quality of life for each individual by:
 - promoting optimal physical and mental health through training and encouraging adequate nutrition and exercise; assistance and training medication administration as needed; securing availability of prompt up-to-date service for medical needs; encouraging good grooming and personal hygiene habits which minimize health-related problems, promote involvement in the community, encourage socialization, foster employment possibilities, and enhance self-esteem.
 - providing support and assisting with options for a safe, secure home environment within the community including training with emergency situations; training with use of community emergency services such as police, fire, ambulance; and maintaining an environment free from hazards and safe from intruders.
 - presenting options to establish a stable source of income and providing training and support for management of income to meet daily living, physical, psychological, and social needs.

- Develop and maintain the services and supports necessary to carry out individually-identified goals and objectives to maximize each individual's gifts, talents, and contributions.

Licensure/Accreditation

- Adult foster care
- Home care/PCA Class A
- Waivered services: MR/RC, CAC, CADI, TBI, EW
- ICF/MR
- SILS
- Consumer-directed services/employer of record

MRCI

Address: 15 Map Drive Mankato, MN 56001	Contact: William Bickett Executive Director
Phone: (507) 386-5600	Fax: (507) 345-5991
Email: mrci@mnict.net	
Internet: mnict.net/~mrci	

Other Contacts

Pam Year, Program Director: (507) 386-5606

Linda Leiding, Developmental Services Program Manager: (507) 386-5642

Brian Benschopf, Transitional Services Program Manager: (507) 386-5674

Founded in 1953, MRCI is committed to creating innovative and genuine opportunities for people with barriers to employment, whether these barriers are physical, developmental, mental, or societal. We seek to provide the services and supports that will meet the needs and wishes of the individuals and that will assist the individuals to become integrated members of the community.

What We Stand For

- We value the people we serve. We believe that because everyone has unique abilities, each person has the right to access services of their own choosing.
- We value relationships. Successful outcomes are founded on individual relationships between the people we serve and our staff members. We believe that every person has the right to be treated with respect and dignity, including consumers and staff alike.
- We value individualized planning. We provide the supports necessary in assisting everyone to reach their goals and dreams and to lead self-directed lives.
- We value interdependence and collaboration. To be integral and successful community members, we all need the support of others. We believe in working together and forming partnerships with other businesses to achieve successful outcomes.
- We value leadership and accountability. We believe in a decision-making process that is creative and responsive to the ever-changing needs and desires of the people we serve. To do this, we seek input from our participants in all program areas.

A private, nonprofit human service agency, MRCI is one of Minnesota's largest and most diverse providers of employment and day services. Headquartered in Mankato with locations on Map Drive, Monks Avenue, and Front Street., MRCI also operates facilities in Fairmont, Chaska, Shakopee, New Ulm, Burnsville, Lakeville, and Worthington. We welcome you to come and visit us soon!

Services

What are your gifts?

What are your dreams?

How can you get there?

– We can help!

Planning is a process that can and does occur at all times of our lives. Our staff are experienced at providing assistance at any stage of the planning process to assist you in achieving your desired outcomes. For individuals who are just beginning a new phase of their lives or for individuals who are seeking a change in their current lives, we offer a LifeStyle planning process to meet your needs. We have facilitators who are trained in Personal Futures Planning, PATH, and Essential Lifestyle Planning for individuals who are interested in a specific type of planning process. We also offer a LifeStyle planning process that is based on the needs and wishes of the individual and family members.

After the planning process is complete, we offer a broad range of service to be able to implement the plan that is based on the needs and desires of the individual, family members, and team members. Services include:

Transitional Services

Individuals have opportunities to explore a variety of jobs through vocational assessments. Each individual is provided with information that will be useful for employment and receives training work skills. This training is designed to meet the specific needs of each individual. It may take place in community job locations or at one of our center-based sites.

Job Placement

We seek to find jobs that will match the needs of the individual. We will assist you to develop a resume and build skills that are needed to procure employment. Our job placement counselors seek work for individuals using our close professional relationships with private insurance companies, state and local government agencies, and our own MRCI programs. The individuals we place in jobs may have a disability that makes finding employment difficult, may never have worked before, may be recovering from a worker's compensation injury, or may face other obstacles to employment.

Community-Based Employment

Our Community-Based (supported) Employment Program helps individuals who have jobs within the community. They may be working in enclaves, on work crews, or at a single-site placement.

A single-site placement provides a job for one person. Job-coaching and support are given as needed to assure success. Some individuals may need long-term support, while others may eventually become competitively employed.

An enclave is a small group of people who work together in business and industry on a contract basis. MRCI staff supervises each enclave. Enclave jobs are generally in the fields of assembly and packaging, food service, laundry, and retail but are not limited to these.

A work crew is a mobile group of workers who cover several locations. MRCI staff also supervise work crews. Jobs tend to be janitorial and maintenance.

Center-Based Employment

Most center-based jobs with MRCI are packaging and assembly but also offered are data entry, micrographics, clerical, and food service work. Our industrial operations division provides full-time or part-time work. Wages are based on productivity and meet U.S. government standards. Individuals may choose long-term center-based work, but more often center-based work is part of preparing for community-based employment. Some people use a combination of center-based and community-based employment to extend their hours and earning capacity.

Day Training and Habilitation (DT&H)

Persons with severe developmental disabilities receive individualized opportunities for employment and other activities through our DT&H service. The individuals in the DT&H programs receive the same opportunities for working in the community, working on contract work, and participating in activities in the community. The advantage of the DT&H programs is the access to a higher staffing ratio to meet the additional needs of the individuals. We have five programs in Mankato to meet the complex challenges and special needs of these individuals. Our highly skilled staff provides support in communication, social and vocational skills, and activities of daily life.

Employment and Social Enrichment (EASE)

People with disabilities who have reached retirement age or for whom full-time work is difficult enjoy our EASE program. EASE offers recreational, social, and educational activities as alternatives to work. Most activities take place in community settings. Some EASE participants choose to continue working part-time. MRCI continues to provide case management and other support services.

Employer of Record/Fiscal Intermediary

For individuals and families who prefer to arrange their own services and hire their own employees, MRCI offers the option of Employer of Record. Through the Employer of Record program, families have the opportunity to determine whom they will hire and what the rate of pay will be. As the Employer of Record, MRCI assumes the responsibility for all of the payroll functions, including issuing the paycheck and filing all related taxes. MRCI then bills the State for reimbursement.

Welfare to Work

Welfare to Work is a comprehensive program that helps individuals on MFIP (Minnesota Family Investment Program) to enter or reenter the workforce. Services include counseling, assessment of work skills and interests, job placement, financial assistance for tuition, day care, transportation expenses, clothes, and other help as needed to gain the skills and confidence to get and keep a job. Case management and ongoing support are included.

Adjustment to Blindness (ATB)

People over 50 who are losing their sight are eligible for our Adjustment to Blindness program. ATB classes of four to eight participants are held once a week for 12 weeks in locations throughout southern and central Minnesota. Participants learn functional skills, such as cooking, housekeeping, and mobility that help them maintain their independence. A rehabilitation counselor helps participants with problems they face in adjusting to blindness.

Blue Earth County Mental Health Project

Through a special grant, MRCI helps persons with severe and persistent mental illness find community-based employment. Specialized mental health services are also available in Brown and Scott/Carver Counties.

Case Management

Our own MRCI professional rehabilitation counselors provide case management for everyone receiving work services in all MRCI facilities. We also work closely with county case managers and with families, employers, and residences. We are dedicated to protecting individuals' rights, ensuring appropriate services of highest quality, and helping individuals with personal issues.

Transportation

Our staff work with each individual to arrange transportation that will best meet that individual's needs. In most cases, MRCI provides transportation throughout the communities it serves. A fleet of vans and buses, most with wheelchair lifts and tie-downs, take people to and from home and work sites.

Food Service

Cafeteria lunches and snacks are available at our Mankato Map Drive location. This on-site food service also functions as a training ground for persons interested in food service jobs. Our MRCI food service also provides catering for businesses and organizations.

Licensure/Accreditation

MRCI's employment program and DT&H programs are accredited by CARF, the international accrediting organization for community rehabilitation programs. The DT&H programs are also licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

Mybeck, Inc.

Address: 112 E. Liberty Street Mankato, MN 56001	Contact: Becky Swanson, Director, (507) 387-5511
Phone: (800) 450-4558	Fax: (507) 387-4903

"Our goal is to provide the highest quality of individualized care to persons with disabilities, enabling them to remain in their own homes."

Mybeck, Inc., was incorporated in 1995 as a personal care provider and is registered with the State of Minnesota. Mybeck provides services to individuals in their own homes and as directed by each individual or their guardian. Mybeck has a supervising registered nurse who trains and supervises all of the personal care attendants. The R.N. also works with the consumers to establish a plan of care in accordance with their home care assessment and their doctor's orders.

Mission

Our goal is to provide the highest quality of individualized care to persons with disabilities, enabling them to remain in their own homes. We will achieve this by putting the consumer first, establishing an "open door" policy, and by addressing needs and concerns with honesty and sincerity. We seek to provide the highest standard of living to all disabled individuals who grant us the privilege of providing services to them.

Waivered Services

Mybeck, Inc., is also a licensed waivered services provider. Mybeck, Inc., works with the consumer, their case managers, and other service providers to develop individualized service plans for each consumer. These plans help to enable the consumer to live in their own home in a safe, comfortable environment but still allows for privacy and independence.

Community-Based Support

Mybeck, Inc., provides community-based support to persons with disabilities to work on special programming areas. The consumer gets individualized one-to-one sessions with a staff person who is trained on the skill the consumer is trying to develop. The staff and consumer will work on developing the skills in real-life situations and in various places in the community and home setting.

Licensure/Accreditation

Mybeck, Inc., is a registered personal care provider.

Prairie River Home Care, Inc.

Address: 227 E. Main Street Suite 120 Mankato, MN 56001	Contact: Meghan Busch, General Manager
Phone: (507) 345-8591 or (800) 598-5546	Fax: (507) 345-5023

Mission

Our mission is to provide cost-effective client care in the best clinical outcomes. Investing in technology will allow our employees to be efficient, productive, reliable, well-trained, and professional. Our ability to meet or exceed our client's expectations will assure and meet investors' expectations.

Services

Personal care attendant, home health aide, skilled nursing, IV skilled nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, medical social worker, homemaker, companion, chore services, and live-in care.

Licensure

Class A license from the Minnesota Department of Health. Medicare certification.

Progressive Living

Address: 105 Creative Court Mankato, MN 56001	Contact: Robert Sweeney
Phone: (507) 388-7560	Fax: (No fax)
Email: kelly@mnic.net	

Mission

Progressive Learning provides quality services to the residents in a consistent, respectful manner in which we would like our own adult children treated.

Services

Progressive Living is a unique SLS home because it is family-operated and family-occupied. We are a private home sharing it to provide professional care for people with disabilities. Our family consists of my wife and me, our children, two dogs, and a cat. Currently in our home, we are providing waived services to three developmentally disabled male residents with disabilities ranging from mild to severe and ages ranging from 29 to 40 years old. Each resident has his own bedroom and shares their living room, bathroom, and laundry room.

Licensure

- Rule 245B – Home- and community-based waiver services license.
- Rule 203 – Adult foster care license.

REM–Heartland Inc. (Mankato)

Address: 210 Thomas Drive Mankato, MN 56001	Contact: Mark Turbes, Regional Director
Phone: (507) 387-3181	Fax: (507) 387-3182

“Creating opportunity for people.”

REM is a privately-owned company offering a comprehensive array of services and supports for people with disabilities. REM was founded in 1967 and is the largest provider of residential and support services to people with disabilities in the state of Minnesota.

Philosophy/Beliefs

- People with disabilities are an asset to society.
- People with disabilities have the right to choices that affect their lives.
- People with disabilities have a right to receives responsive and respectful services.
- Services must support the health and safety as well as the dignity, rights, and individual needs of people served.
- True integration is being a vital participant in your community.
- People are best served by the private sector.
- Activism is necessary to achieve social and political change affecting people with disabilities.
- Changing service demands require innovation and a commitment to new development.
- People work best in an environment which promotes teamwork and a commitment to people served.
- A stable workforce is achieved by providing resources and opportunities that are valued by employees.
- Job and service stability are assured by profitability.
- Sound management strategies assure financial stability.
- People with disabilities deserve to live in desirable neighborhoods and in homes which are safe, clean, and well-maintained.
- REM Minnesota's spectrum of services empowers the people we support to live, work, and participate in community life utilizing their full ability in the least restrictive manner possible. We are committed to providing responsive and innovative community services in safe and supportive environments, encouraging and protecting individual choice and personal dignity.

Each of our services is designed around the needs of the individual, coordinating their strengths with supports available in the community. The perseveration of family and personal relationships is a critical aspect of REM services. Our best outcome measure is found in the satisfaction of the people we serve.

Waivered Services

Community-based waivered services make it possible to keep family members with disabilities in their homes or to provide services in the least restrictive environment. Services available through REM in Minnesota include in-home family supports, 24-hour supported living services, respite care, homemaker services, and case management.

Semi-Independent Living Services (SILS)

Many individuals are able to maintain their own home or apartment when provided with additional support and training. People receive training in such areas as shopping, preparing meals, managing budgets, social interactions, community orientation, safety, and medical needs.

Intermediate Care Facilities (ICF)

Intermediate care facilities are community residences providing 24-hour supervision which includes the security of federal licensing. People living in community residences may be working on a variety of skills: learning to take care of their personal needs, developing skills for community living, improving communication or other skills tailored to the needs of the individual.

Licensure/Accreditation

The REM--Heartland Inc. Intermediate Care Facility is licensed under Federal ICF/MR regulations and Supervised Living Facility regulations through the Minnesota Department of Health and the Consolidated Rule 245B under the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

Waivered Services are licensed under the Consolidated Rule 245B. Homes are licensed under Adult Foster Care Rule 203.

The SILS Program is licensed by the Department of Human Services under Consolidated Rule 245B.

River Valley Homes, Inc.

Address: 20176 528th Avenue Lake Crystal, MN 56055	Contact: Deb Blanness, LPN, Administrator
Phone: (507) 726-6239	

Mission Statement

It is the mission of River Valley Homes to provide services based on quality, not quantity. As a small provider, we believe in a more personalized approach to promoting independence by assisting people with developmental disabilities to fulfill their goals in life and to provide respectful services to the consumer and their family.

Services

River Valley Homes, Inc., was established in 2000. We operate two SLS waived services homes in Mankato. The homes are in quiet residential neighborhoods and are close to shopping and local parks. River Valley Homes, Inc., continues to remain a small provider, providing quality, personal services to our consumers. The administrator is the nurse and is active in the care of all the consumers at River Valley Homes.

Licensure

River Valley Homes, Inc., is licensed by the State of Minnesota under Rule 245B - Home- and Community-Based Waivered Services and Adult Foster Care license under Rule 203 in Blue Earth County.

SMILES

Address: 709 S. Front Street Mankato, MN 56001-3804	Contact: Mary Mensing, Manager
Phone: (507) 345-7139 (voice and TYY)	Fax: (507) 345-8429
Internet: www.macil.org/smiles	

"Assisting individuals with disabilities to live independently, pursue meaningful goals, and have the same opportunities and choices as all persons."

SMILES is a nonprofit organization committed to providing a wide array of services to assist individuals with disabilities to live independently, pursuing meaningful goals, and have the same opportunities and choices as all persons.

Beliefs

The SMILES Center for Independent Living believes that persons with disabilities have the right to:

- live as independently as their abilities allow;
- receive services based on need;
- have the same access to opportunities as all persons;
- exercise self-determination;
- access programs which maximize their potential;
- integration in the community;
- employment which enhances their feeling of self-worth and their financial independence;
- a guarantee of constitutional and human rights; and
- choose available options and receive assistance toward independence.

Services

Services are provided to all counties in Region Nine (Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Sibley, Waseca, and Watonwan). Direct-service programs provide individuals with disabilities and opportunity to make appropriate choices and learn the skills that will assist them in achieving the highest level of independence possible. Services include:

- Advocacy.
- Volunteer peer counseling/mentoring.
- Independent living skills training and assessments.
- Transition from school to community living.
- Waivered services.
- Semi-independent living services.
- Assistive technology.
- Community Alternatives for Disabled Individuals (CADI).

- Ramp Project.
- Recreation.
- SMILES drop-in center.
- Transition from nursing home/institution to community-based living.
- Citizens for Accessibility - a self-advocacy group for people with physical disabilities.

SMILES also provides individuals with disabilities, family members, other service providers, and the community-at-large with information on options, resources, and issues that influence independent lifestyles. SMILES community services relate to activities that have an impact to increase disability awareness and provide a means for consumer involvement along with leadership roles.

- General information and referral.
- Accessible housing and transportation directories.
- Community/systems advocacy.
- Technical assistance/disability awareness training.
- Support groups.

Licensure/Accreditation

SMILES is certified by the State of Minnesota as an independent living center.

Waivered services and semi-independent living services are licensed by the Department of Human Services under the Consolidated Rules.

Valley Enterprises

Address: 1711 Gault Street St. Peter, MN 56082	Contact: Mitzi Hodapp or Randy Frey-Hawkins
Phone: (507) 931-5103 or 931-5108	Fax: (507) 931-5115

*"Building community capacity to serve people at home, at work,
and in the community."*

Philosophy

Valley Enterprises is part of Minnesota State Operated Community Services (MSOCS). With MSOCS, we strive to provide the best in consumer-directed community support that is tailor-made for individual needs. It is our purpose to "discover and help move people toward a desirable personal future through – discovering a vision; creating opportunities; and delivering support." We offer needed help in ways that protect and promote valued experiences of everyday living, including growth in personal relationships, the sharing of ordinary community places and activities, making choices, contributing to the common good, being treated with respect, and having a valued social role.

Services

Valley Enterprises operates Monday through Friday, and the general work hours are 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Program hours can be flexible depending on individual needs. We are open year-round, providing 248 service days. We are licensed to provide services to 50 individual workers, and the program itself is designed to offer competitive employment, work enclaves, work activities, supported employment, and structured day program activities. We offer services to persons with developmental disabilities and related conditions, traumatic brain injury, and mental health-related concerns. We are in the process of forming a relationship with DRS to help expand the possibilities and capacities of each person working at Valley Enterprises.

Licensure/Accreditation

Valley Enterprises is licensed under the Consolidated Standards and recently was accredited by CARF, the Rehabilitation Accreditation Commission, for three years. A three-year award, the highest accorded by CARF, signifies a high level of conformance to industry standards, strong leadership, financial stability, and the premium value placed on individuals served.

APPENDIX

Questions to Ask the Provider Agency

These are some things you may want to think about and questions that you may wish to ask the provider directly when you are making a decision about services.

1. When visiting a home or program:
 - What's that neighborhood like?
 - Who may live or work there?
 - What are rooms/furnishings like?
 - What's the atmosphere like?
 - Are there house rules or an employment handbook?
 - Are the people you're talking to interested in you?
 - How do they describe the agency, the environment, the people that will work with you?
 - What do they do? Do they like their job?
 - How many people work there?

2. When talking to a director or supervisor:
 - How experienced are your staff people? or How long have staff been employed here on an average?
 - How can I be involved in making decisions that effect me?
 - How are staff people taught to promote self-determination?
 - How are staff people taught to listen to me?
 - What should I do if I have a concern?
 - How many different staff would work with me?
 - When are staff on duty and what is the ratio?
 - What sort of training do new staff members receive before they can start working? What kind of training do they receive once they are employed?
 - Are staff trained for medical emergencies?
 - How are staff trained to respect and support rights of consumers?
 - What kinds of activities are people involved in?
 - How do I get to be involved in making decisions about the support services I need? How do you involve family in making decisions about supports? Who completes the plans or programs?
 - How often do staff people communicate with family members to let them know that things are going well? Are there routine updates?
 - Describe how staff support individuals/families in making informed choices and decisions?

- How do you ensure the health and safety of those you serve? How do you determine the vulnerabilities of the people you serve and how to protect them?
- How do I contact a staff after work hours? Is there an emergency number?

Every provider is required to conduct satisfaction surveys of the people they serve. You can contact a provider and ask them to send you a copy of the results of their most recent survey.

If you are considering:

Day Habilitation Services:

- Please describe your program to me.
- How many people have jobs in the community?
- Who decides where I will be working?
- Where do other people work?
- What sort of activities or work is there for people who do not work in the community?
- What hours during the day are people in your program?
- How do people get to work?
- What health and safety precautions are followed?
- What is your procedure for emergencies? How would you notify parents and family?
- How do I get paid? How much is the pay? Does the employer or the day program pay me?
- Do people work together in groups or by themselves?
- Can I work in the evenings?
- Do you have physical therapy (PT), occupational therapy (OT), or speech therapy?

In-Home Supports:

- Please describe your program to me.
- Who will train staff?
- What if staff do not come when they are scheduled?
- How flexible are you regarding schedules?
- Can I meet the people before you hire them? or be involved in interviewing them?
- If staff cannot come, who will be responsible for covering hours? Would you expect family to cover hours?

Semi Independent Living Services:

- Please describe your program to me.
- How many hours a week do you provide service?
- What will you teach me?
- How do you decide what skills I should learn?
- How do you decide on activities to go to?
- What happens if I need short-term more intensive support?
- Are you available during emergencies by pager?
- Can you take me out into the community to activities?

Supported Living Services:

- Please describe your program to me.
- What do people do in their free time?
- Can I spend some time here and get to know people before I decide to move here?
- What furniture do you provide? What services do you provide?
- Will you help manage finances?

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