

**Muskingum Valley Educational Service Center's**

# **HEART**

**Helping Every Adult Refine Transition**

**Program Handbook**

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# **Welcome to HEART**

## **Helping Every Adult Refine Transition**

### **Mission, Vision and Information**

**HEART is a community and adult day program for adults with disabilities which provides a supportive environment where individuals can engage in various activities tailored to their needs and abilities. These may include socialization opportunities, educational sessions, recreational activities, and skill-building exercises. HEART's mission is to enhance the quality of life by providing a safe, supportive and engaging environment that promotes independence, enhances social skills, and fosters a sense of community and belonging among participants. Professional staff members are on hand to provide assistance, supervision, and personalized support throughout the day. Overall, HEART aims to empower individuals with disabilities to lead fulfilling and meaningful lives.**

**Our vision at HEART is to create an inclusive community where every individual is valued, empowered, and enabled to live a fulfilling life. We aspire to be a leading provider of innovative and compassionate care, continuously improving and adapting to meet the evolving needs of participants. HEART envisions a future where all adults with disabilities have access to resources, opportunities, and support that enhance their well-being, promote their independence, and integrate them fully into society. Through dedicated service and advocacy, HEART aims to break down barriers and champion the rights and dignity of every individual.**

**HEART was created through Muskingum Valley Educational Service Center (MVESC) in 2024. HEART is located at Muskingum Valley Educational Service Center 205 North 7th Street Zanesville, Ohio 43701. HEART is open Monday through Friday, starting at 7:00 am and closing at 3:00 pm. Please see the program calendar for days HEART is closed.**

### **Staff**

**HEART has a very thorough employee hiring process that includes reference checks, criminal background checks and multiple human services database checks. Once employed, each staff member completes a comprehensive orientation and training plan to include agency policy/procedures, health and safety training, specific waiver service implementation, and topics**

that enhance our employees' understanding of their role in facilitating person centered planning, self-advocacy, self-determination, community inclusion and employment.

Staff members are certified in American Red Cross First Aid and CPR and they meet all requirements set by DODD for working with persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

HEART's staff members demonstrate a high level of commitment to the provision of quality, outcome based services to program participants. Staff members participate in ongoing training and professional development scheduled throughout the year. HEART holds our staff members to a strict professional code of conduct in working with you and your support team. HEART is committed to ensuring your emotional/physical health and safety and that you receive the benefits of program participation. Staff members will avoid any conduct or relationship with you/team that work in opposition to our commitment to you and that may interfere with your acceptance and/or participation in agency services.

HEART's staff members include the following:

- Monte Bainter, MVESC Superintendent
- Adam Copeland, MVESC Director of Operations
- Kate Kimble, HEART Director of Operations
- Lori Morrow, HEART Coordinator

### **Program Eligibility**

- The applicant is a minimum of eighteen years of age.
- The applicant can reside outside the county of service.
- The applicant has a medically documented physical, cognitive and/or developmental disability.
- A reasonable expectation must exist that the applicant will benefit from active participation in a day service program option.
- The applicant and/or legal guardian is willing to consent to admission.
- The applicant is approved for funding through local, state or other third party arrangements.

- The applicant is willing to provide the result of current (within one year) medical evaluation to include a TB test.
- The applicant poses no safety risk to themselves and/or others.
- The applicant is willing to participate in the program and accept program goals.

No person is denied services because of race, religious belief, sex, disability, national origin, or age (except minimum requirement of 18).

### **Program Options**

HEART is structured to provide you support with your vocational rehabilitation and/or habilitative goals as you move towards community life engagement. All of HEART's day service programs provide goal-oriented services that support and encourage each person's desired option and right for personal growth, self-enrichment and self-determination. Prior to program admission, you and your support team evaluated program services offered and determined you would benefit from enrollment. If at any point program services are not beneficial, needed or HEART cannot support your needs, we will work as a team to discuss the reason, options and give you time (minimum of 30 day notice) in order to help you achieve a more appropriate service. Individuals served must meet at minimum the following eligibility requirements to participate in our day service program options.

### **Continuous Quality Improvement**

HEART is committed to providing quality services to our individuals/families. HEART has identified measurable goals for improving the effectiveness, efficiency, satisfaction and access of services. The data collected is used to monitor and improve service delivery. Your feedback through visits, phone calls, Individual Service Plan meetings and completion of an Annual Satisfaction Survey is critical to our ability to respond to current needs, improve quality of service delivery, progress towards future goals and strategies as well as fuel our innovation of new ideas.

### **Diversity**

HEART likes to celebrate what we have in common as well as what makes us different. HEART focuses on you as an "individual" with individual needs and goals. HEART tends to focus on needs in the areas of cognitive, physical, educational, social and personal care. At times,

religious, ethnic, race, cultural or language considerations may impact or enhance your program participation. HEART encourages you to share with us the information you feel we should know in order for you to participate fully in our program while still respecting your individual preferences. Your ISP should reflect these important preferences.

### **Accommodations/Adaptive Equipment**

Upon enrollment HEART will discuss what types of accommodations you will need to be successful with program activity, whether it be related to work, social, recreational, personal/physical care and health/safety. As you begin to participate in programming and staff members learn your strengths and abilities, they can create jigs, fixtures, and adaptations to enable you to perform activities better. Oftentimes, it is you who comes up with the ideas for making things work better for yourself and what you are trying to accomplish. Creating a program environment that makes you independent and self-sufficient is our goal. Our building, program areas and restroom facilities are fully accessible. HEART works closely with various adaptive equipment companies to address issues you may be having with your wheelchair, scooter and/or other assistive devices.

### **Vocational Assessment**

The first 30 days of your program are designed to assess your interests, abilities, work skills, work behaviors, productivity, and quality levels. The need for adaptations for work activity is also assessed during this time. Every six months your work skills, individual goals, productivity on work activity and your progress towards competitive employment will be assessed.

### **Social, Recreational and Educational Activities**

Activities with therapeutic objectives are developed based on weekly themes, special events and your interests and preferences. A variety of shared group activities, common interest groups and clubs are offered daily so personal choice and self-directed programming can be facilitated. We utilize community resources to provide additional programming such as drama, art, music, wellness, therapy dogs, library book club, and guest speakers to name a few. Activities are designed to encourage active participation for all ability levels.

## **Community Connections**

**Community exploration and engagement occur daily as individuals can choose from a variety of scheduled options and rotate their participation through community based activities. The type of activities are determined by individual input, common interests, special events, recreation, wellness and meaningful opportunities to connect and explore community life. You and your team should assess the support you need to stay safe and be successful in the community.**

## **Community Adult Day Service**

**Community Adult Day Service is a time limited vocational habilitation program that provides habilitation and vocational readiness services to individuals who have identified community employment as their vocational goal. The purpose of Community Adult Day Service is to provide pre-vocational educational and work activity to individuals who are targeting a path to community employment and preparing their skills and behaviors for competitive employment. HEART staff members work to maximize each person's potential, create opportunities for growth and exploration, and help you to reach current and future employment goals.**

## **Pre-Vocational Education and Community Based Experiences**

**Work activity is only one way in which we promote improved personal growth and increased skill development. Each participant works on an individualized vocational goal that addresses work and/or social skills and behaviors, productivity, ability to transfer skills and/or learn new skills toward community based employment. Participation in unpaid programming to gain knowledge, learn skills and explore vocational options is essential to this program service. Work education topics will be offered for you to learn skills to help you move on your path to employment. Guest speakers and visits to community work sites are offered so you can determine the kinds of community jobs you may want to pursue.**

## **Service Plan**

**All participants in the program have an Individual Service Plan [ISP]. It summarizes the things you want out of life today and in the future, identifies the supports you need to achieve those things and who will help you with those supports and services. This plan is developed by you, supported by those who work with you and coordinated by your assigned County Service and Support Administrator. It identifies your strengths, skills, abilities and preferences. As one of**

**your Providers that you have chosen to support you with your goals, we contribute to the planning process with a summary of the ways in which we can support your success, health, safety and discuss the strategies for helping you reach your future goals. Your family, friends, HEART staff and others who help and advocate for you will be part of a working team to assist you as needed. Your "Plan" is reviewed by you and your team on a regular basis to discuss progress, additions or changes needed. Your team will want to meet with you at least once a year to update your plan.**

### **Annual Satisfaction Survey**

**At the time of your annual Individual Service Plan meeting, you will be asked to complete a Satisfaction Survey. Information from this survey is used for program planning, review service quality and future goal development for the adult services programs. Satisfaction surveys are given to you every year you are in the program and upon completion/discharge/transfer from the program.**

### **Individual File/Record**

**HEART compiles all your program documentation in an individualized file maintained at the program facility. HEART maintains your information in a confidential and secure manner. You have the right to access your file whenever you choose. If you need help accessing your file, please ask a HEART staff member for assistance. They can also assist you by reading information or explaining what certain information means. Questions/concerns you have about documents generated by another provider (non HEART documentation) should be addressed, explained by that provider.**

### **Information & Referral**

**Should you/family need a service that we cannot provide directly, we can offer assistance to you in finding and accessing the services and/or provide the information you need. Some of these community resources may be behavioral health services; home health care, respite, social/recreational; health professionals that accept Medicaid; transportation; adaptive equipment.**

### **Attendance**

**HEART expects you to attend each day as scheduled unless you have an excused absence. If you know in advance that you will be absent, inform a HEART staff member as soon as possible.**



If you must unexpectedly be absent, call HEART to inform us of the reason for the absence. Extended absences for reasons such as vacation, behavioral issues or illness, must be communicated to HEART. Failure to discuss extended absences can jeopardize your placement. Our goal is to have individuals maintain 85% or better attendance each month. HEART staff members will follow up with you if you are missing time that falls below this amount. HEART wants you to maximize your benefits from program services. HEART will work with you on strategies to improve your attendance. This may be done by holding a special team meeting, initiating an attendance agreement or considering a reduced program schedule. If attendance continues to be consistently low, we will recommend discharge from the program service.

### **Individual/Care Provider Responsibilities**

Call us at 740-452-4518 ext: 1150 if you aren't attending program services when scheduled to be here with reason for your absence. Inform us of any change in address, phone numbers, emergency contact information, health and medical information. Follow through on ISP recommendations and procedures to which you have agreed or to specifically communicate your withdrawal of consent.

Respect the privacy, safety and property of others that you may come in contact with at HEART. You and your parent/guardian have a responsibility to be aware of the information and requirements in this Handbook. If you need assistance reading or understanding the contents of the handbook, a HEART staff member can assist you.

### **Visitors and Appointments**

We like families/advocates to share an interest in your program day and what you do. Upon arrival visitors must enter through the main door, sign in and wear an ID badge for safety purposes. Should you want to speak directly with a particular staff member, please make an appointment in advance so that the person can be available for you. Supervised visits must be scheduled in advance and at the availability of staff members. Community activity will have participants out of the building for parts of the day. Visitors should always call ahead to make sure you are at the program site or if a spot for your visit is available.

### **Leaving Program**

HEART staff members are responsible for your supervision and wellbeing during service

provision. Staff members need to know where you are going if you leave your program area. If you are leaving the building before your normal departure time, we need to know when, with whom and how. When leaving the building you are required to sign out at the building reception desk.

### **Phone Use**

Personal calls made/received during program day using HEART phones should be short in length and limited to lunch and non-programming times. Some calls must be made during the program day in order to contact people during normal business hours. Staff members can assist you with making necessary calls and direct you to the appropriate area to make your call. No long distance calls. Use of personal cell phones is permitted only during designated times/lunch. If the use of phones becomes a problem during the day, the issue will be discussed with your team and restrictions will be put in place.

### **Technology**

HEART cannot be responsible for the location, maintenance and charging of cell phones, tablets, computers, handheld video games, portable music devices, headsets and earphones. Exceptions will be made on a case by case basis for devices necessary for communication that remain in the program environment.

### **Eating/Drinking**

This is permitted only during breaks and lunch in designated areas. Food and beverages are prohibited in the production areas due to exposure to work materials and only in activity areas at specific times.

### **Lunch**

You need to bring a packed lunch daily. It is preferred that you pack your lunch in an insulated bag or a small cooler to ensure that your food is safely maintained during transportation. If you have special dietary requirements (mechanical soft diet, pureed diet, thickened liquids, for example), your food should be sent in according to prescribed dietary consistency and you must supply a thickening agent for liquids for staff to use. Soda may be purchased from vending machines located on the third floor. A microwave is located in the kitchen to heat lunch items. All items to be heated must be microwaveable and packed in microwave safe containers. Staff

members are available to assist you with the microwave or to heat items for you. If lunch is not sent in with you, a HEART staff member will call and ask your family/provider to bring it in prior to lunch beginning. The program cannot supply lunch for you. You are expected to assist with cleaning up your lunch table and area after finishing lunch to the extent that you are able.

### **Lost, Stolen or Damaged Items**

HEART is not responsible for the loss of personal items or damage of personal items due to regular use. HEART is not responsible for loss of personal items due to theft or vandalism. Personal items must be clearly marked with your name and should be limited to what is necessary for your program day. Please do not bring large sums of money, credit cards or gift cards with you to program services unless used for community activities and program staff members know your intention to use this form of payment.

### **Smoking/Vaping/Chewing Tobacco**

HEART is located in a smoke/vapor/tobacco free building. These products are permitted outside during designated program times and only in the designated smoking area outside of the building. Access to the smoking area is based on individual need and availability of staff supervision at certain times.

### **Drugs/Alcohol**

The use of alcohol, un-prescribed drugs and illegal substances are strictly prohibited. Should you be found with any in your possession or if you are suspected to be under the influence during the program day, administrative action will be taken, including police involvement as applicable.

### **Personal Care and Guidelines**

Upon entrance into HEART, a personal care assessment will be completed with you to determine the support you will require to meet your needs and ensure active program participation. Personal care services are provided by a trained staff member for your comfort and safety. From the personal care assessment completed with you prior to beginning HEART, personal care services will be developed and approximate times for services will be discussed with you. Trained staff will assist you throughout the program day to meet your personal care needs.

**Toileting – you are responsible for bringing in the supplies needed to have your briefs changed.**

**Clothing – it is recommended that you keep an extra set of clothes with you (in your wheelchair bag) or at HEART. We ask that all clothing, including the coat you wear, have your name marked in it. Should you need to borrow clothing that belongs to HEART, we ask that it be washed and returned to us within the same week. If you have a wheelchair bag to put items in, it needs to be cleaned out on a regular basis. When a concern arises regarding the personal care services you are receiving, please notify a HEART staff member immediately. It is more effective to follow up on issues the same day of your concern. If you feel your issue is not resolved to your satisfaction, please contact the HEART Coordinator.**

### **Dress Code**

**You should wear comfortable clothing so you can actively and safely participate in all program activities, including personal care. You are required to dress appropriately and have good hygiene. Body odor and distracting, inappropriate clothing can be disruptive to others attending the program. Discussing with you concerns about hygiene and appropriate dress is never a comfortable thing to do, however we will address it in the most respectful and dignified way possible. Therefore, the following guidelines need to be observed:**

- **Blouses/shirts, shorts, skirts and dresses that are too short and exposing are not permitted. Clothing needs to completely cover all undergarments. [too short = 2+” above the knee].**
- **Appropriate clothing worn for program participation should keep your back, bottom, stomach and chest covered.**
- **Shirts need a regular sleeve or capped sleeve.**
- **No tube, tank, muscle or spaghetti strapped shirts.**
- **Finger nail length, jewelry and other accessories that might interfere with a safe working and activity environment will be discouraged.**
- **All clothing needs to be clean and free of stains, odors, rips and holes.**
- **Clothing should have finished edges/hems.**
- **Clothing/shirts with print need to have an appropriate message – prints, pictures, or language that has strong political, ethnic, or religious content that is offensive to others will not be permitted.**
- **Humorous t-shirts that could be perceived as disrespectful to others will not be permitted.**
- **No open toed shoes or sandals are permitted for safety reasons, including a foot covering if**

you use a wheelchair.

- **Hats and sunglasses should be worn in appropriate settings and should not interfere with communication, participation or mobility.**
- **For personal care to be completed in a timely, efficient manner, please wear 2 piece outfits.**
- **If you have a catheter bag or bottle, it needs to be covered and attached to your wheelchair in a safe manner.**

## **Personal Conduct**

**You are expected to participate in programming and socialize with others following the behavior guidelines listed in this section. You are expected to treat others with courtesy and respect. When your actions and behaviors infringe on the health, safety and wellbeing of others you will be held accountable for those actions and individualized behavioral procedures will be implemented. You are expected to participate completely and safely in activities. If you exhibit a behavior that prohibits this from occurring, a behavioral intervention may occur. Behavioral strategies may be used for any of the following reasons:**

- **Stealing, damaging or disturbing other participants' personal property.**
- **Refusal to follow program expectations to maintain a healthy, safe and a respectful environment.**
- **Use of abusive language or profanity.**
- **Property destruction or misuse of equipment.**
- **Arguing or aggression with fellow participants or staff.**
- **Inappropriate sexual behavior.**
- **Physical aggression.**
- **Attempting to leave the property without permission when supervision, health and safety are at risk.**

**If your behaviors create an emergency situation in which other people, staff members or you will be hurt, crisis behavior strategies will be implemented including physical interventions using approved training programs; removal from program; police or paramedics may be called. If behavioral concerns continue to prohibit program participation and/or the safety of other participants, a special team meeting may be called, behavioral strategies, behavioral consultation, and/or a formal behavioral program may be implemented. Severe behaviors that cannot be**

addressed or supported programmatically may lead to discharge from program services or a transfer to another program that can meet your current needs and level of behavioral support. This action would be discussed as an ISP team process, with input from the HEART Coordinator.

### **Weapons**

For the safety and well-being of all participants, staff and visitors, weapons of any kind are strictly prohibited on the premises. HEART is committed to maintaining a secure and peaceful environment for everyone in our community.

### **Medical Information and Procedures**

HEART enrollment process requires that each person provide the program with a current medical evaluation and TB skin test. It is important to HEART that you are healthy for program participation and that the program staff, as needed and appropriate, is aware of any health conditions that need monitoring for your safety during the program day. Anytime there is an update or change of any kind in your health/medical status, including medical consultations of any kind, tests and results, new conditions, doctor's orders changing medication in any way, etc., you are required to provide this information for your records. This includes medications that you take at home but not at the program for updating our emergency medical form. HEART complies with the Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act (HIPAA) and the privacy regulations to protect the confidentiality and integrity for your personal health information.

### **Safety**

Any injury or accident, no matter how slight, must be reported immediately. Mandatory safety drills are held monthly and it is your responsibility to follow the procedures identified by the safety code. Safety drills and procedures, location of first aid stations, fire pull stations and extinguishers are reviewed during orientation and on a regular basis thereafter.

### **Medication**

HEART encourages you to take your medication(s) at home, before or after your program day. However, when medication is required to be taken during program hours, you and your guardian are responsible for acquiring the needed authorization(s) from the physician before you begin the program or when a new medication is prescribed. Participants receiving medication at



**HEART need to have completed the Medication/Treatment Authorization Form. This form will be initiated for completion once a year or as needed. Your physician is required to sign the form and return it to the program as soon as possible. This form is required before we can give any medication or treatment. No exceptions will be made. HEART is mandated to follow the rule and law of the Ohio Board of Nursing and law and rule of DODD. Medication in the original updated pharmacy labeled container is to be sent/carried with your driver/provider who is responsible to give the medication to a program representative who will see that all medications reach the appropriate area where they will be kept locked. No medication may be carried by you unless you self-medicate. You will be notified when medication supply is short and needs to be refilled. You, your provider or guardian will need to inform a HEART staff member of any changes in physician, dosage and/or medication termination, etc. You, your provider or guardian are required to notify HEART regarding the use of any drug prescribed by a physician for the purpose of behavior management. You and your team can discuss your ability to self-medicate during the program day. A self medication assessment can be completed by your County Board SSA. HEART cannot be responsible for storing such medications. Over the counter PRN medications will not be given unless specific protocol is prescribed by your physician for when this medication is authorized to be administered.**

**HEART will use the following illness guidelines to determine if your condition requires you to be sent home. A HEART staff member will assess your symptoms.**

- **TEMPERATURE:** Greater than 100 degrees.
- **SEIZURES:** Seizure activity will be assessed individually and based on the discretion of the HEART Coordinator, physician and/or agency protocol. (\*\*Emergency situation)
- **RESPIRATORY:** Excessive coughing; change in normal consistency, color, or volume of nasal drainage.
- **GASTRO-INTESTINAL:** One or more episodes of vomiting; diarrhea – more than one watery bowel movement in succession.
- **COMMUNICABLE DISEASE:** A HEART staff member will examine and use their own judgment to disseminate a case.
- **PAIN:** Any extreme expression of pain uncommon to the individual.
- **WOUND:** Drainage from wound.

- **EMERGENCY SITUATION:** Discretion of HEART staff members. Any participant sent home will have their primary provider contacted. The primary provider will be notified of program requirements that have to be met prior to return to the program.

## **Health Practices**

There are a number of valid health/medical reasons for absence. Good judgment and common sense will help you decide when you need to stay home.

If you have a health condition that presents risks to others and/or prevents program participation, we ask that you do not attend. You must evaluate the possible risks and consequences for you as well as the risks and consequences to all people who will be interacting with you during your day. Some possible reasons for a medically excused absence might be:

- Communicable or infectious airborne disease that can be spread from close contact with others, such as influenza, diarrhea, measles, meningitis, mononucleosis, mumps, rubella, strep throat, whooping cough.
- Communicable skin to skin conditions that are spread from close contact with others, such as unknown rash, chickenpox, impetigo, ringworm, lice, pink eye, and/or scabies.
- Emergency room visit.
- Hospitalization.
- Accidents, injuries, fractures, unexplained bruising.
- Side effects from medications or treatments.

Following any of these circumstances, a signed physician release is required prior to your return to HEART. If there are any restrictions for your program day they must be determined and written by a physician and communicated to HEART. Please make sure your physician understands the amount of contact you have with others throughout the program day. If you experience an infestation, such as lice, fleas or bed bugs, you will be sent home from program services and expected to treat self and/or home environment prior to returning to program services. You will be required to show proof of environmental treatment from a professional exterminator for bed bugs. For lice, you must be free of all adult/nits on person and comply with environmental treatment to reduce the likelihood of repeat infestation. You are required to report the presence of any communicable condition immediately, as well as not attend HEART if any indication of a communicable disease is present. HEART is required to evaluate possible risks to



others who might have been exposed. Upon confirmation of a communicable condition, HEART will review the risks with medical personnel and make notification to program participants as applicable based on the exposure and risk. Notification will include signs/symptoms to monitor the disease.

### **Emergency Situations**

If you have an accident, an injury or have a health crisis during the program day your family/guardian/provider will be notified promptly. In the case of a minor emergency or accident, they will be contacted to: a) advise them of your condition: b) consult on further action to be taken and: c) if necessary, request their assistance in obtaining medical care.

In the case of a major medical emergency, we are required to call the local paramedics. The primary provider will also be contacted immediately. In the event that you are taken to the hospital, a HEART staff member will accompany you and remain with you until they are in contact with a provider/guardian or when the provider/guardian is in contact with hospital personnel. \*\* If you have seizures and you have a seizure activity lasting longer than 5 minutes the local paramedics will be notified. At that time, the paramedics will determine if you will require transport to the hospital for further evaluation. This is HEART protocol however if you have a special circumstance we will need a letter from your physician stating your specific protocol. In the case where you have a DNR order, HEART is not a health care provider and is required to provide emergency first aid until paramedics arrive and hand a copy of the DNR order to them upon their arrival. Remember to let us know if emergency contact information or medical information changes!

### **Emergency Procedures**

Emergency drills are conducted at HEART on a regular basis. This practice enables all persons to be prepared for all types of emergency situations. In addition to being a good safety practice, these drills are required of facilities such as ours. The staff members will train you on all emergency procedures. The following are some of the guidelines:

- **Fire Procedure:** An audio and visual alarm will sound. When you hear or see this signal, please walk to the exit nearest to you. Guidance and assistance out of the building will be given to you, if you require it. Individuals will report to the program designated area.

- **Severe Storm Procedure:** For a tornado watch, you will be made aware that severe weather is in our area. If the watch progresses to a tornado warning, you will be directed to the designated evacuation area for your building.
- **Bomb Threat Procedure:** Immediately after a bomb threat is received, it will be called in to 911 and details of the threat will be given to safety personnel. The building will not be evacuated until directed to by safety personnel. If an evacuation is necessary, a staff member will assist you to evacuate.
- **Power Failure Procedure:** In the event of a power failure you and a staff member will remain in your work/activity area until guided to a central area or exit. If the power failure is due to severe weather, follow severe weather procedures.
- **Lock down Drills:** When emergency personnel or MVEESC management determine that there is a significant threat to a program when individuals are present in the building a lockdown status will occur. Individuals and a staff member will assemble in a designated area until all clear is given.
- **Inclement Weather:** Inclement Weather may cause other transportation to not operate but program services remain open for individuals who feel safe transporting on their own to the program. Only in severe emergency weather conditions will program services shut down completely. HEART will use media stations as well as an automated call system to communicate if program or transportation services are closed. Please check Facebook, Twitter and WHIZ for updates on HEART closings.

In order for our automated system to work for your needs, please make sure HEART is aware of any changes to your home phone or primary contact number. Please call HEART if you have any specific questions about any of these options for inclement weather notification.

### **Rights and Conflict Resolution**

It is important to know what your rights are and how to exercise your rights during your participation in programming. This list of rights will be reviewed with you upon enrollment and annually thereafter. A HEART staff member will review these rights with you in a way that you can understand them. HEART uses a variety of different formats in order to ensure that the intent of each right is understood by you and/or your guardian/advocate. Our goal is to help enhance your rights as part of program participation. Staff members are trained on a regular basis on ways to respect and promote your rights in daily activities.

- **The right to be treated at all times with courtesy and respect and with full recognition of your dignity and individuality.**
- **The right to an appropriate, safe and sanitary living environment that complies with local, state and federal standards and recognizes your need for privacy and independence.**
- **The right to adequate food which meets accepted standards of nutrition.**
- **The right to practice the religion of your choice or to abstain from the practice of religion. The right to timely access to appropriate medical or dental treatment.**
- **The right to access necessary ancillary services, including but not limited to, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, and behavior modification and other psychological services.**
- **The right to receive appropriate care and treatment in the least intrusive manner.**
- **The right to privacy, including both periods of privacy and place of privacy.**
- **The right to communicate freely with persons of your choice in any reasonable manner you choose.**
- **The right to ownership and use of personal possessions so as to maintain individuality and personal dignity. The right to social interaction with members of either sex.**
- **The right to access to opportunities that enable you to develop your full human potential.**
- **The right to pursue individual vocational opportunities that will promote and enhance economic independence.**
- **The right to be treated equally as citizens under the law.**
- **The right to be free from emotional, psychological, and physical abuse.**
- **The right to participate in appropriate programs of education, training, social development, and habilitation and in programs of reasonable recreation.**
- **The right to participate in decisions that affect your life.**
- **The right to select a parent or advocate to act on your behalf.**
- **The right to manage your personal financial affairs, based on your ability to do so.**
- **The right to confidential treatment of all information in your personal and medical records.**
- **The right to voice grievances and recommend changes in policies and services without restraint, interference, coercion, discrimination, or reprisal.**
- **The right to be free from unnecessary chemical or physical restraints.**

- **The right to participate in the political process.**
- **The right to refuse to participate in medical, psychological or other research or experiments.**

**If you feel one of your rights has been violated during program services, HEART will help you work through the process of advocating for yourself and resolving your concern. Many situations can be resolved and mediated by communicating your issue, sharing your feelings, listening to the viewpoints of others and participating in the process of creating a solution. Should you feel this issue is not resolved to your satisfaction, a special meeting request with the HEART Director of Operations or your ISP team may need to occur. A more formalized method of working through an issue is outlined in the grievance procedure later in the handbook. HEART is mandated to investigate and report any rights violation that results in a reasonable risk of harm to health and safety [OAC 5123:17-02]. The rule includes misappropriation and exploitation of you as a person, your personal property, finances and/or other resources. If you feel representation or action is necessary to uphold your individual rights, the agency will provide information, referral and advocacy, as appropriate on your behalf.**

### **Complaint Procedure**

**HEART has many structured and informal opportunities for you to voice your ideas for change and improvement. Sharing your ideas directly with staff member or HEART Coordinator are excellent ways to initiate change. If you are having a problem with a program service, another participant or a staff member, the HEART Coordinator is the best person to help you resolve these types of issues. He/she can help you examine the situation, come up with solutions or different ways of handling your concern. In some cases, the HEART Coordinator will act as a mediator between yourself and the person you are having problems with to help bring about change. If you feel that process has not been successful at resolving your problem, you should discuss your situation with the HEART Director of Operations or request a special team meeting be held with your ISP team.**

**There may be situations in which you feel you need a more formalized method of resolution. In these types of situations, you should use the HEART Complaint Procedure. A HEART staff member will assist you with your understanding and access of the complaint procedure. Part of the process is communicating to you that this process is within your rights and will not result in any retaliation on the part of the agency or impact agreed upon service delivery. Fair and prompt**

consideration will be given to the adjustment of misunderstandings and complaints on your part. Should differences or questions occur involving any decision regarding programming, you, your parent, legal guardian, or County DD representative will use the HEART complaint procedure as a means of questioning the decision. All decisions regarding an enrollment in any agency program are also subject to the same procedure.

- **STEP ONE:** The individual or his/her representative shall request an informal discussion of the problem with the HEART Director of Operations within five (5) working days of the occurrence giving rise to the complaint. The meeting shall be scheduled within five (5) working days following the request from the participant. The HEART Director of Operations shall respond to the complaint no later than five (5) working days following the meeting.
- **STEP TWO:** In the event that the matter has not been resolved to the individual's satisfaction, the individual may prepare a written statement of the complaint or complete the complaint form, for submission to the MVESC Director of Operations or Superintendent within seven (7) working days after receipt of the decision from HEART. The MVESC Director of Operations or Superintendent will conduct a meeting with the individual, his/her representatives and any other interested parties, including non-biased sources, at the invitation of either the consumer or MVESC Director of Operations or Superintendent within seven (7) working days after the receipt of the formal request and appeal. At the conference, the MVESC Director of Operations or Superintendent shall review the circumstances of the dispute and provide an opportunity to the party initiating the appeal to present reasons why the decision should be reconsidered. The MVESC Director of Operations or Superintendent shall forward a written decision, including an explanation of the reasons for the decision, to the consumer within seven (7) working days following the conference.
- **STEP THREE:** If issues remain unresolved upon completion of the due process procedures, the consumer may contact their funding/plan coordinator to discuss ongoing dissatisfaction. Once all of the steps have been completed, the decision of the MVESC Director of Operations or Superintendent is final and binding.

## **Closing**

**We are extremely grateful that you have chosen HEART as your provider of services. It is our goal to support you in your growth, ensure your health and safety and maintain your satisfaction. Should you need any additional information or have questions about the content of the handbook, please call a HEART staff member. A copy of this handbook and an agency calendar is always accessible upon request. It is our responsibility to show our communities the value of all people, to celebrate differences, and to take a stand for acceptance and inclusion.**

**Kate Kimble**

**HEART Director of Operations**

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**Lori Morrow**

**HEART Program Coordinator**

**740-255-0439**

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# **DOCUMENTATION OF RECEIPT OF PROGRAM HANDBOOK**

I \_\_\_\_\_ (print name) have received a copy of Muskingum Valley Educational Service Center's HEART Program Handbook and questions that I had were explained to me and clarified.

I understand that it contains the following information:

- HEART Mission and Vision
- Core Values and Rights
- Program Eligibility
- Attendance, Dress Code and Technology Guidelines
- Eating/Drinking, Smoking/Vaping Guidelines
- Lost, Stolen or Damaged Item Guidelines
- Personal Conduct Guidelines and Procedures
- Illness and Medication Procedures
- Inclement Weather and Emergency Procedures
- HEART Grievances Procedures

I received on the handbook on (date): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Guardian, if applicable