

North West Residential Support Services Inc.
Policies & Procedures
SOCIAL VISITING FOR CLIENTS

NWRSS recognises the importance and benefits of social visiting but our responsibility to clients requires that we place safeguards around social visiting.

There are risks in terms of insurance coverage, the duty of care responsibility of the organisation and employees in all forms of social visiting including:

- NWRSS shared homes
- Staff homes
- Public private homes

Clients should not be dependent on social interactions with employees or their family and friends for the following reasons:

- Employees at NWRSS are employed to work with clients in a professional capacity, not a social one. Employees should consider that none of their own personal friends are paid to be a friend
- It may restrict opportunities that exist elsewhere
- If friendship lacks depth, then it will disappear when the employee leaves or is transferred
- Clients involved with off-duty employees may not be able to differentiate the role of that person when working
- Employees are obliged to keep all matters to do with clients and other employees confidential, so there needs to be a strong client interest for involving your family and friends in a client's life

NWRSS has a responsibility to encourage and promote community access and integration, to assist clients to participate in activities, which they enjoy, and to make and maintain personal friendships. To this end, employees should encourage integration through the following networks:

- Unpaid friendship networks
- Community activities such as sporting events, community events, concerts, pubs/restaurants, church attendance, etc.

To allow consideration for social visiting within a broad definition NWRSS has, to ensure safety, created a simple permission process.

The practice of clients visiting other peoples homes including NWRSS shared homes, staff homes and public private homes is not permitted without the express permission of the General Manager or Direct Service Manager.

Employees must:

- 1. Request permission with enough lead time for consideration**
- 2. Adhere to agreed arrangements that will require detailed information such as:**

- a. **The location of the visit or activity**
 - b. **The purpose of the visit or activity**
 - c. **A list of who will be there**
 - d. **The support arrangements for the client**
 - e. **How long the visit or activity will last**
- 3. Advise the General Manager or Direct Service Manager of any change of plans before the visit or activity**

The General Manager and Direct Service Manager reserve the right to restrict or disallow the visit or activity.

If a client's families are involved in their personal affairs, they must grant permission.

Permission is also required by staff to visit shared homes outside of work hours.

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