

# Family & Support Network Handbook







Welcome to NEXUS Community Support Society.

We're glad you're here!

This guide is designed to help you learn more about who we are, what we do, and how we support individuals and the people in their support network.

It will walk you through important information about NEXUS services, what you can expect from us, and how we work alongside individuals and their support networks to provide meaningful, person-centred support.

We hope this guide answers your questions and helps you feel informed, supported, and confident in your role as part of the individual's support network.

All photos in this handbook feature supported individuals, staff, board members, and families connected to NEXUS. We've included them to help you get a feel for the people who make NEXUS, NEXUS.

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## Our Mission

To support individuals and families to live full lives.

## Our Vision

Inclusive communities that embrace diversity and equality, where all members belong.

## Our Values

**Diversity:** Each person is unique and we love and accept our individual differences.

**Belonging:** Accepting everyone for who they are. Everyone has the right to be a citizen of our community.

**Respect:** Everyone is treated with dignity. Every person has strengths, abilities, and value.

**Choice:** Having the support and freedom to make our own choices.

## About NEXUS

We are NEXUS Community Support Society.

We support adults with diverse needs and developmental disabilities. Our goal is to support people in all aspects of life so they can take part in and belong in their communities, and live full, meaningful lives.

We believe that all people, regardless of ability, are unique and valuable. Every person has the right to live with dignity and to have access to the same opportunities as others.

We are committed to working in a supportive and collaborative way with each individual we serve. We focus on promoting choice, independence, and personal growth, while respecting each person's goals, preferences, and strengths.

Person-centred thinking and planning are at the core of everything we do. This means we take the time to understand what matters most to each individual and tailor supports to reflect their needs, goals, and vision for their life.

## Our History

In the early 1950s, Dr. William James Endicott's Kootenay Society for Handicapped Children became one of the first organizations of its kind in the region, advocating for more inclusive communities.

Within a short time, this family-driven society established several chapters throughout the Kootenays, many of which later became independent non-profit organizations.

Among these were the Cranbrook Society for Community Living (CSCL) and the Creston & District Society for Community Living (CDSCL), both founded in 1956. Over time, the services provided by CSCL and CDSCL grew and evolved to meet the diverse needs of the individuals they supported.

In 2021, CSCL and CDSCL amalgamated to form what is now NEXUS Community Support Society.



## Governance & Accountability

We are a registered charity in Canada and an incorporated society in British Columbia.

As a registered charity, we are governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, which is reviewed annually at our Annual General Meeting (AGM).

To support transparency and accountability, we report our finances each year to the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and complete an external audit.



Above all, as a charity, we are not driven by profit. Our focus is on serving our communities and supporting individuals as effectively as we can.



Following this, NEXUS continued to grow. The organization later amalgamated with Windermere & District Social Service Society (WDSSS), further expanding its reach and service capacity. NEXUS has also extended its services into additional communities, including Revelstoke and Kamloops.

Today, NEXUS supports individuals across multiple communities, continuing a long-standing commitment to inclusion, choice, and belonging.

## Accreditation & Quality

We are accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF).

CARF is an independent, non-profit organization that provides accreditation services nationally and internationally. Their standards are rigorous, and organizations that meet them demonstrate a high level of quality and accountability in their services.

CARF surveyors regularly evaluate our performance through ongoing reviews and site visits.

We are proud to have received multiple three-year accreditations from CARF, which is their highest level of recognition.

For more information, please visit: [www.carf.org](http://www.carf.org)



## Our Approach To Support

At NEXUS, our approach is grounded in person-centred support. We believe that each individual has the right to make their own choices, try new things, and learn through experience. Growth involves being able to take risks, change direction, and ask for support, all within safe and responsible boundaries.

Part of NEXUS' role is to provide information, guidance, and support so individuals can make informed, safe, and responsible decisions. We work alongside individuals and their support networks to find a balance between rights and responsibilities, and between opportunities for growth and safety.

The rights of each individual supported by NEXUS will be respected and upheld at all times, unless exercising those rights would result in harm to the individual or others.

While we value and consider the perspectives of families and support networks, the choices and rights of the individual remain the priority.

## How To Access Our Services

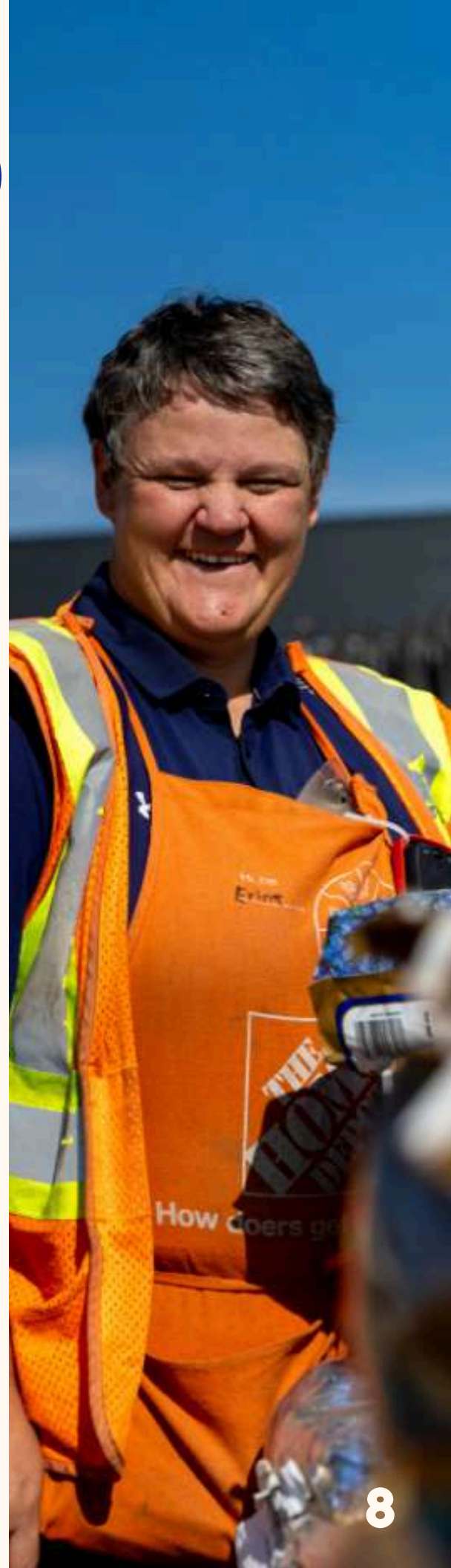
Most NEXUS programs require a referral before services can begin.

This means that individuals must first connect with either the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) or Community Living BC (CLBC), depending on their age and eligibility.

These agencies are responsible for assessing eligibility and determining the types of services and supports that may be appropriate.

If an individual is found eligible, a referral will be submitted to NEXUS.

Once the referral is received, NEXUS staff will follow up to discuss next steps, including service options, timelines, and any additional information required to support a smooth transition into services.



# Our Programs, Services, & Supports

## Staff-Supported Living for Adults

24/7 support from trained staff in a safe and supportive home.

## Supported Independent Living

Customized support to help you get the most out of living on your own.

## Outreach Support

Flexible help in your home and community to support your independence and help you work toward what matters to you.

## Homemaker

Flexible, in-home support for adults who may need help with daily tasks at home. Promoting comfort, well-being, and independence.

## Personal Support Initiatives (PSI)

Full-service, wrap-around supports to help you grow in all aspects of your life, from connecting with new friends to developing new skills.

## Affordable Housing For Seniors

Live in a safe, well-maintained building especially for seniors in need of affordable housing.

## Stepping Out

Spend six weeks living in an apartment with daily support to see if living on your own feels right for you.

## Community Inclusion

Helping you build relationships, try new things, and feel a stronger sense of belonging in your community.

## L.I.F.E

L.I.F.E. is a person-centred program dedicated to helping individuals lead active, fulfilling lives through community connection and personal growth.

## Supported Employment Services

Individualized support to help you find and keep a job that's right for you.

## Employment Readiness

Training and hands-on experience to help you prepare for work in the community.

## Cycling Without Age

Volunteers pedal trishaws to help seniors with limited mobility enjoy being out on a bike again.

# What You Can Expect From Us

What you and the individual you support can expect from NEXUS

That We...

- Treat you with respect, dignity, courtesy, and fairness, while always being mindful of your rights;
- Act in alignment with our mission and guiding values in all decisions and actions;
- Follow our Ethical Code of Conduct, including respecting the privacy of personal information, avoiding conflicts of interest, and not using service relationships for personal gain
- Provide planning support and assistance that is tailored to the supported individuals needs;
- Communicate openly and regularly with you;
- Listen to, review, and respond to any concerns you may have, including investigating issues when appropriate;
- Strive to continuously improve our practice through ongoing training and professional development;

and

- Meet or exceed standards set by government and accrediting bodies, while continuously reviewing and improving the quality of our services.



## What we expect from the individual you support and their family & support network

That You...

- Provide us with the information we need to deliver the best possible support and services;
- Follow the policies and guidelines in place for our programs;
- Treat staff, individuals, and families with respect, dignity, courtesy, and fairness;
- Participate in orientation activities and, where appropriate, support staff in understanding the needs of the person you support;
- Participate in service planning meetings.

and

- Communicate openly with us and share any questions, concerns, or feedback.

## Rights and Responsibilities

An important part of our role is to support each individual in understanding their rights. We encourage individuals to advocate for themselves as much as possible and to take an active role in decisions that affect their lives. Each year, we review rights and responsibilities with each person we support.

We are committed to respecting and upholding these rights in all of our interactions with individuals and their families and support networks.



We also have training and policies in place to prevent, recognize, and respond to any concerns related to abuse or neglect.

Individuals who receive our supports and services have the same rights and opportunities as all Canadian citizens, as outlined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the BC Human Rights Code.

Individuals supported by NEXUS have the right to:

- Be recognized and respected as a person first;
- Be treated and spoken to with respect, dignity, courtesy, and fairness;
- Be an active member of society (for example, voting in elections);
- Receive support and assistance in times of emergency or disaster;
- Be supported by an advocate;
- Develop their abilities to their full potential;
- Freedom of thought, expression, and belief;
- Participate in decisions that affect them;
- Make choices about their lifestyle and have those choices respected and supported (for example, employment, education...);

and

- Take part in recreation, leisure, and volunteer activities in their community.



Individuals supported by NEXUS also have the right to:

- Access adequate nutrition and medical care;
- Receive high-quality, inclusive services that respect diversity and meet their needs;
- Be protected from all forms of neglect, abuse, exploitation, humiliation, retaliation, and discrimination;
- Access legal advice at little or no cost;
- Receive information in a way that they can understand;
- Access their personal information held by NEXUS;
- Receive information about their rights and suggest changes or additions, with those suggestions given fair consideration;

and

- Enjoy these rights without discrimination based on gender identity, sexual orientation, appearance, ethnicity, culture, religion, faith or spiritual beliefs, family status, socio-economic status, or age.



With rights come responsibilities. NEXUS supports individuals in understanding and carrying out their responsibilities in a way that works for them.

The responsibilities below support individuals in building skills, developing independence at their own pace, and taking part in daily life.

Individuals supported by NEXUS have the responsibility to:

- Respect the rights of others;
- Tell someone when they are not feeling well;
- Take care of their personal hygiene;
- Help take care of their home;
- Follow the rules in their home and/or programs;
- Manage their money (with support if needed);
- Take part in personal planning;
- Let someone know when they need help;
- Make their own choices and decisions;
- Build independence in a way that works for them.



# Adult Residents' Bill Of Rights

(IHA - COMMUNITY CARE LICENSING)

## Commitment to care

An adult person in care has the right to a care plan developed:

- specifically for them and
- on the basis of their unique abilities, physical, social and emotional needs, and cultural and spiritual preferences.

## Rights to health, safety, and dignity

An adult person in care has the right to the protection and promotion of their health, safety and dignity, including a right to all of the following:

- to be treated in a manner, and to live in an environment, that promotes their health, safety and dignity;
- to be protected from abuse and neglect;
- to have their lifestyle and choices respected and supported, and to pursue social, cultural, religious, spiritual and other interests;
- to have their personal privacy respected, including in relation to their records, bedroom, belongings and storage spaces;
- to receive visitors and to communicate with visitors in private;
- to keep and display personal possessions, pictures and furnishings in their bedroom.



## **Rights to participation & freedom of expression**

An adult person in care has the right to participate in their own care and to freely express their views, including a right to all of the following:

- to participate in the development and implementation of their care plan;
- to establish and participate in a resident or family council to represent the interests of persons in care;
- to have their family or representative participate on a resident or family council on their own behalf;
- to have access to a fair and effective process to express concerns, make complaints or resolve disputes within the facility;
- to be informed as to how to make a complaint to an authority outside the facility;
- to have their family or representative exercise the rights under this clause on their behalf.



## **Rights to transparency and accountability**

An adult person in care has the right to transparency and accountability, including a right to all of the following:

- to have ready access to copies of all laws, rules and policies affecting a service provided to him or her;
- to have ready access to a copy of the most recent routine inspection record made under the Act;
- to have their family or representative participate on a resident or family council on their own behalf;
- if any part of the cost of accommodation or services is prepaid, to receive at the time of prepayment a written statement setting out the terms and conditions under which a refund may be made;
- to have their family or representative informed of the matters described in this clause.

### **Scope of rights**

The rights set out in clauses 2, 3 and 4 are subject to:

- what is reasonably practical given the physical, mental and emotional circumstances of the person in care;
- the need to protect and promote the health or safety of the person in care or another person in care, and
- the rights of other persons in care.

## Family Council

A Family Council is a group made up of family members, friends, and others who are part of an individual's support network.

The purpose of a Family Council is to provide a forum for sharing information, discussing concerns, and supporting the needs and interests of individuals, particularly where individuals may need support in sharing their thoughts or concerns.

Family Councils are supported under licensing regulations (Section 59: Family and Resident Council).

All Family Councils:

- Are organized and led by their members;
- Are recognized and supported by NEXUS management and staff;
- Are inclusive, with membership open to individuals, family members, and friends;

Individuals are reminded annually that a Family Council may be established and can meet with NEXUS representatives.



## Our Commitment to DEIA

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) is about recognizing, respecting, and valuing differences, and ensuring that everyone has fair access to opportunities, supports, and services.

British Columbia is a diverse province, where people come from many different cultures, backgrounds, and life experiences. This includes differences in ability, ethnicity, religion, language, sexual orientation, gender identity, beliefs, and socio-economic circumstances.

At NEXUS, we recognize and value this diversity. We are committed to creating an environment where all individuals feel respected, included, and supported.





We work to uphold these values by incorporating diverse perspectives into our decision-making, providing staff with ongoing training in culturally responsive and inclusive practices, and fostering a safe environment that is free from discrimination and harassment.

We also strive to ensure equitable access to our services by recognizing and responding to the unique needs, preferences, and identities of each individual we support.

## Our Commitment To Health & Safety

The health, safety, and well-being of the individuals we support are always our top priority. Individuals have the right to a safe environment that supports their physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

NEXUS maintains safe and well-managed programs through a range of safeguards. All program sites and homes are clean, well-maintained, and regularly inspected. Where applicable, inspections are conducted by licensing authorities, the Fire Department, and NEXUS's Health and Safety Committee.

Programs also have emergency preparedness plans in place, including regular fire, earthquake, and other emergency drills, and are equipped with emergency supplies and personal protective equipment (PPE).

In the event of an incident, a manager is available on-call 24 hours a day. The on-call manager is responsible for completing required reports for licensing authorities (where applicable) and Community Living BC (CLBC), and for notifying families as appropriate.

We support individuals' health needs by documenting medication administration and coordinating medical, dental, and specialist appointments within inclusive living programs.

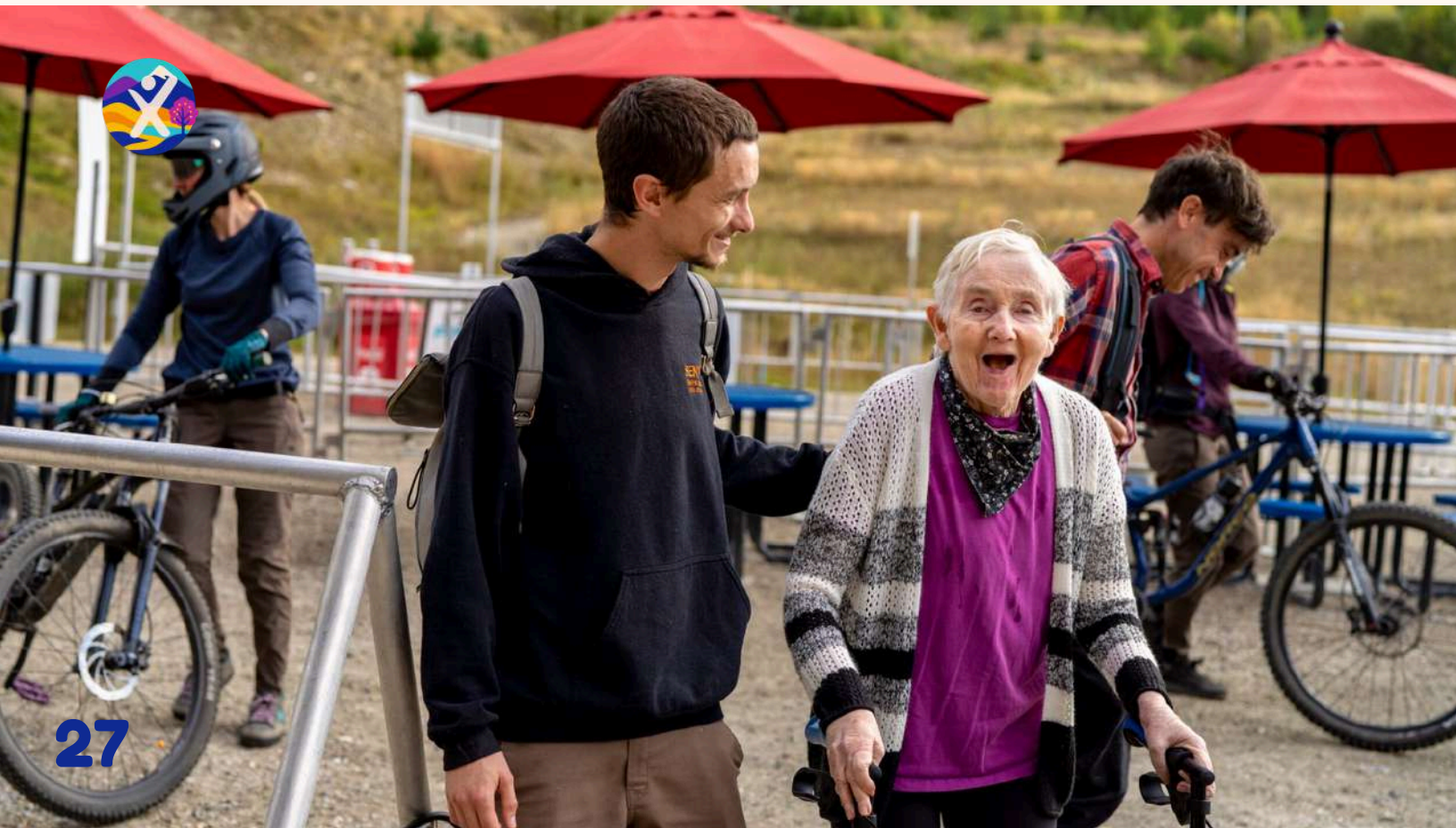


Staff are trained to support health and safety through courses such as First Aid, CPR, Non-Violent Crisis Intervention, Mental Health First Aid, and Food Safety. NEXUS also maintains policies, procedures, and ongoing staff training in areas such as violence prevention, accident prevention, emergency response, and workplace health and safety. First Aid kits are also available in all NEXUS sites, as well as in vehicles used to transport individuals

Staffing levels are determined based on the needs of the individuals we support, in consultation with our funders. Casual staff are available to ensure continuity of support when regular staff are unavailable.

To promote safety and accountability, all staff, practicum students, and volunteers are required to complete a criminal record check. Staff are also required to follow organizational policies, including those related to substance use, infection control, and universal precautions when providing personal support. Vaccination requirements are followed in accordance with current public health guidance.

Transportation safety is also a priority. NEXUS vehicles are properly maintained and, where required, provincially inspected. Staff who transport individuals must hold the appropriate driver's license as defined by ICBC. Staff-owned vehicles used for transportation must carry appropriate business-class insurance.



# Financial Responsibilities & Contributions

Individuals living in a staff-supported home are required to pay monthly rent and contribute to shared food costs. Rent includes basic services such as cable, phone, utilities, and access to laundry facilities.

In most cases, rent is paid directly to NEXUS using a portion of the individual's disability benefits. The remaining funds are provided to the individual for personal expenses, such as clothing, recreation, and other personal items.

NEXUS may provide support with financial management, where appropriate, in a manner that respects the individual's preferences, independence, and level of support required.

If an individual leaves NEXUS, any personal funds held on their behalf will be returned to them. If an individual moves out partway through a month, they may be eligible for a partial refund of room and board, based on the number of days they resided in the home.

Families and support networks are encouraged to speak with staff or management if they have questions regarding rent, payments, or financial supports.

# Collection & Use of Personal Information

All individuals supported by NEXUS have an electronic file stored in our private and secure cloud-based system, ShareVision. Access to this electronic file is restricted to authorized personnel who require it to perform their job duties.

This file may include the following:

## Profile

A profile includes important information about the individual, such as support needs, preferences, health information, and emergency contacts.

## Individual Service Plan

The Individual Service Plan is developed at intake and reviewed annually thereafter. With the support of staff, individuals are involved in identifying their goals and determining the supports they need.

Service planning meetings provide an opportunity to discuss goals, review progress, and make any necessary adjustments to supports. The process is intended to reflect the individual's preferences and support their future goals.



## Consent Forms

All consent forms are reviewed and signed annually by the individual or their legal representative.

## Health Care Plan

A Health Care Plan outlines any formal plans or recommendations developed by health care professionals to support an individual's health needs.

Plans are developed in collaboration with appropriate professionals (such as nurses, therapists, or physicians) and are reviewed and updated at least annually.

For individuals living in licensed settings, a Health Care Plan is required by licensing.

## Behaviour Support & Safety Plan

A Behaviour Support and Safety Plan is an individualized, written plan developed to support individuals who may experience behaviours that are challenging or unsafe.

The plan is developed with input from the individual (where possible), family or support network, staff, and relevant professionals. It follows guidance from CLBC's Guide for Service Providers.

## Procedures for Support

Procedures for support provide guidance to staff on how to support individuals during daily activities, routines, and skill development.

These may include personal care routines, mealtime supports, and support in the community. While procedures may describe behaviours that can occur, they are not a substitute for a Behaviour Support Plan.



## Privacy & Confidentiality

In accordance with provincial law, NEXUS protects the privacy and confidentiality of information related to the individuals we support and their families.

Confidential information includes any personal or sensitive information about an individual, such as medical, educational, financial, or psychological information. This information may exist in many forms, including names, meeting notes, emails, reports, videos, or photographs.

We collect only the information necessary to plan and provide services, and we take steps to ensure it is kept accurate, up to date, and secure. Information is only shared with others with the consent of the individual or their legal representative. This is typically completed in advance using a Consent for Release of Information form. Even with consent, only the minimum necessary information is shared.

In certain emergency situations, it may not be possible to obtain consent. In these cases, limited information may be shared to ensure the individual's safety or to support appropriate medical care.

Some of the information maintained in NEXUS files is held on behalf of Community Living BC (CLBC) and/or the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) and is subject to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPPA).

Individuals have the right to access the personal and confidential information NEXUS holds about them and to review it to ensure it is complete and accurate. Requests must be made in writing to NEXUS's Privacy Officer (the Chief Executive Officer).

Individuals may also provide consent for others to access their information and may request that any incorrect information be corrected.



Upon written request, the Privacy Officer (or designate) may disclose the following personal information held by NEXUS:

- Name
- Address
- Social Insurance Number
- Date of Birth
- Service planning information (current and historical)

Requests to access information beyond the scope listed above must be directed in writing to Community Living BC (CLBC), Attention: Director, Quality Assurance, who serves as CLBC's Privacy Officer.

For children and youth in care, the Representative for Children and Youth ([www.rcybc.ca](http://www.rcybc.ca) or 1-800-476-3933) and the Office of the Ombudsperson ([www.bcombudsperson.ca](http://www.bcombudsperson.ca) or 1-800-567-3247) are available to assist with requests to access personal information.

If an individual, or a member of their support network, is not satisfied with the information provided by NEXUS or CLBC, they may request a review through the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner at [www.oipc.bc.ca](http://www.oipc.bc.ca).



## Artificial Intelligence

NEXUS may use approved technology, including artificial intelligence (AI), to support administrative and documentation tasks. This may include helping staff draft general information, prepare summaries or reports, organize ideas, and improve the clarity of written materials.

AI is used as a support tool only. All content created with AI is reviewed by a staff member to ensure it is accurate, appropriate, and reflects the needs of the individual.

NEXUS does not enter personal or identifying information about individuals or families into AI systems. All use of technology follows privacy laws, confidentiality requirements, and NEXUS policies.

AI is not used to make decisions about individuals or their services. Staff remain responsible for all decisions and for the quality of services provided.

Individuals and families will be informed about how AI may be used and are welcome to ask questions at any time.

## Concerns, Complaints, & Feedback

NEXUS reviews the complaint process with each individual at intake and annually as part of the service planning process.

We take a proactive approach to preventing and addressing concerns or issues as they arise and encourage open communication. Families and support networks are encouraged to raise any concerns or questions as soon as possible.

NEXUS promotes an open-door approach, where concerns can be discussed with staff or management at any time. Our management team is experienced in positive problem-solving and communication, and we strive to resolve concerns in a timely and respectful manner.

Where a situation requires a more formal approach, NEXUS has a structured complaint and dispute resolution process. This process includes clear steps, fair review methods, and an appeal mechanism.

Individuals living in licensed homes also have the option to contact the Interior Health Patient Care Quality Office (PCQO) at 1-877-442-2001.

If a concern is not resolved through the PCQO, the individual may contact the Patient Care Quality Review Board for an independent review. The Review Board is separate from Interior Health and reports to the Ministry of Health.

All complaints are handled in a confidential manner and shared only with appropriate individuals. Raising a concern or complaint will not affect the services provided by NEXUS.



Complaints can also be submitted online at:  
[nexussupport.ca/contact](https://nexussupport.ca/contact)

Licensing Direct can be contacted through the following methods:

- Phone: 1-877-980-5118
- 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. PT, Monday to Friday (excluding statutory holidays)
- Fax: 250-868-7760
- Email: [licensingdirect@interiorhealth.ca](mailto:licensingdirect@interiorhealth.ca)

# Communication & Staying Connected

At NEXUS, we are committed to open, ongoing, and proactive communication between our staff, individuals, and their families and support networks. Clear communication helps us build strong relationships and provide consistent, person-centred support.

We offer several ways to stay informed and connected:

## Website

Our website ([nexussupport.ca](http://nexussupport.ca)) provides general information about our organization, programs, services, and updates. It is a helpful resource for learning more about NEXUS and accessing important information.

## Social Media

NEXUS shares updates, highlights, and important information through our social media channels, including Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, and X (formerly Twitter). These platforms offer another way to stay connected and engaged with our organization.



### Open-Door Approach

NEXUS promotes an open-door approach. Supervisors and staff are available to provide information about programs and activities, and to respond to questions, concerns, or suggestions. We encourage families and support networks to reach out at any time.

### Surveys and Satisfaction Interviews

We regularly seek feedback through surveys and satisfaction interviews. These are opportunities for individuals, families, and support networks to share their experiences, provide input, and help us identify what is working well and where we can improve.

Feedback is an important part of how we continue to grow and enhance the quality of our services.

## A Message From The CEO

Hello,

Thank you for taking the time to review this handbook.

We recognize the vital role that families and support networks play in the lives of the people we serve. Your insight, advocacy, and ongoing support are essential, and we value the partnership we share.

This handbook is designed to provide clarity about how we work at NEXUS, what you can expect from us, and how we can collaborate effectively. We believe that strong, respectful relationships and clear communication are the foundation of high-quality support.

At NEXUS, our primary responsibility is to the individual—their rights, their choices, and their personal goals. We are committed to supporting each person to live a life that is meaningful to them, while balancing the perspectives and contributions of those who care about them.



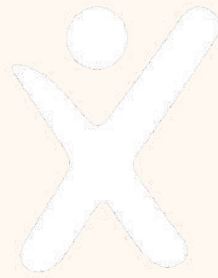
We are committed to being responsive, transparent, and accountable in our work. We welcome your questions, feedback, and perspectives, and we encourage ongoing dialogue to ensure we are providing the best possible support.

Thank you for your trust and for the important role you play in this partnership.

Sincerely,

Brandon Arnett

CEO, NEXUS Community Support Society



We hope this guide has helped you better understand NEXUS, the supports we provide, and how we work alongside individuals and their support networks.

If you have any questions or need clarification, we encourage you to connect with a NEXUS staff member or manager. Open communication is an important part of how we work together.

We value the role you play as part of the individual's support network and recognize the importance of working collaboratively to provide consistent, respectful, and person-centred support.

We look forward to building a positive relationship with you and working together to support the individual's goals, well-being, and connection to their community.



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**NEXUS**  
Community Support Society  
Connected, for life.

