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| Policy Number SE4.502 | Policy Section Supports and Services | Effective: April 1, 2022 Amended: December 5, 2024 |
| Title: Learning, Inclusion, Friendship, Employment (L.I.F.E.) Service Policy | | Executive Sponsor: Vice President, Service Delivery & Innovation |

Summary

This policy explains how the L.I.F.E. Service supports individuals in the areas of Learning, Inclusion, Friendship, and Employment.

The purpose of the L.I.F.E. Service is to help individuals who use CLBC services to get jobs. This policy includes:

- Guiding principles – the beliefs behind the service
- Characteristics – things that are unique about the service
- Components - the way individuals experience the service

1. PURPOSE

This policy outlines how Community Living British Columbia (CLBC) staff collaborate with individuals, their families/support networks, and service providers to plan, implement, and monitor the four cornerstones of Learning, Inclusion, Friendship, Employment (L.I.F.E.) Service, in a way that fits and respects their personal and cultural values, practices and traditions.

This *L.I.F.E. Service Policy* should be applied together with the [L.I.F.E Service Best Practice Guide](#) as one set of standardized requirements to support inclusive and culturally safe L.I.F.E Service.

2. DEFINITIONS

For a full list of definitions, please refer to the [Employment Service Glossary](#) and [L.I.F.E. Service Glossary](#)

Area: Geographical part of a CLBC region comprising of a Service Area.

Check-ins: Regularly scheduled times when an individual and their Learning, Inclusion, Friendship, Employment (L.I.F.E.) Service staff connect to determine how the service experience is going for the individual and identify if anything needs to be ‘tuned-up’ (that is, approach, intended differences, goals, frequency of Direct A or B support). Individuals and their L.I.F.E. Service staff work together to determine the best way and how often a check-in will happen. This is an essential part of individual level service evaluation.

Policy Framework

Cultural Safety: An outcome of respectful engagement based on recognition of the power imbalances inherent to service systems, and the work to address these imbalances. A culturally safe environment for Indigenous peoples is one that is physically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually safe without challenge, ignorance, or denial of an individual's identity. Practicing cultural safety requires having knowledge of the colonial, sociopolitical, and historical events that trigger disparities Indigenous Peoples encounter, and perpetuate and maintain ongoing racism and unequal treatment.

Direct A and B Supports: For more information, see Support Strategy.

- **Direct A:** In-person support provided by staff to an individual.
- **Direct B:** Research, planning, and coordination conducted by staff on behalf of an individual to inform the development and tune-up of their Direct A support.

Ebb and Flow: For each individual accessing Learning, Inclusion, Friendship, Employment (L.I.F.E.) Service, the amount of service they receive will ebb (decrease) and flow (increase) over time in relation to their goals and intended differences. It is expected that there will typically be a variety of levels of support needs across all the individuals being served at any one time allowing the provider to balance support within the fixed global funding envelope. As the demand for service or the reliance on paid support ebbs (because an individual is more confident in their skills and/or relies on natural support), the service can flow service to someone else. If in the future an individual needs more service again, it will flow to them.

Employment: Paid work that takes place in a community setting, alongside people without disabilities, where cultural values and traditions are respected. Wages, benefits, and working conditions must meet industry standards, BC's [Employment Standards Act](#), and other relevant laws. This includes self-employment but does not include unpaid or volunteer work. Employment is not always stable and may change over time. Employment is one of the cornerstones of the Learning, Inclusion, Friendship, Employment (L.I.F.E.) Service.

Flexible Funding: A component of a Learning, Inclusion, Friendship, Employment (L.I.F.E.) Service that ensures the support needs of individuals are met when needs change. Additional funding (in the short term or as variable funding) can be added to the contract with approval from the Service Delivery Manager who assesses the Periodic Reports for L.I.F.E. Service and unique factors in each situation, on a case-by-case basis.

Friendship: L.I.F.E. Service supports individuals to develop diverse, healthy friendships. Friendship is a relationship of mutual affection between people. It is a stronger form of interpersonal bond than an acquaintance or an association such as a classmate, neighbour, or co-worker. Friendship is one of the cornerstones of the Learning, Inclusion, Friendship, Employment (L.I.F.E.) Service.

Group Difference Reflection: A regularly scheduled time when the service provider brings together individuals, families, CLBC staff, and service provider staff to reflect on the delivery (that is, practices) and experience of the service. Sessions may contain mixed or specific groups. This

reflection supports continuous quality improvement and is an essential part of service level evaluation.

Inclusion: The practice or policy of providing equal access to opportunities and resources in the community for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized. This includes actions that allow individuals, teams, and organizations to ensure voices of Indigenous Peoples are included in governance, policy, and program development as well as service delivery. Inclusion is one of the cornerstones of the Learning, Inclusion, Friendship, Employment (L.I.F.E.) Service. L.I.F.E. Service strives to create and nurture opportunities for individuals to be included in their communities.

Individual: A person 19 years of age or older who is eligible for CLBC services, as described in the *Eligibility Policy*.

Informal supports: For the purpose of this policy, unpaid supports and typically have some type of relationship with the individual. Individuals develop these relationships independently or strategically with paid services, to provide support in daily life and employment.

Intended Difference: A positive difference or impact that an individual is seeking in their life. It focuses on answering the 'why' of the goal, and the 'what difference it will make in their life' when their goal is achieved. Intended differences typically impact multiple Learning, Inclusion, Friendship, Employment cornerstones within the L.I.F.E. Service.

Learning: The acquisition of knowledge or skills through experience, study or by being taught. Individuals are supported to explore and participate in learning opportunities that support their goals and the intended differences they would like to experience in their lives. Learning is one of the cornerstones of the Learning, Inclusion, Friendship, Employment (L.I.F.E.) Service.

Natural Supports: For the purpose of this policy, support from individuals, Elders, community resources, co-workers, assistive technology, adaptations (for example, checklists or prompt tools, etc.), and/or relationships rather than being provided through formal or paid forms of support.

Periodic Report for L.I.F.E. Service (PRL): This is a quarterly reporting requirement populated by L.I.F.E. service providers when they collect information from check-ins, tune-ups, and strategy planning with individuals. The report is designed to: identify intended differences and goals, note employment details, learn about capacity and informal networks, increase individuals' confidence and decrease attachment to the service.

Support Network: Friends, family and/or community members, including Elders, who provide personal support, advocacy, and/or help with monitoring services and who have reciprocal relationships with individuals.

Support Strategies: For the purpose of this policy, the ways that service provider staff support individuals to achieve their goals and experience the intended differences in their lives. This strategy focuses on building confidence and independence as well as increasing natural supports.

There are two types of support, Direct A and Direct B:

Direct A: In-person support provided by staff to an individual.

Direct B: Research, planning, and coordination conducted by staff on behalf of an individual to inform the development and tune-up of their Direct A support.

Tune-up: A change to the support strategy identified during the 'check-in' that will improve the service experience for the individual. This is an essential part of individual level service evaluation.

3. POLICY

3.1 Principles

Employment First Culture

An understanding that individuals with diverse abilities have valuable contributions to make in the workplace and in their communities. Employment and/or post-secondary education to support employment are considered a natural first step in the transition to adulthood and individuals are supported to explore or create diverse career paths that are meaningful, inclusive, and progressive.

Count What Counts with Everyone Who Counts

Evaluation of service quality and accountability to funders is essential and will be done in collaborative ways (that include individuals, families, CLBC, service providers and sometimes employers) that show the service has been provided and improve the service experience.

Flexibility and Responsiveness

Service when you need it, not when you don't. A service delivery approach that responds to the natural rhythm of life, rather than imposing a rhythm.

Beyond Collaboration

A framework of key service elements, funding, delivery, evaluation, advocacy, and reporting that both generate and are propelled by mutual trust, curiosity, and respect.

Plan for a Future, Not Just a Service

A dynamic and rich adulthood may emerge through childhood hopes, dreams, experiences, and expectations, not only through transition into adult services. Service supports one's journey through life, it must not define it.

I Know...

Information is power. It must be easy for individuals and their families to get and understand the information they need to plan for the future and make the most out of today.

3.2 L.I.F.E. Service is built on four connected service cornerstones of Learning, Inclusion, Friendship and Employment. These cornerstones are often blended into the natural development of life activities, rather than being individually distinct. To participate in L.I.F.E. Service, an individual must be interested in employment, and want to connect to

community (Inclusion), build friendships/relationships (Friendship), and learn new things (Learning).

3.3 L.I.F.E. Service features a unique set and style of service delivery, involving required activities:

- Check-ins
- Tune-ups
- Support strategies
- Group difference reflections
- Service evaluation

3.4 L.I.F.E. Service must be personalized to each individual and happens in community at times and places, and in culturally safe ways that make sense for the individual. The overall goal is to create a life in which the individual is more independent, confident, and less reliant on receiving paid service.

3.5 The implementation and operation of the L.I.F.E. Service delivery involves the following required components:

3.5.1 Eligibility Requirements: To access L.I.F.E. Service, an individual must have an employment goal and want to get a job in addition to inclusion, learning, and friendship goals. Individuals are eligible for the service either through the Developmental Disability or Personal Supports Initiatives service streams.

3.5.2 Supports to Participate in My Community: L.I.F.E. Service is a service in the “Supports to Participate in My Community” category of Supports Funded by Community Living BC. Individuals receiving another service under this support category may not access the L.I.F.E. Service unless a Service Delivery Manager grants an exception.

3.5.3 Prioritization of Requests: Requests for L.I.F.E. Service are managed and prioritized based on CLBC’s [Request for Service Policy](#) with additional consideration given to matching individual service and service provider capacity. Service providers and CLBC staff collaborate on referrals to ensure service providers can manage the ebb and flow of all individuals connected to the L.I.F.E. Service.

3.5.4 Globally Funded Service: L.I.F.E. Service uses a global contract model where funding is attached to the service and not to specific individuals accessing the service. This allows individuals’ service levels to ebb and flow based on their goals, service needs, and changes in self-confidence, independence, employment, and/or natural supports. The funding model includes a flexible funding component to address short-term overall service capacity issues. Access to flexible funding ensures individuals who have reduced their service levels over time may access support through the L.I.F.E. Service should the cohorts’ needs increase at the same time.

3.5.5 Service Development: Individuals interested in receiving L.I.F.E. Service are encouraged to make service requests even if there is no contracted service provider

available in their community. A request for L.I.F.E. Service helps inform CLBC's planning for service expansion, however, an individual's request does not initiate a procurement process.

3.5.6 Transfers out of Areas: Individuals in receipt of L.I.F.E. Service who move between service areas will be offered comparable funded supports and services in the receiving area. L.I.F.E. Service availability is not guaranteed in all areas. See the [Transfer Policy](#) for more information.

3.5.7 Reporting: The L.I.F.E. Periodic Report (PRL) is a key source of information to demonstrate the flexibility and responsiveness of the service, track the growth and difference the service is making in individual's life, and may be used to prepare for difference reflections, monitoring, and site visits. The PRL report form provided by CLBC must be completed and submitted to CLBC on a quarterly basis per the L.I.F.E. Service Provider's contract. Refer to the [PRL Practice Guidance for Service Providers](#) for more information.

3.6 The following defined characteristics must be included in the delivery of L.I.F.E. Service:

- **Combined Service:** Individuals' intended differences in Learning, Inclusion, Friendship, and Employment are achieved through a blend of supports.
- **Culturally Safe:** Opportunities are provided for individuals, families and support networks to meaningfully explore and connect with their cultures (such as learning about and participating in ceremonies and traditions, and developing relationships within Indigenous communities) in a supportive way that aligns with the [Cultural Safety Policy](#).
- **Collaborative Design:** Support and evaluation strategies and schedules are designed collaboratively with the individual and their informal and formal networks.
- **Goal Oriented:** Support is shaped by both the individual's stated goals and the difference that achieving those goals will make in their life.
- **Community-Based:** Support is offered within the community where and when it makes the most sense.
- **Responsive Service:** Flexible and responsive support varies in frequency, intensity, and focus over time through check-ins and tune-ups in relation to individual changes in capacity, confidence, natural (informal) supports, and emerging life circumstances.
- **Multiple Support Strategies:** Combines both in-person support, such as coaching, observation, and feedback (Direct A), and other support, such as research, design, and development (Direct B).
- **Future Focused:** Support that is designed for life beyond receiving paid support.

4. REFERENCES

[BC Employment Standards Act](#)

[Completing the L.I.F.E. Service Periodic Report PRL Practice Guidance for Service Providers](#)

[Cultural Safety Policy](#)

[Employment Service Best Practice Guide](#)

[Employment Service Glossary](#)

[L.I.F.E Service Best Practice Guide](#)

[L.I.F.E. Service Glossary](#)

[Monitoring Policy](#)

[Request for Service Policy](#)

[Resource Allocation Policy](#)

[Service Terms and Conditions for Contracts Between Community Living British Columbia and Service Providers](#)

[Support and Planning Policy](#)

[Supports to Participate in Your Community](#)

[Transfer Policy](#)