

What to Consider When You Write an Inclusion Policy

Key Tips:

- Treat people with disabilities just like any other member to the extent possible
- Remember that many people with intellectual disabilities live on their own or with family and may not receive formal disability services
- Train staff on disability awareness, communication, and inclusion

Detailed Recommendations

Specify when/if a policy refers to a particular population of people with disabilities.

Is this policy specific to people with intellectual/developmental disabilities?

Is the policy specific to groups from day programs or residential services?

Specify which parts of the facility are covered by an inclusion policy. Just “equipment”? Or also pools, classes, common areas, etc...

Use “people with disabilities” or “person with a disability” rather than “disabled people” or “the disabled.”

Don’t assume people with disabilities need assistance/support. Provide clear signage and information on how to request accommodations.

Best practice suggests that members with disabilities can request reasonable accommodations including having a direct support person (DSP) with them, *but are not required to have a DSP.*

Treat members with a disability just like you would other members if a complaint or issue arises with their behavior or use of the facilities.

Provide thorough disability awareness training to all staff who interact with members and make it part of new staff orientation.

Include policy clauses specific to group homes or day programs. For example: “Direct support professionals accompanying a group of individuals with disabilities are to remain with the group at all times, provide appropriate support and assistance to individuals when needed, and refrain from using equipment on their own.”

Resources and Links:

- Raegan Schurr of the Kansas City YMCA serves on the Disability Task Force of the YMCA National Office of Diversity Inclusion. She provides training on disability inclusion, and she is also a certified trainer for people with disabilities.
- Accessible Sports provides a [universal design checklist](#).
- If you do not already have a person with a disability, or a family member, on your board, the [Missouri Disability and Health Collaborative](#) could help with recruitment.
- Find your local [Independent Living Center](#) and your county [Developmental Disability Services](#) board (if your country doesn’t have one, a neighboring county may provide services)
- Examples of [People First language](#)
- Technical assistance available from the Missouri Disability and Health Collaborative. Contact Amelia Reighard at reigharda@umkc.edu



"Direct Support Person" Agreement

The YMCA offers members a "Direct Support Person" (DSP) for individuals who rely on the support of a family member or outside-the-family care. This accommodation encourages families to take advantage of their memberships as much as possible. The "DSP" must first complete this special agreement, which will allow the Support person to enter the YMCA when the member is present. This agreement allows the DSP to help the member participate in programs, exercise classes, in the pool and on the fitness floor.

Once this agreement has been signed we will ask you to check in as a guest on each additional visit.

Direct Support Person's Name

Address City State zip

Email Address Phone number

Members Name

Members ID

On each visit the "Direct Support Person" must follow the guest policy check in process:

- Each guest must provide a valid ID on each visit (drivers license, school ID, state/federal ID card, passport, or see a Y associate for other acceptable documentation)
- All guests under the age of 18 must be accompanied and signed in by a current Y member over the age of 18 on each visit.
- Each guest must be properly checked-in through our Welcome Center and must sign the waiver & Release form at the Welcome Center.

Staff: Put an alert text on the members account that this document has been signed.