

Handbook for Individuals and Families



Individualized Supports



community **living** society

Our Vision

*Communities where every person lives with dignity and
enjoys a full life.*

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Introduction to Individualized Supports

Individualized Supports are one-to-one (not group) supports that can occur in your home or take part in community. The type of support provided can focus on many areas, such as developing and maintaining life skills, community activities or assistance and support in your home. Individualized Supports responds to your strengths, individuality and changing needs.



Community Living British Columbia (CLBC) will make the decision about the level of support hours available to you. Once we know the number of hours you have been allocated, we work with you to learn about the things that matter to you so we can make sure we support you to focus on the areas that are important to you.

These hours will cover your direct service time with staff and the time needed to coordinate supports on your behalf.

Individualized Supports looks different for everyone, as everyone has different wants and needs. With one-to-one supports, we can customize and personalize services to each person.



The Focus of Individualized Supports

An Individualized Supports Coordinator will work with you to set up your personalized supports. They will also monitor and oversee your support and conduct regular check-ins with you. Your support staff will help you connect with and feel a sense of inclusion and belonging in community and support you with goals in your home. This can look different for each person.

Your support staff will work with you to get the most from these activities by supporting you to:

- ✓ Feel confident and comfortable engaging in activities and with others;
- ✓ Increase your skills in finding your way in community and accessing community resources;
- ✓ Try new things and learn new skills in areas of interest;
- ✓ Build relationships with others;
- ✓ Explore opportunities to contribute to your community through volunteering;
- ✓ Explore employment opportunities;
- ✓ Advocate for yourself;
- ✓ Give feedback about your services.
- ✓ Give feedback and explore ways to handle issues you experience in using community resources/services i.e., transit issues or other barriers;
- ✓ Manage challenges and upsets you may experience;
- ✓ Practice street safety and being safe in community and on-line.

We believe that we can be more effective when we are helping you learn new skills and do more on your own. Although you and your personal support network may have identified key areas where ongoing support may be needed, we will spend time with you looking at areas where you would like to increase your independence, as much as possible.

Our support is intended to help you develop new skills and strengthen ones you already have so that you can enjoy an independent and full life.

We work together to decide what types of skills make sense to focus on. Many of these may be practical skills that allow you to accomplish the tasks of daily living. Others may be focused on finances, budgeting, problem solving, health and safety, or relationships. Sometimes we will provide direct coaching or training in your home or in the community. Other times we may help you access community-based training, other support and services, or mentorship opportunities.

Getting Started

Information we need from you

As part of getting to know you, the Individualized Supports Coordinator will gather personal information about you. When gathering this personal information, we encourage you to involve members of your personal support network who can help you think through some of the things they know about you that can help us get to know you better.

The Individualized Supports Coordinator will also use the “*Getting to Know You*” form to guide discussions to learn:

- Your preferences;
- How you spend your days;
- The places you like to go;
- The activities you like to do;
- Areas where you need support;
- How you want to be supported – what type of support works best for you.



Once the Individualized Supports Coordinator has gathered this information they will:

- Introduce you to potential support staff;
- Confirm the days and times your support will take place;
- Build a schedule to include the areas of development/exploration you want to focus on;
- Develop personalized goals.

Service Hours and Support

The hours CLBC have assigned to you are typically used for:

- Your service times with the assigned CLS support staff (referred to as your support or support worker/staff);
- Regular check-ins and planning sessions with you to be sure we are on track to achieve your goals;
- Support to help address any unexpected issues or concerns that may come up. We try to build these into your service time, but we also know that sometimes things will come up that you need to address more immediately.

Flexible and Responsive Supports

We know that people's lives do not always go according to plan, so we are flexible and responsive to your changing needs. The Individualized Supports Coordinator will check in with you regularly to make sure the supports you are receiving are meeting your needs and will work with you and your support worker to make necessary changes.

There may be times you will need extra support or a change in support to manage a difficult situation, or when making a change in your life like starting a new job or moving to a new home. Sometimes, we can adjust hours to meet your needs and other times we may help you advocate for additional funding or help you access other community supports. In some cases, we also help you find different housing arrangements that may better meet your needs.

We will support you to make informed choices about the life you want to lead and the activities and actions you choose to do. We do this by exploring options, helping you think about the risks and benefits of certain actions, learn skills you to be successful, and to learn from the choices you make.

We also help bring together people that can support you when things don't go exactly as you hoped, and you need support to deal with the outcome.

Activity Logs

Activity logs are a record of the support we provide you. They serve as a snapshot of your activities and allow your support staff to record details of each shift pertaining to:

- quality of life statements
- active supports
- highlight
- challenges
- activities of the day
- additional comments

Activity logs track goals and help us measure your progress towards meeting them. They are required to be entered at the end of each of your support sessions. These logs help your support team move forward together with support and are used to ensure you and your personal support network receive the information needed to ensure you are engaging in meaningful activities and meeting your goals.

In addition, they verify how your support staff have supported you during your scheduled sessions and serve as documentation should verification of the session be required. The Individualized Supports Coordinator and Director of Programs will refer to activity logs for problem solving, tracking progress and goals, following up on quality-of-life statements, recognition of highlights, and to complete quarterly reports. Your support staff can complete these logs with you. Your support hours are specifically adjusted so your support staff can complete the logs within your funded hours.

Preparing for Your Supports

Involving your personal support network

You get to choose if and how your personal support network are involved. We can talk with you more about the ways you might want to have them be involved, but it is your choice. If they will be part of the team, we will ask you to sign a consent that will include what information you agree can be shared with them about you, your progress and the support we provide.

Dressing for the occasion

It will be important for you to dress for the weather and bring extra clothes so you can be comfortable being out in community. This is important even if your chosen activity will be indoors because you will still have to make your way to the activity.



It is also important to think about the activities you have planned for the day. Will you need special clothes to work out, go swimming, look for employment, go to a painting class, etc.?

Planning for meals and other refreshments

You will be responsible for bringing or buying your own meals, snacks, water bottle and other refreshments. If you plan to go out for a meal or buy any refreshments, you will need to bring your own money to cover these costs.



Medications and personal supplies

If you have medications that must be taken during the time you are receiving support, and are unable to administer them independently, the Individualized Supports Coordinator will review our medication policy with you and your personal support network.



You will need to:

- make sure medication is brought in the right packaging along with the Medication Administration Record (MAR);
- ensure it is stored properly;
- bring any other supporting documentation that may be needed for the CLS staff to administer the medication.

You are responsible for supplying and bringing other personal supplies you might need if going into community such as:

- sanitary supplies;
- attends;
- wipes;
- sunscreen;
- mobility devices such as folding wheelchairs, walkers, or canes.

it is recommended that you carry personal identification and your health care card with you in case of an emergency. If you have any medical conditions, a medical alert bracelet or ID should also be carried with you.

Understanding Your Needs and Supporting Your Goals

Behavioural support/safety plans, health or other plans to support you in community

We will consult with, and seek guidance from, the relevant professionals that support you in these plans and make sure your support staff stay up to date and are supported in any new strategies or interventions that have been included.

Transportation

Part of our focus in Individualized Supports is supporting you to use public transportation like the bus and Sky Train, just like others in the community. This means you will need to arrange for a bus pass or other form of payment if more specialized transportation is required such as HandyDart. Our employees can work with you to access a BC Bus Pass and Compass Card with discounts that might be available for you.



In some cases, your support worker may use their vehicle to support you in doing specific tasks such as getting to a location that is not easily accessible by transit.



However, in most cases, this support is intended to be a short term with a plan put in place to help you learn the steps or other options you can take to get you there independently as part of being independent.

Steps may include:

- Learning the bus schedule;
- Arranging for Handi-dart, or other driving services;
- Planning to do these tasks with family or friends who can drive.

Paying for activity costs

CLS provides service free of charge but we are not funded to cover your costs for any registration fees, entrance fees or other costs to participate in chosen activities, or any other purchases you want to make. You have to bring your own money to cover these costs. As part of our services, we can work with you to plan and select activities that can be managed within your budget. Make sure to talk with us if you are finding it hard to make choices that fit within your budget so we can find activities that can work for you.

Following rules for smoking and vaping

All participants must follow smoking/vaping regulations which means smoking/vaping only in designated areas. If you are a smoker/vaper, part of our support will be in assisting you to follow the rules in the community so you can enjoy successful experiences in community.



Cancelling supports if you are sick

Be sure to stay home if you are feeling unwell. This is important so you get better and don't pass your illness on to others.



Individualized Supports - Your Questions – Our Answers

How many hours of support do I get?

CLBC may already have approved a specific number of hours per week for you. These hours cover:

- direct service time (time with CLS support staff in person or virtually)
- time we need to develop your service. Time for support staff to complete documentation and ongoing support for you. This may include travel time to meet you at your chosen location for support.

Not all approved hours will be spent directly with you.

We will work with you to confirm the number of hours your support staff will spend with you each week and how you want to use them.

How do we decide how to use my direct service hours?

We will work with you and any other people you have chosen to be involved. People you might include are your family, roommates, spouse, or other loved ones.



We will spend time with you to confirm:

- ✓ What is your highest priority;
- ✓ How you like to be supported – what type of support works best for you;
- ✓ Where and when to provide support so you get the most from it;
- ✓ Who will be providing support.

What is expected of me?

We ask that you:

- Make sure you are home or at the chosen meeting place for your scheduled support times.
- Make sure to entertain guests outside of support time.
- Make sure your home is smoke free for a minimum of 1 hour before any scheduled support time in your home.
- Provide your Individualized Supports Coordinator with at least 24 hour's notice if you need to cancel service.
- Contact your Individualized Supports Coordinator if you cannot show up at the place/time you agreed to meet so we know you are safe.
- Make sure you let your Individualized Supports Coordinator know if you have any concerns with the service we are providing.

NOTE: Hours are not banked if you cancel your support time.

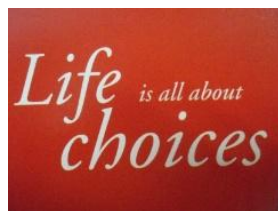
How do I get started in developing my service plan?

We use the information we gather from you during your initial intake to create an initial plan. This plan identifies your priority support needs and will be the initial focus while we get to know you and learn more about how you want to live your life, and how we can tailor supports to help you achieve your goals. Once we know you better, we can update the initial plan, so we make sure we are on track with your services. You can also include your family, spouse, other loved ones, other service providers or home share provider in developing this plan.

How do I make sure my plan is meaningful to me?

To make sure this plan is meaningful to you and reflects what you want, we will spend time with you getting to know:

1. *Your Lifestyle choices* –We want to be sure we understand and respect the things that matter to you and how you want to live your life.
2. *Your Community Connections* – We want to know about the people and places already have connections with and may count on for support. We also want to find out about any potential new connections you would like to make or want to find out more about to support you to be successful living independently.
3. *Your Support Needs and Preferences* - We will take time with you to find out how you like to be supported when you are learning new things, taking on new responsibilities, or needing direct support with any activities of daily living.



4. *Any Risk Factors or Areas of Concern*– We want to know about the things that are concerning to you or that might cause challenges for you to live independently so we can make sure we help you plan for and address them.

What does my plan look like?

We make sure your plan is written in a way that is



understandable to you, to the employees that will be supporting you, and anyone else who you choose to share it with.

What do I want support with?

You may decide you would like support with 3 or 4 key areas such as getting connected to your community, exercising, joining a team, group, or organization, meeting new people, learning how to organize/clean your home, how to cook specific meals, how to budget or pay bills, or how to find a new doctor/dentist. We will help you set some specific goals in these areas. What other areas are important to you that your support team can help you with?

- Helping you increase your skills or learn new things;
- Helping you develop routines to make sure things get done;
- Supporting you to get to know and develop relationships with people and places in your community;
- Helping you find and access other supports;
- Providing direct support with activities of daily living;
- Checking in with you, providing you with encouragement when you could use motivation to stay on track with a goal.

A yellow, multi-pointed starburst graphic with a black outline. Inside the starburst, the text 'We focus on supporting your independence!!' is written in black.

We focus on
supporting your
independence!!

When, How Often and Where would I like supports?

We will plan when, where, and how often you want to receive support. For instance, you might only want to work on paying your bills once a month at the bank or learning on-line banking at home. Cooking may be something you want to do weekly at home.

What do I expect to gain from focusing on the identified goals?

This step is helpful because we get clearer about your expectations so we can focus our support on what you need. For instance, you may never have used a stove or microwave, and want to learn. Or you may be very comfortable using a stove and reheating food but want to actually learn some recipes so you can save money by buying food to prepare rather than readymade items.



What if my needs change?

Your service plan is intended to support you. If your needs change, we will work with you to update your plan.



We expect plans to change as you gain skills, increase your community connections, and learn how to manage any challenges you encounter. Support workers will review your plan with you at least once a year but will talk with you about it more often and change it as needed.

What type of activities can be included in my plan?

We support you to do many things. We stand alongside you and assist and teach you how to do different things. We do not do the task for you. Our goal is to teach you how to do tasks so that you will eventually no longer need our help.

Activities in your Plan that we can support you with:

- Learning how to cook;
- Learning how to grocery shop;
- Learning how to maintain a clean home;
- Making your home safe (ie: plan for and practice handling emergencies);
- Making a budget to help you save money or help you to spend it in a better way;
- Finding a job;
- Finding a volunteer position;
- Booking and attending medical appointments;
- Providing resources for emotional support during difficult times;
- Making decisions;
- Talking with your landlord;
- Finding a place to live;
- Developing and maintaining friendships and relationships;
- Being involved in your community.



Things we cannot support you with:

- Doing your cooking for you;
- Cleaning your house for you;
- Telling you how to spend your money;
- Making you spend time with people you would prefer not to;
- Driving you around with no purpose;
- Driving you to places where you don't need support, when you could take transit or a taxi on your own
- Doing things for you that you do not actually need support to do;
- Telling you what choices to make;
- Telling you where to live;
- Running errands for you;
- Feeding your pets or water your plants while you are away.

If you are not sure if the type of support you want fits under this service, please ask us!

What if I need help with something and CLS does not offer that support?

If you need a type of support or a service that Individualized Supports does not offer, we would be happy to refer you to another organization that might. CLS has developed relationships with many other organizations in our community.



What if I decide I need more help than I can get from this service?

We understand that your needs are constantly changing. If you decide you need more support than you are receiving, we encourage you to talk to your facilitator at Community Living British Columbia (CLBC) and discuss your options.

Can I combine this service with other services?

There may be some other services available to you while you are also receiving support in Individualized Supports. You would need to discuss this with a facilitator at CLBC.



What if I don't like the support I am getting?

1. If you do not like the support you are receiving, we encourage you to first talk to your Individualized Supports Coordinator or support worker and see if there are any changes that can be made.
2. If you do not feel this was successful, we encourage you to contact the Director of Programs for Individualized Supports. You can call our Administration Centre at 604.523.0303 to obtain the contact information.
3. If you are still not satisfied, you can make a formal complaint following the steps outlined in our Feedback and Complaints process. It is important for us to get feedback about our services when we are not able to work it out directly with you within our team. Making a complaint will not affect your services. It helps us get better!

Details of our Feedback and Complaints process is provided during intake, is on our website and is reviewed with you annually.

When can my service times be scheduled?

Usually, service hours are scheduled during the day on weekdays. We schedule times during these hours to match your needs and your other activities. Many people work during weekdays or have other commitments; therefore, if needed, we can provide support on the weekend or in the evening. To make sure your schedule fits for you, your service plan will include *what, when, where, and how* services will happen. This schedule may change as your service needs change.



What if I need to change my service times?

Temporary Changes

We know sometimes you may need support outside of scheduled service times to handle a special activity or an unexpected situation. That's part of life! We try to be as flexible as possible to be able to support you.

This means that:

- Sometimes you may ask us to adjust your support time for a special activity or goal (examples might be when you need support to attend a special event, medical appointment or to learn how to get to a new job, etc.).
- You might ask us to help you deal with a problem that needs to be handled sooner than when your next session is scheduled. This may require us to ask someone else to change their service time or we might send another support worker to help you.
- Your service time may be changed if someone else needs unexpected support when we typically meet with you. When we need to change your support time, we may offer to have another employee work with you or, if no one is available or you want the same employee, we will try to adjust your times, so you still have your needs met.

***That's
Life!*** 

Revamping My Schedule

We expect that your needs will change over time as you develop your skills and competence managing your home and daily life. That's why we regularly review your services with you. We will make changes to your weekly schedule to match the ways that you want to use your support and the availability of our employees.

Who will be supporting me?

Individualized Supports employees work as a team to support you. The Individualized Supports Coordinator is



responsible for managing your services and for providing support and supervision of your support worker(s). They will work to match the skills and personalities of employees with your support needs and

preferences and are open to making changes if matches are not working out.

All employees are qualified to provide support and receive ongoing training in:

- Person-centred planning and goal setting;
- Our values, ethics and guiding principles.

Health and Safety

How can you help me stay safe and healthy in my community and home?

Your health, safety, and well-being are important to us. Our focus is on helping you establish good practices so that you are safe and healthy in your home and community. This is important because you may not always have CLS employees or members of your personal support network around to help you.

What support can I access to help me be safe?

We can help you plan for and address your health and safety needs by helping you to:

- ✓ Develop and practice your emergency plan so you know how to handle emergencies such as:
 - fire
 - earthquake
 - medical emergency
 - power outage or other utility failure
 - intruders
- ✓ Put together emergency supplies and a first aid kit.
- ✓ Compile a list of emergency numbers to get emergency support.



What health and safety skills do CLS employees have?

CLS employees follow good safety practices when they are supporting you:

- ✓ Employees are trained in First Aid, CPR, abuse recognition, and responding to emergencies or critical incidents;
- ✓ Employees carry fully-stocked first aid kits in their vehicles;
- ✓ Employees have cleared a criminal record checks;
- ✓ All employees whose vehicles you may drive in have the appropriate liability insurance;
- ✓ In the case of an emergency, accident or a 911 call, we respond appropriately, write a report for CLBC to review, and notify your emergency contacts immediately.

Employees may also have training specific to your needs if you require any specialized supports.

My Personal Support Network

How might I involve my family or others?

You may have close family or other people who are important to you who you will naturally want to include in your life. If your family is not available, or you would prefer to not have them involved for some reason, we encourage you to find others who are important to you to include in your life as part of your *personal support network*.

Your service hours with Individualized Supports are limited and scheduled; therefore, it is important for you to have a personal support network you can count on to support you when we are not available.

These are people you choose who are people you might count on for:

- help with important decisions;
- companionship and good times;
- community connections;
- problem solving;
- support in times of need.



Who decides how my personal support network is involved?



No matter who you choose to include in your personal support network, you decide who they will be. Like your lifestyle choices, we will make sure to check in and understand your decisions.

For instance:

- ✓ We ask who you want to include in planning and reviewing your services with us. You may choose to involve certain people and not others, or perhaps only involve them in some decisions.
- ✓ We ask with whom and how you want us to share information about you. This means if someone in your personal support network calls to ask about you, we will share information only if you have given us permission to do so. You also get to decide what types of information you want to share.
- ✓ We ask you to provide us with emergency contacts. In the case of an emergency, we will contact the people you have named as your emergency contacts. We only call the people who have been added to your emergency contact list.

Service Delays/Cancellations

Are there times my service might be delayed or cancelled?



Sometimes we may have to cancel or reschedule service with you if there is an emergency that prevents us from getting to you for any reason. Examples include:

Severe Weather

If there is severe weather that prevents safe travel in the community such as a snowstorm or high winds, your support worker may not be able to meet you as planned. You will be contacted by the Individualized Support Coordinator and they can arrange with the people named in your emergency contacts to check in on you at your request.

A Community Emergency such as an Earthquake or Flood

If it is not safe to travel to you, we will make sure to contact you if communication lines are open. If not, you will need to follow your personalized emergency plan.



Our goal is to help you be prepared for unexpected situations by practicing "What ifs?" together.

We also work with you to make sure you have emergency plans in place and people you can call when emergencies or upsetting events happen.

Are there times CLS can cancel my service time(s)?

Emergency

If an employee is in an accident, is unexpectedly sick, or has another type of emergency and is unable to meet you, they will call the Individualized Supports Coordinator who will try to find another employee to work with you. If that can't happen or you would prefer to wait for the scheduled support worker to return, your service may be cancelled and rescheduled for another time.

What happens if I am not available or refuse service?

We respect your choices and will cancel service if:

- You don't answer the door or make yourself available for the session;
- You refuse service for that session.



In these cases, your time is not rebooked. The CLS support worker has been booked for that time and must be paid for the time whether you show up or not.

What other times might CLS cancel service?

We need to make sure our employees are safe and free from harm. This means that if they come to meet you and they run into any of the following circumstances, they may have to end your session:

- If you are physically or verbally abusive and they feel they are in danger;
- If you have people visiting they don't know or expect to be there;
- If you are drunk or intoxicated;
- If you threaten them in any way (i.e. verbal threats, carrying/threatening with weapons).



Please note that CLS employees will need to report any threats of or acts of violence as a critical incident to CLBC and CLBC may need to follow up with you.

Your Health and Wellbeing is Our Priority

Employees will follow up with you before your next scheduled time to explore how we can support you if here are issues happening in your life that are impacting your ability to access services and get the support you need.

Changing or Ending Services

There may be circumstances where our program is no longer the right fit:

- ▶ You may have new plans for your life that focus on other activities like employment or school.
- ▶ You may no longer feel the program is a good fit and want to explore other available options at CLS or with another provider.
- ▶ You have new health or other needs that may require another type of service or level of care that is not available in our program.



Whatever the situation, our Director of Programs will work with you, your personal support network, and your CLS support workers to plan next steps so that you have a comfortable transition to your new setting.

In cases where, as part of our planning with you, we have identified the need to look for more suitable services for you, we will work with CLBC to explore options either to help you stay in the program with the adaptations you need to remain comfortable and satisfied there, or to explore other possible options for you. CLBC will take the lead in making other arrangements for you.



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Important

This Handbook was printed on September 2, 2026.
Please note that contents may have changed and the
most recent copy of this Handbook should be
referenced on our Resource Portal on the CLS website.

<https://www.communitylivingsociety.ca/portfolio-items/important-information-about-cls/>