

Clovernook Center for the Blind

And Visually Impaired

Consumer Handbook

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Clovernook Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired. This book is intended as a guide to help you get the most out of your participation in Clovernook's program services. It includes information about your rights and responsibilities, safety, service descriptions, and other general information about Clovernook.

Clovernook staff are dedicated to helping you to achieve your goals. Your thoughts, opinions, and questions are critical to your progress, and you are encouraged to express them.

WHAT IS CLOVERNOOK CENTER FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED?

Clovernook was founded by two sisters, Florence and Georgia Trader. Georgia was blind, well educated, and quite accomplished in music. She wanted to make a difference in the lives of other blind women who were not as fortunate as she was. Georgia and Florence become leaders in the movement for better eye care, education for blind children, and employment for adults. In 1903 they established a home for blind women which became known as Clovernook.

Over the years Clovernook has grown to become a nationally recognized agency that provides comprehensive services to men and women of all ages who are visually impaired. In addition to an array of program services, Clovernook offers employment in our industrial operations and Braille Printing House, as well as warehouse and materials support for the National Library Services's Talking Books Program. Clovernook has a satellite office in Memphis, Tennessee. Clovernook is accredited by the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped, and Clovernook's community employment services are accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

To promote independence and foster the highest quality of life for people with visual impairments, including those with additional disabilities.

GENERAL CRITERIA FOR ACCEPTANCE INTO PROGRAM SERVICES

Acceptance decisions will be made by the Program Services Manager and will be based on the following criteria:

In general, to be eligible for Clovernook services, the individual will:

- a) Have a vision impairment that affects some aspect of independent functioning.
- b) Demonstrate the ability to actively participate in services.
- c) Be free of ongoing behavior patterns, medical, or related conditions which would pose a threat to the safety of self, others, or property during the course of program participation.
- d) Be able to independently manage personal hygiene needs.

Specific programs may have additional criteria for acceptance. (See service descriptions below). If you are found not to be eligible for Clovernook services, you will be informed as to the reason(s) why, and

given information about potential alternative services. This information will also be shared with your referral source if applicable.

ORDER OF ACCEPTANCE:

In most instances, individuals will be admitted on a first come, first served basis. If unusual circumstances make it impossible to schedule the start of services, you will be placed on a waiting list and enrolled as soon as possible.

Opportunities to learn about Clovernook and its services are provided as part of the intake process. At any time this information can be accessed via the Clovernook website, the telephone bulletin board, as well as through informational brochures, videos, and the Annual Report. Program evaluation data is updated and made available to persons receiving services on an annual basis as well.

SUMMARY OF CLOVERNOOK'S PROGRAM SERVICES

In the effort to carry out our mission, Clovernook offers a broad range of program services. Not all of these services are available in all of our locations, but they include the following:

SOCIAL SERVICES:

- **Case Management Services** are individually designed to assist people with visual impairments in acquiring the supports necessary to maintain independence. These services include identifying unmet independent living needs, recommending options to meet those needs, initiating service referrals at Clovernook and with community agencies, community advocacy, assisting with applying and maintaining eligibility for benefits, and assistance with coordinating transportation for medical appointments.
- **Personal Assistance** can be provided to help with grocery shopping, banking, home management, and various other activities of daily living.
- **Counseling** facilitates growth in personal, social, educational, and vocational development through individual and group therapeutic intervention. Counseling may provide techniques for anger

management, relaxation, and other strategies for dealing with issues associated with vision loss.

- **Information and Referral** assists individuals who are blind or visually impaired and their families to locate program services they need as well as provide information to the general public about blindness and related topics.

INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES:

- **Low Vision Services** begin with a thorough assessment of an individual's current vision status, and the activities for which they would like to enhance their visual functioning. Various optical and non-optical aids are then prescribed along with training and practice in the use of the aids to ensure the individual achieves his or her optimum benefit.
- **Orientation and Mobility** instructs individuals in all aspects of safe and efficient travel with or without the use of mobility aids in home, school, work, and other public setting.
- **Rehabilitation Teaching** provides instruction in adaptive personal and home management skills such as food preparation, housekeeping; and communication skills such as Braille, labeling and use of adaptive equipment for home and personal use.

- **Computer Training** assesses current computer based skills and instructs the individual in the use of adaptive equipment and current computer technology to increase proficiency in the use of computers in both the work and home settings. To be eligible for computer training the individual must be at least age 6 or in a first grade level classroom.
- **Recreation Services** provide individual and group instruction aimed at enriching the use of free time through activities such as art, crafts, ceramics, and access to a variety of community recreation opportunities.

COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT:

- **Job Placement** assists individuals in achieving their goal of competitive employment by linking them with employers who have a need for their particular skills and interests.
- **Job Coaching** provides the worker who is blind or visually impaired with direct and systematic worksite instruction for mastery of job tasks. The job coach also consults with the employer regarding worksite adaptations that may be needed to optimize the employees work performance.

- **Work Adjustment** develops the interpersonal skills, worker traits, and work habits necessary to function in a competitive work environment by using real work experience and a variety of other facility and community based instructional opportunities.

YOUTH PROGRAMS:

- **Discovery Program** offers weekly programming during the summer and monthly activities during the school year for youth ages 9 to 17 with an emphasis on having fun while developing skills in socialization, mobility, technology, and other activities of daily life. Participants must be age 8-17 and demonstrate the ability to effectively exchange information through spoken or written words, sign language, Braille, concepts, gestures, or other means.
- **Summer Employment Program** links young people who are blind or visually impaired with summer employment opportunities either at Clovernook or in the community. The goal for either experience is to provide the supports necessary help the individual gain a better understanding of the demands of a competitive work environment. Participants must be of working age and enrolled in high school.

SERVICE PLANNING

In most cases service planning begins with the initial intake process. During this time we will gather information about you and what you hope to accomplish through your involvement with Clovernook. Your primary service provider will be designated as your plan coordinator to work with you on developing a written individualize service plan (ISP) that will outline the goals you want accomplished. This plan will be updated with information about your progress and revised as needed with your input. This is your plan, so if you don't fully understand it please ask for explanation. In addition to describing the steps to be followed to accomplish your goals, the ISP will identify all of the team members that will be assisting you in the process.

YOUR SERVICE RECORDS

Clovernook will keep a complete written record of your involvement in services. This record will be treated in a confidential manner, and will be housed in a restricted storage area within the Clovernook facility. Included in your service record will be:

- Descriptive information about you that either you or an outside source has provided with your permission.
- Emergency contact information.

- Fee agreements (if applicable).
- Documentation of all services you have received from Clovernook and progress you have made.
- Any additional correspondence or reporting that Clovernook has provided to outside sources with your consent.
- Payroll records (if applicable) are maintained by Clovernook's accounting office.

Clovernook will maintain your program services record in its entirety for 7 consecutive years after you have completed all services. At that point it will be destroyed.

Accessing your records:

Clovernook will make available to you a copy of any documents you have signed (e.g. Individual Service Plan, Application for Program Services, Consent for Release of Confidential Information, Fee Agreements etc.) or any other programmatic information that Clovernook has legal authority to provide to you. You or your legal guardian may review your case record by submitting a written request to your service provider. Supervised access will be given within ten working days of receipt of the request. Clovernook may not have authorization to allow access to certain information generated by other agencies or service providers.

YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As a consumer Clovernook's program services, you shall retain all civil rights and liberties provided by law. The program does not discriminate in the provision of services on the basis of age, race, religion, color, creed, national origin, sex, lifestyle, or handicapping condition.

Specifically, Clovernook shall provide and safeguard the following rights for all consumers:

1. The right to ask for and receive accurate, understandable information about our services before deciding what to do.
2. The right to confidentiality of communications and of all personally identifying information within the limitations and requirements for disclosure of various funding sources, state or federal statutes, unless you or your legal guardian specifically authorize it.
3. The right to be treated with consideration and respect for your personal dignity.
4. The right to communicate freely with your Clovernook service providers as arranged at

reasonable times so as not to interfere with agency services and operations.

5. The right to a fair and timely resolution to any differences you may have with your service provider(s) or your service plan.
6. The right to a safe training, residential, and work environment as provided by Clovernook.
7. The right to be an active and informed participant in the development and implementation of your individual service plan.
8. The right to the appropriate rehabilitation services.
9. The right to receive an explanation of the reasons for denial of services.
10. The right to know the cost of services.
11. The right to discontinue services at Clovernook.

Clovernook Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired reserves the right to decline acceptance and/or discontinue services for those individuals who do not meet the criteria as stated in the agency admission procedures.

This statement does not constitute a contract.

As a consumer of Clovernook services you are responsible to:

1. Provide complete and accurate information about your medical status, previous program involvement, work history, and emergency contact information to help ensure that you receive the highest quality of service provision.
2. Inform us when you will not be able to keep appointments. Also, notify us of any changes in your address, phone number, and emergency contact information.
3. Participate in the planning and implementation of the Clovernook services you receive.
4. Ask questions if you do not understand information or instructions given to you.
5. Treat other Clovernook consumers and staff with respect.
6. Provide complete and accurate financial data necessary to arrange payment for your services if applicable.
7. Pay for services when received.

8. Comply with any established rules, procedures, and guidelines that apply to you and your participation in Clovernook's programs.

SCHEDULES AND ROUTINES

Calendar:

Clovernook recognizes the following holidays and will be closed on these days:

- New Year's Day (January 1)
- Martin Luther King Day (third Monday in January)
- Memorial Day (Last Monday in May)
- Independence Day (July 4)
- Labor Day (first Monday in September)
- Thanksgiving (fourth Thursday in November)
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

HOW DO WE COMMUNICATE?

Resolving Conflicts:

It is the policy of Clovernook Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired to provide consumers an opportunity to communicate openly with the staff and administration of this agency without reprisal, concerning positive experiences as well as grievances. You are encouraged to discuss anything

of concern with your service provider or plan coordinator. It is that individual's responsibility to assist you in resolving your conflict or difficulty. If doing so has not resolved the situation to your satisfaction, the following formal grievance procedure is to be followed:

1. Your grievance should be made verbally to the appropriate program supervisor/manager.
2. If the supervisor does not satisfactorily resolve our grievance within 7 working days, put the complaint in writing and submit it to the Vice President of Program Services. If you have any difficulty in writing out the grievance, you are to request assistance from a neutral party of your choice.

The Vice President will prepare a written response within 7 working days.

3. If you are still not satisfied, you may submit a written statement of the grievance to the President of Clovernook Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired, who will then prepare a written statement of his/her findings within 7 working days.

Satisfaction Feedback:

Soon after you complete a Clovernook service you will be contacted by a Clovernook representative to find out how satisfied you were with the services

you received. Your participation in this brief interview is strictly voluntary and your feedback will help us know what we are doing well, what we can do better, and what you would like us to do differently.

Communication with Clovernook's Leadership:

Clovernook is governed by a volunteer Board of Trustees that meet six times per year. If you would like to speak with a member of Clovernook's Board about a Clovernook matter of concern or interest to you, please contact our Executive Secretary who will arrange that for you. She can be reached by calling our main number at (513) 522-3860 and asking for extension 2250.

General Information Sharing:

If you would like to learn more about Clovernook services and activities, log on to our website at www.clovernook.org. Information is also available through informational brochures, videos, and the Annual Report. Program evaluation data is updated and made available to consumers on an annual basis as well.

If you would like to be informed about weekly events and training opportunities in the area of health and safety, self advocacy, as well as recreation and leisure opportunities, call

Clovernook's voice mail bulletin board by dialing our main number, (513) 522-3860, and asking for extension 2248.

If you would like more information about how to become involved with other organizations that are dedicated to advocating for your interests as a person with a vision impairment, your Clovernook service provider can assist you in contacting them. Two examples of such organizations are the American Council of the Blind and the National Federation of the Blind, both of which have local chapters.

Included at the end of this handbook are 2 pages of resources. The first page (green) is a 2 page list on **Low Vision and Blindness** sources for information and services from around the country. The second 2 page list (yellow) is **Benefit and Public Assistance** resources for local areas. Both lists have phone numbers as well as websites.

Emergency Closings/Snow Policy:

At times, emergencies such as severe weather, fires, or power failures can disrupt Clovernook operations. In extreme cases, these circumstances may require the closing of the facility or cancellation of community-based services. In the event that such an emergency occurs during evening or weekend hours, local radio and/or television stations will be asked to broadcast notification of the closing. If the decision is made to close the facility while you are here and participating in services, the staff will work with you to arrange the necessary transportation home.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

1. In the safety policies, and posted on the walls are maps showing all the building exits as well as the location of fire alarm boxes and fire extinguishers. Appropriate staff are trained in these routes, and in fire extinguisher use. You will be shown the safest evacuation routes for your work area. Also sighted guide assistance will be offered if required.
2. All consumers and employees are to move toward the closest outside exit upon hearing the fire alarm.
3. Everyone shall evacuate in a safe and orderly fashion.

4. The elevator should NEVER be used for evacuation.
5. Once outside, everyone will be directed by a staff member or fire fighter to a safe location, away from the building.
6. In case a designated exit route is blocked, alternative routes are noted and will be practiced during regular fire drills.

Severe Weather Safety Plan

During a thunderstorm or tornado watch, no action will be taken except the monitoring of weather radios. If a severe weather warning is received, or a tornado is spotted, appropriate Clovernook staff will assess the situation and decide on the appropriate action to be taken.

In the event of a tornado warning in Hamilton County, we will take the following steps:

1. Assemble all persons in the middle of the basement area of the Multi-purpose building near the sub-contract department. If you are in the Procter Center building you will assemble in the conference room on the lower level. Sighted guide assistance will be offered for those who require it.

2. Should a tornado be sighted within 5 miles of the building, all persons will be instructed to sit on the floor, away from all windows and face an interior wall if possible. Cover your head with your arms, and place a coat or blanket over your head if available. If you are in a wheelchair, remain in your chair and cover your head with your arms. Remain this way until you are told that the storm has passed. Report any injuries to the nurse or any staff person.
3. Audible and visible alarm signals will be activated in the event that evacuation is required.
- 4.

Conduct and Safety Rules

1. Smoking is not allowed in any Clovernook buildings. There are designated outdoor smoking areas for you use. You are responsible for disposing of cigarette ashes and filters in designated containers.
2. You are expected to cooperate with all emergency procedures and evacuation drills.
3. Use proper mobility techniques when walking through and around Clovernook facilities.

4. If you use a guide dog, you must relieve your dog in designated areas, and do any clean-up required.
5. Theft or destruction of Clovernook or other's property is not permitted.
6. Foul or abusive language is not to be used.
7. Clovernook is a drug-free workplace. Having or using illegal drugs or alcohol while at Clovernook is prohibited.
8. Fighting or trying to hurt someone is not permitted.
9. Possession of weapons on Clovernook property is not permitted.
10. You must report any accidents or injuries as soon as possible after they occur.
11. You are encouraged to make prior arrangements if you plan to have visitors.
12. You are expected to comply with the terms agreed to for payment of service fees.
13. You are expected to comply with any additional work rules that apply to Clovernook's facility-based or community-based production areas.

14. You are expected to dress in a manner which is safe and appropriate for the occasion, the activity and/or instructional class.

15. Pagers, cell phones, and other electronic devices can be disruptive and interfere with instruction. Keep the use of these devices to a minimum during your training time. Arranging to contact others during designated breaks in training would be appropriate.