



Individual Initiative and Autonomy

HCBS Settings Requirement

A setting optimizes but does not regiment individual initiative, autonomy, and independence in making life choices, including but not limited to, daily activities, physical environment, and with whom to interact.

Intent

Individuals make choices about how they spend their time in any given setting and are given opportunities to participate in age appropriate activities.

Best Practice Suggestions

- ✓ Individuals are supported to participate in activities of their choice.
- ✓ Provider seeks input from individuals on their daily schedules and preferred activities.
- ✓ Provider uses natural environments to assist individuals in learning new skills. For example, if a goal is to learn how to use money to shop, the individual shops at the local mall.
- ✓ Individuals have daily routines based on their interests and preferences.
- ✓ Individuals choose with whom to interact and engage in activities.
- ✓ Provider is flexible and accommodates changes and choices in activities.
- ✓ Individuals help develop the grocery list for the week and shop for food.
- ✓ Provider seeks to foster relationship and the involvement of others in the community in activities.
- ✓ Provider has a community participation policy that represents HCBS expectations and values.
- ✓ Individuals have opportunities to participate in a variety of activities but are not required or forced to participate if they decline.
- ✓ Evidence of staff training on HCBS principles, practices and expectations.
- ✓ Provider encourages individuals to host friends and families in their home.
- ✓ Space is provided for individuals to have private interactions with visitors.
- ✓ Individuals are able to decorate their bedroom and home environment.

Additional Guidance

What makes an activity “age appropriate?”

“Age appropriate” means something that corresponds with a person’s chronological age. For example, people of all ages may enjoy working on puzzle. If this is an activity offered in an HCBS setting, then the image on the puzzle should be reflective of the interest of that age group. Children may prefer images of cartoon characters, while adults may prefer landscapes. Similarly, if a community outing is planned, the provider should consider the interests of the individual(s) when selecting the movie. A young adult may prefer to see the latest superhero action movie rather than an animated children’s film. Generally, the content and context of an activity are what make it age-appropriate or not.

Red Flags 🚩 -- Practices to Avoid

- 🚩 Provider requires that all individuals participate in activities, even when the individual declines.
- 🚩 Individuals do not provide input in daily routines and activities.
- 🚩 Provider has one posted activity schedule for the week or month for every individual to follow.



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- 🔒 Provider is not flexible in accommodating individuals when there are changes in schedules.
- 🔒 No policy, procedure or process for staff to document attempts to gather input from individuals.
- 🔒 Punishing an individual for not participating in an activity.
- 🔒 Restricting an individual's right to access the community.
- 🔒 Restricting an individual's right to meet with a visitor.
- 🔒 Provider decides how an individual's bedroom should be decorated with no input.
- 🔒 The culture of the organization does not support individual initiative, autonomy, and choice.

Acknowledgements:

Idaho- Welcome to HCBS Rules Guidance Section of the Provider Toolkit

Minnesota- A Provider's Guide To Putting the HCBS Rule Into Practice

Wyoming-HCB Setting Improvement Strategies Guidance for Case Managers, Providers, Participants, & Guardians

South Dakota-Guide to Expectations and Compliance