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### Buddy Program Handbook

AIDS Community Services of Western New York

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AIDS Community Services  
OF · WESTERN · NEW · YORK

# BUDDY PROGRAM

## HANDBOOK

**AIDS Community Services of Western New York**

**BUDDY PROGRAM HANDBOOK**

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### Description of Buddy Program

The Buddy Program is designed to provide agency clients with one-to-one support from trained volunteers. These trained volunteers often become the primary contacts between the clients and staff of AIDS Community Services of Western New York. Buddy volunteers may serve as companions, peer counselors, advocates, helpers with daily living tasks, or a combination of all of these. The Buddy does not take the place of a Case Manager, but rather serves as a member of the Case Management Team. The Buddy serves under the direct supervision of the client's Case Manager.

### Buddy Program Policies

#### 1. WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY

**Medical emergencies** - Buddies are not physicians. If your client is experiencing a medical emergency, **CALL 911**. Notify the Client Services Department as soon as possible.

**Emotional crisis** - Buddies are not therapists. If your client is experiencing an emotional crisis:

1) Call the Client Services Department if it is during business hours (Monday - Friday, 9-5). Explain your situation and a staff person will assist you.

2) If it is during non-business hours (evenings, weekends), call Crisis Services, a 24 hour hotline at 834-3131.

#### 2. TRANSPORTATION

As a Buddy, you may be asked to transport a client, his/her significant other, or family member on an errand. If you agree to do this in your role as a Buddy, you must have a **valid New York State driver's license and current automobile insurance**. You may be asked for a photocopy of this information for your personnel file.

#### 3. SEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH CLIENTS

Under no circumstances may the Buddy engage in sex with the client. Failure to comply with this policy will result in immediate dismissal from the Buddy Program.

#### 4. CONFIDENTIALITY

The volunteer's visits with clients, significant others and family members are strictly confidential. General observations and insights may be shared ONLY with other members of the Buddy Program or Client Services Department staff. **Any breach of confidentiality will result in immediate dismissal from the Buddy Program.**

#### 5. CLIENT SATISFACTION WITH SERVICES

If a client brings problems or questions concerning AIDS Community Services, its operation, programs, and/or services to your attention, relay this information to the client's Case Manager as soon as possible.

#### 6. FINANCES

Under no circumstances are Buddies permitted to lend, loan, or give money to clients or their family members or friends. If your client is in need of emergency financial assistance, have him/her contact their Case Manager.

#### Buddy Volunteer Training

A volunteer must go through an extensive training and evaluation program before being designated as a Buddy. There is ongoing supervision and continuing education for Buddy volunteers.

#### Buddy Referral Procedure

1. Client makes a request for a Buddy Volunteer to his/her Case Manager.
2. Case Manager enters the Buddy request in the Client Services Department "Buddy Status Book."
3. Case manager arranges for a meeting between Buddy volunteer and client.

## Buddy/Client Linkage

After a client requests a Buddy, and is judged by the Case Manager to meet the qualifications, steps will be taken by the Case Manager to find an appropriate Buddy, using the Buddy/Client linkage procedure. Linkages are supervised by the Case Manager.

1. Assessment:
  - a. Case Manager assesses client's need for a Buddy; assessment minimally includes description of client's needs and established qualifications of the program.
  - b. Case Manager assesses skills and availability of Buddy Volunteer; assessment minimally includes a description of the volunteer's strengths and weaknesses and his/her approximate time commitments.
2. Buddy Team Leader, Buddy Volunteer and Client arrange initial linkage meeting.
3. Case Manager reviews, discusses and clarifies the following items with the Buddy Volunteer and the client:
  - a. Buddy Volunteer Job Description
  - b. Handout, "The Buddy Program: Helpful Hints for a Productive Relationship"
  - c. Buddy/Client Contract and Mediation Policy
  - d. Buddy Volunteer Evaluation
  - e. Client Intervention Record (CIR - green sheet)
  - f. Check Request Form (for mileage reimbursement)
  - g. Mileage Log form
4. Client and Buddy review and sign Buddy/Client Contract, which addresses established goals agreed upon for the linkage. These goals are periodically evaluated to determine the success of the linkage.

5. Case Manager allows time for questions and answers from Buddy Volunteer and client concerning linkage.
6. Case Manager informs Buddy Volunteer of next Buddy Team meeting; schedules next meeting between Buddy Volunteer and client.

### **Client Needs Statement**

The Client Needs Statement is completed by the Case Manager to help develop a plan for the Buddy volunteer's work with his/her client.

### **Client/Buddy Mediation**

1. After Client Services chooses a Buddy for a client, the Case Manager will facilitate the first meeting between the Buddy and the client.
2. During this meeting, the mediation policy will be explained and agreed to by all. A contract between all three parties will be signed.
3. The mediation policy states that Buddies and clients will regularly discuss their relationship, including any problems either one experiences.
4. If a problem arises between the Buddy and client which cannot be resolved between them, a meeting will be arranged with the Buddy, client and the Case Manager. The Buddy Team Leader may be asked to serve as a mediator during this meeting.
5. If a resolution cannot be reached between the Buddy and client, the Buddy linkage will be terminated. The client will be linked with a new Buddy whenever this is possible. Every effort will be made to match the Buddy with a new client, as well.

### **Client Intervention Records - Buddy Record Form**

The Client Intervention Record (CIR - green sheet) is to be completed after every Buddy/Client interaction, including face-to-face, phone and mail contact. Our state funding source, the AIDS Institute, requires that CIR's are part of each clients case record. Buddies must submit monthly CIR's to the Buddy Team Leader or to the client's Case Manager at the monthly Buddy Meeting.

### **Travel/Mileage Reimbursement Request**

In order to be reimbursed for travel expenses, Buddy Volunteers should complete Check Request Forms. These forms are submitted to the Director of Client Services on a monthly basis with a Mileage Log Form.

### **Buddy Evaluation**

The Buddy Team Leader will complete bi-annual evaluations for each active Buddy Volunteer on his/her team. Evaluations will include references to the goals established in the Buddy/Client contract, as well as the Buddy's ability to carry out the responsibilities as stated in the Buddy job description. Evaluations will be reviewed by the Case Manager responsible for that Buddy's client.

Evaluations will be maintained as a part of the Buddy Volunteer's personnel file. The Director of Volunteers will also review Buddy evaluations bi-annually.

In situations where there are concerns about a Buddy's behavior with a client, a review shall occur. The Buddy Team Leader and the Case Manager will be present. The volunteer's status as a Buddy volunteer will be determined by the Director of Client Services, with input from the Case Manager and the Buddy Team Leader.



## AIDS Community Services of Western New York

### Buddy Volunteer Job Description

#### **Responsibilities:**

1. Commits to a minimum of one year of service.
2. Reads, understands and acknowledges all policies and procedures of AIDS Community Services, especially those relating to client rights and confidentiality.
3. Provides client with additional supportive services such as shopping, transportation to appointments and supportive listening.
4. Acts as a liaison between the client and the Case Manager; contacts the Case Manager whenever special needs of the client need to be addressed. It is mandatory for the Buddy to contact the Case Manager when:
  - a. a client is at risk of hurting himself/herself or at risk of hurting others;
  - b. there is any breach of confidentiality by Buddy volunteers;
  - c. Buddy and client are unable to resolve differences;
  - d. there is misuse of Emergency Support Fund money;
  - e. a client revokes authorization for client services;
  - f. a client requests Buddy change;
  - g. a client is hospitalized;
  - h. a client dies.
5. Accepts responsibility for ensuring the total confidentiality of all information and communication with clients; signs the AIDS Community Services of Western New York client confidentiality statement; helps others to understand that written permission is needed for the release of any client information.
6. Follows up on the client on a regular basis. The exact amount of client contact is agreed upon by the Buddy and the Case Manager in the goal statement.
7. Keeps commitments and appointments with the client; notifies the client, as soon as possible, of any changes in the Buddy's schedule.

## **Buddy Volunteer Job Description cont'd.**

8. Completes AIDS Experience Weekend; attends all monthly Buddy Team meetings and volunteer inservice trainings.
9. Attends any and all additional Buddy training sessions.
10. Notifies Buddy Team Leader of any anticipated absences or vacations, including absences from trainings or Buddy Team meetings.
11. Keeps records of all contacts with the client. (i.e. phone, direct mail, etc.) on Client Intervention Record (CIR) forms (green sheets); submits CIR's to Buddy Team Leader monthly.
12. Discusses pertinent Buddy volunteer process issues at Buddy Team meetings, i.e. limit setting, fear of death and dying, rejection, frustration, unresolved differences between Buddy and client, etc.

Since each Buddy/Client relationship is unique, it is not possible to list all the responsibilities that may result from the relationship. The Buddy must at all times remember that he/she is a representative of AIDS Community Services and conduct himself/herself as a professional.

**AIDS Community Services of Western New York**

**Buddy Team Leader Job Description**

**The Buddy Team Leader will:**

1. Commit to a minimum of one year of service.
2. Attend all Buddy Team meetings.
3. Complete AIDS Experience weekend and all specific Buddy trainings.
4. Read, understand, and be knowledgeable of all policies and procedures of AIDS Community Services of Western New York, especially those relating to client rights and confidentiality.
5. Complete a monthly summary of Buddy Team meetings.
6. Monitor attendance at and completion of Buddy volunteer trainings.
7. Encourage Buddy's to submit Client Intervention Record (CIR) forms in a timely fashion; follow up by phone when this does not occur.

## AIDS Community Services of Western New York

### The Buddy Program: Helpful Hints for a Productive Relationship

1. **BE SINCERE** The best personal style in working with a client is the Buddy's own personality. Buddies are advised to simply be themselves, to trust themselves. Insincerity is inappropriate and easily detected by a client.
2. **BE HELPFUL, BUT DON'T "OVERHELP"** Assistance in the form of helping a client to do things that they can do themselves is NOT assistance. Overhelping can lead a client to develop a sense of imminent decline. Clients should be encouraged to do as much as they can, taking into account medically prescribed limitations.
3. **MAXIMIZE THE QUALITY OF A CLIENT'S LIFE** Clients should be encouraged to participate in as many social, recreational, leisure and occupational pursuits as possible, given their medical status. Discourage the frequently adopted role of the "professional patient," whereby clients spend all of their time in support groups, with counselors, therapists and medical practitioners. Suggest that the client go to movies, theater, dinner parties and the like. It is appropriate for Buddies to accompany clients in recreational activities.
4. **PERMIT DENIAL** If the client is obviously utilizing the defense mechanism of denial, let it go, as long as his or her medical care is not compromised as a result. Failure to accept one's prognosis is usually not damaging. Denial reduces stress, keeps clients happy, intact, and helps them to maintain a positive quality of life.
5. **BE RELIABLE AND CONSISTENT** The support offered by Buddies must be reliable, consistent and continuous. Since any therapy or cure primarily involves "being there," it is important the Buddies make commitments to themselves and to their clients to be available. The client and his/her Case Manager should be advised far in advance of a Buddy's plan to be out of town.
6. **ACCEPT BEING USED AS A DARTBOARD** A Buddy volunteer should recognize his/her need for a "thick skin." Clients will find many reasons to become angry and will often direct their anger at whatever or whomever is present. Buddies should not personalize these attacks.

## The Buddy Program: Helpful Hints...

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7. **GIVE YOURSELF PERMISSION TO EXPERIENCE DISCOMFORT**  
Buddies should recognize and accept that during their work as a Buddy they may experience feelings of fear, anxiety or discomfort with clients. Working with individuals who are facing a possible terminal illness is not easy. Remember that you are human and that it is natural to feel fragile and frightened. Buddies are expected to participate in supportive services offered by AIDS Community Services, such as inservices and monthly meetings. They should realize their limits and work not to exceed them.
8. **FAMILILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH A CLIENT'S NEED, CONDITION AND ATTITUDE BEFORE YOUR VISIT** Become familiar with the client's case record. Talk with the his/her Case Manager about the client's history and current circumstances.
9. **NEVER VISIT A CLIENT WITHOUT CALLING FIRST** This is important for both you and the client. Arrange a meeting time and be prompt for your appointment. Always leave the client with some idea of when you will return or be in contact. Avoid saying "I'll wait to hear from you" or "Just call me if you need me." Too many clients, for whatever reason, will not take the initiative to contact their Buddy. Just knowing that you will be in touch with them may also give them something to look forward to.
10. **DON'T FEEL YOU MUST HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS** You don't have to have a solution to every problem. It is okay, and in some cases even encouraging to say, "I don't know," or "I will try to find out."
11. **DON'T BE JUDGEMENTAL** Do not judge people or their reactions; react to the needs they express. Remember, it is the client's life to live. He/She will make their own decisions and choices. Each person has to find his/her own way to handle their illness.
12. **REALIZE YOUR OWN LIMITATIONS** Do not become involved beyond your capabilities, either physically or emotionally. If you feel your client may need professional counseling, contact his/her Case Manager. We can provide initial or interim counseling and also can recommend counselors from a referral list. **Remind your client of this option.**