



CLIENT HANDBOOK

Mainstream Outreach

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WELCOME TO TRAVERSE INDEPENDENCE



Toby Harris
CEO



Aaron Willmott
Director of Client Services

Our goal at Traverse Independence is to support clients to be as independent as possible. This support comes in many shapes and forms and is unique to each client, just as each client is unique to us. We believe strongly in including family and caregivers in the planning, should that be something the client has requested. Client safety, privacy, individualized care planning, transition and independence are of utmost importance to us, and we

strive to ensure that all clients feel supported and work towards short term and long-term goals. The CEO (Chief Executive Officer) at Traverse, Toby Harris, comes with a long history of independent living having started off her career working as a front line staff. The team that makes the organization great consists of front line PSW (Personal Support Worker) staff, site coordinators, department managers and a director, Aaron Willmott, who also comes with a background of front-line experience.

The board of directors is passionately committed to our mission and reviews it regularly to ensure it is still valid. They work yearly to make sure our strategic plan is current and supports our incredible vision.

We wish you all the best at Traverse Independence. May your journey to becoming independent be supported and successful.

MISSION

We maximize our clients' ability to live independently by providing support services for adults with a physical disability or brain injury.

VISION

Supporting people to traverse the distance to independence.

VALUES





DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Traverse Independence provides an atmosphere free from barriers to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion. We celebrate and welcome the diversity of everyone involved with our organization. It is the policy of Traverse Independence to foster an environment that respects people's diversity, dignity, ideas, and beliefs thereby ensuring equity and diversity in employment and service delivery. We demonstrate our commitment to this by providing a supportive work environment and a corporate culture that welcomes and encourages equality and inclusion for all.

We make sure our offices, facilities, and housing buildings are accessible to anyone, we follow all the Ontario accessibility laws (AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act)) and our plan is on our website.

Our employees work in your home, which is their place of work. As such, clients are expected to treat the staff equally with dignity and respect and celebrate the diversity of those employed by Traverse Independence. Lack of respect and abuse of staff will not be tolerated.

ACCOMMODATION

When you start your interactions with Traverse, we will ask you how you prefer to get information. The options will be email, Canada Post mail or a worker can read information to you (so long as it is not confidential).

While we cannot guarantee that we can provide services in your native language, we will work on your behalf to find an interpreter if necessary.

We will work to honour your spiritual and religious beliefs, routines and requests and staff can assist you to access community-based services that support you in these areas.

Any other areas of accommodation can be discussed with the supervisor of the program, and we will make every effort to support your needs and requests.

SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

When it comes to substance use disorders, Traverse uses a harm reduction model. Harm reduction is an evidence-based, client-centered approach that seeks to reduce the health and social harms associated with addiction and substance use, without necessarily requiring people who use substances to abstain.

Not everyone is willing or able to enter treatment. In this case, harm reduction programs work to:

- reduce risks
- improve health
- connect people with other key health and social services.



BEING A CLIENT OF TRAVERSE

CLIENT BILL OF RIGHTS

You have the right to:

- Be treated with courtesy, respect, and dignity.
- Be treated as an individual.
- Be informed about services in the agency and the community.
- Participate in the planning of your service.
- Say yes or no to service.
- Voice your concerns.
- Review your client file.

THE RIGHT TO PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

You have the right to privacy. This right shall be recognized and protected to the greatest extent possible. All information about you is considered personal and confidential and will be used to plan the services you need.

You must sign a Release of Information Form before anyone at Traverse Independence can discuss your personal information with, for example, your doctor or a family member.

We celebrate many special occasions where we take pictures. Of course, your privacy is particularly important, so we always ask your written permission to use your picture publicly. We have a Facebook site that you may be interested in following along with other social media such as Instagram and Twitter. This is where we may post your picture, or on our website and in our brochures, but only with your permission.

MAINSTREAM OUTREACH CLIENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Treat all employees with respect and dignity.
- Ensure that your home or environment is free of harassment and abuse
- Maintain a safe work environment for employees, free of hazards.
- Report safety incidents
- Cooperate with reasonable requests by your staff
- Participate in the orientation and training of new Community Facilitators
- Attend your planning meetings and work on smart goals
- Participate in evaluation of employees and the program as requested.
- Notify Traverse Independence of any changes to you, your home, or your needs.
- Provide timely notice if you are moving, requiring a schedule change or if you are canceling services.
- Notify Traverse Independence of any changes that may change your eligibility for service.

PERSON CENTERED CARE

It is important that you know you have the right to put forth opinions on the services we deliver and to be aware of our quality improvements. The following framework is a basis for those conversations. We are committed to asking your opinion regularly through face-to-face meetings, surveys, and email requests. We also have a Client/Caregiver committee where you can put forth your ideas, concerns and quality suggestions should you choose to join.

Core principles of the framework are based on our strategic plan and our values, which were developed by staff and clients: CARES (Compassion, Accountability, Respect, Excellence and Support) – Compassion, Accountability, Respect, Excellence and Support.



HOW DO WE WORK WITH YOU TO DESIGN YOUR GOALS AND YOUR PLAN?

You and your caregiver/family (if you want) will work with our team to develop your care plan including goals and objectives. What your Community Facilitator assists you with depends on your goals and objectives. One-to-one services will be scheduled for a community facilitator to assist you with those specific goals. The community facilitator will arrive at your home or housing unit at a pre-arranged time to offer support.

THE PLAN – SMART GOALS

You will be assigned a Community Facilitator who will work with you to create a plan with a focus on “Smart Goals”. These need to be goals that move you towards more independence in the community. After that conversation, a plan is created and written. The resulting plan is your formal contract with Traverse Independence. You will get a copy of this agreement, and this will be reviewed regularly to ensure you continue to work on the goal completion. Once your goals are achieved or no longer relevant you will graduate from the program. You may always reapply to have a staff assigned to you, should a new requirement for support present itself.

ENGAGEMENT/INVOLVEMENT

There are many opportunities for family and/or caregivers to be involved in the planning and goal setting. If the family member is not a decision maker, or the client does not want them to be involved, we will keep all information private.

QUALITY

We have a client/caregiver committee that meets regularly and can bring issues and concerns forward, along with ideas and solutions. The work of the committee is reported to the CEO and the Board of Directors as part of the quality system. If you are interested in sitting on the client/caregiver committee please contact Aaron Willmott, Director of Client Services as a.willmott@travind.ca.

DECISION MAKING



Clients have the right to make decisions on their own. If you need someone to make decisions on your behalf, we can work with you to request a power of attorney, substitute decision maker, or public guardian. If you are using a substitute decision maker, we will need a copy of your paperwork.

CLIENT SAFETY

This is one of our top priorities. So, what does that mean?

We practice a harm reduction model for clients who have a substance use disorder. This means that we will work you to link with our partner agencies such as Stonehenge to develop a solid plan around harm reduction, safer supply, medical supports, outreach, opioid antagonist therapy (methadone, suboxone, etc.) and anything else needed to ensure a harm reduction model is in place.

We will try to keep you safe from abuse, so you need to report anything you see, hear, or feel that does not seem right. You should encourage your family or caregivers to do the same. We want to hear about everything.

With your permission we could assess your risk of taking a fall. If it seems like this might be an issue, we will work with you to put in place a falls prevention program, which may include things like exercise, conditioning, healthy food choices.

EMERGENCIES

We have a plan that covers what will happen in an emergency such as a flood, power outage, fire or even a pandemic. We will keep you and your family informed and let you know what you can expect should an unexpected event occur. We learned a lot during COVID, and all those learnings have been put into policy.

YOUR CLIENT FILE

We will regularly enter information in the electronic client file in the form of case notes. Reports summarizing progress and assessments are also part of the file. If you or your caregiver wish to see your client file, you may do so by submitting a verbal (which will be documented) or written request to the manager of your program.

SERIOUS OCCURRENCE/SIGNIFICANT ACCIDENT

If something happens to you that is unwanted such as a serious occurrence or significant accident, that information will be documented in an incident report. We use these reports to document what happened, make sure we take the right action to support you and finally we use them to trend information so we can prevent such things from happening again. We also have a policy on immediate disclosure in the case of a serious occurrence or significant accident/injury so we will contact your designated caregiver or substitute decision maker.

RESEARCH

On occasion, we may collaborate with research projects. Every project is approved by the board of directors and overseen by the CEO. We always adhere to the rules and ethics of the research facility. You may choose to participate or may choose not to. Participation is not a requirement for Traverse Independence clients.

RELATIONSHIPS

Harassment and Abuse

Harassment and abuse are serious matters and must be dealt with promptly. Traverse Independence will support everyone to deal with any situation of harassment or abuse. As a client, if you suffer from harassment or abuse you must tell someone. The best person to tell is your service coordinator or manager as quickly as possible. All information will remain confidential. If you are not comfortable talking to them about what happened, then the following guidelines might assist:

- Talk to someone you trust. This might be a member of your family, a friend, a minister, a counselor or therapist, an attendant, the life skills facilitator/community facilitator, the service coordinator, or the program manager. You can also call a crisis hotline or sexual assault center.
- Do not let your fears stop you from speaking out. Fear of retaliation, intimidation, embarrassment, or feelings of guilt may persuade you not to make a complaint. However, harassment and abuse will continue if not dealt with properly. Therefore, it is important to register a complaint.
- Ask for help if you need it and take things one step at a time.

YOUR RIGHT TO FILE A COMPLAINT

You or your caregiver have the right to file a formal complaint at any time. You can do this by speaking directly with the service coordinator or manager of the program. It is their responsibility to respond quickly to your complaint and to share a copy of our complaint policy with you.

They will meet with you to discuss your concerns and will work with you to develop a plan to improve the situation where necessary. This will be done privately, and you should not feel worried about complaining.

If you feel that you are being treated differently because you complained, or if someone harasses you over it, report that right away to the program manager.

YOUR RIGHT AND YOUR STAFF'S RIGHT TO BE SAFE

Traverse Independence has an obligation to protect the client's health and safety but also the health and safety of the people who work with you – the staff.

Personal Protective Equipment (gloves, masks, gowns)

Depending upon Public Health Guidelines, our employees may wear personal protective equipment when they are with you or in your home or driving with you in a vehicle, such as masks and gloves.

Smoking/Vaping – Tobacco and Marijuana

If you choose to smoke or vape, please ensure you have extinguished 30 minutes before the employee's arrival. Employees can request that you open a window if they feel the environment is too smoke filled. If they then still feel the environment is too smoky, they may request to provide the service later.

Likewise, employees are not allowed to smoke in your home.

Weapons

Traverse Independence is vitally interested in the ongoing health and safety of our employees, clients, visitors, and guests. Traverse Independence has adopted a weapons policy to ensure that we minimize the threat of injuries associated with weapons. As such, if you have a registered firearm, you must discuss that with the program manager before the initiation of service.

PET CARE

Community Facilitators will not take care of your pet in your home.

PROPERTY DAMAGE

We expect staff to be careful and respectful in your home but sometimes things get broken accidentally. If this happens, please report it to your service coordinator right away. Traverse Independence cannot replace items. This is a risk you take while receiving service.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

For more information about all our programs and services please visit the Traverse Independence web site at www.traverseindependence.ca

PLACES TO CALL FOR HELP OR INFORMATION

AGENCY	CONTACT INFORMATION
Here 24/7 Crisis line and intake for mental health and addictions services	Phone: 1-844-437-3247 or you can call/text 9-8-8 tollfree, anytime. English & French.
ARCH Disability Law Centre	Phone: 416-482-8255 TTY: 416-482-1254 Internet: https://archdisabilitylaw.ca/
KW Sexual Assault Support Centre	Phone: 519-571-0121 Crisis Line: 519-741-8633 Email: kwsasc@web.net
Waterloo Regional Police Services	Non-emergency phone: 519-653-7700
Health Services Appeal and Review Board (HSARB)	Phone: 416-327-8512

CONTACT INFORMATION

NAME AND TITLE	LOCATION	PHONE NUMBER
Toby Harris <i>Chief Executive Officer (senior leader)</i>	1-1382 Weber St. E. Kitchener, ON N2A 1C4	226-444-1277
Aaron Willmott <i>Director of Client Services (senior leader)</i>	1-1382 Weber St. E. Kitchener, ON N2A 1C4	226-444-3955
Alyssa Nelson <i>Manager of Human Resources (senior leader)</i>	1-1382 Weber St. E. Kitchener, ON N2A 1C4	226-444-3933
Jim Izzard <i>Manager of Transitional Living</i>	78 Stanley Ave, Kitchener, ON N2K 2B2	519-575-8135
Jim Izzard <i>Manager of Transitional Living</i>	165 Gordon Street – Apt. 118 Fergus, ON N1M 0A7	519-575-8135
Sabrina Jesso <i>Manager of Residential Services</i>	20 Union Lane, Apt. 209 Kitchener, ON N2H 6T2	519-588-6241
Sabrina Jesso <i>Manager of Residential Services</i>	695 Strasburg Road, LL007 Kitchener, ON N2E 4A2	519-588-6241
Sabrina Jesso <i>Manager of Residential Services</i>	120 Tagge Street Kitchener, ON N2K 3V9	519-588-6241
Karen Liphard <i>Manager of Community Services</i>	The Opportunity Centre 450 Westheights Drive #18A Kitchener, ON N2N 2B9	226-749-4104
Karen Liphard <i>Manager of Community Services</i>	Outreach 450 Westheights Drive #18A Kitchener, ON N2N 2B9	226-749-4104
Ashley Chessell <i>Intake Coordinator</i>	1-1382 Weber St. E. Kitchener, ON N2A 1C4	226-444-3935
Dan Holisek <i>ABI (Acquired Brain Injury) Intensive Case Coordinator</i>	1-1382 Weber St. E. Kitchener, ON N2A 1C4	519-580-9206