Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services
Position Paper on Social Inclusion
July 2017

Department of Developmental Services (DDS) programs should include chances for people to fully join in their community. Every effort should be made to find and try activities in the community. The goal is that all people are valued and included in the community. Inclusion requires support from everyone DDS, providers, families, guardians, advocates and people with IDD. DDS will monitor and measure progress.

Below is the list of expectations for DDS service providers:

1. People should be supported to take part in community activities that interest them no matter the support needs. People's interests should be a part of the person centered planning process.   People should have lots of chances to take part in things happening in their community.

2. There should be a balance between rules or limits to keep people safe and giving people chances to try new things. Safety measures should not limit people unless a real risk exists.

3. Support staff will be trained to create and develop chances for people to take part in the community. Staff will also be trained about the community where they work.   Click here for DDS "Social Inclusion" resources.

4. Provider agencies will make sure staff understand that it is part of their job to help people make friends with people in their communities. Staff may also spend time with people in social activities.

5. When possible, staff may continue a friendship with the person they support when they leave their job .

6. All DDS and provider rules should be reviewed and updated as needed to promote social inclusion and prevent limits that are not needed.

7. New ways to access transportation should be pursued.

This Position Paper is the result of information collected through focus groups and interviews by DDS and The Center for Developmental Disability Evaluation and Research (CDDER) located at UMass/Shriver Center. You can find the white paper and other social inclusion materials posted here.