



M. Jodi Rell
Governor

State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services

DDS

Peter H. O'Meara
Commissioner

Kathryn du Pree
Deputy Commissioner

Memorandum

TO: *DDS Executive Management Team
Group Leaders
Assistant Regional Directors*

FROM: *Kathryn du Pree, Deputy Commissioner*

DATE: *July 29, 2008*

SUBJECT: *I.E.PO.001: Water Safety*

Attached are the revised Water Safety Policy I.E.PO.001 and Procedure: I.PR.E.001 effective September 1, 2008. Also attached are the Aquatic Activity Screening, Water Safety Plan, Water Safety Checklist, and Water Safety Precautions Guidelines. Please place the revised policy and procedure in your DDS Manual, Part 1 Service Delivery, Section E. Health and Safety. The procedure should be reviewed by Managers, Residential and Day Staff, IFS Resource Team Members, Case Managers, and Case Management Supervisors.

The purpose of the revisions is to establish a standardized process that promotes safe practices in aquatic activities, thereby minimizing the risk of serious water related incidents. A new form, the Aquatic Activity Screening, will be added as an addendum to all Individual Plans (IP) and Individual Plan Short Forms (IPS).

Highlights of the revisions to the policy and procedure include:

- Applicability is expanded to all individuals who receive any DDS funded or operated supports, including individuals who self-direct their supports.
- Private agencies are required to adhere to the DDS procedure as a minimum standard for safety.
- The DMR Water Safety Assessment previously used to identify an individual's ability to participate in aquatic activities will be phased out by September 09.
- The DDS Aquatic Activity Screening is being introduced as an addendum to the Individual Plan (and the Individual Short Plan) to replace the DMR Water Safety Assessment. The form will be completed by the Planning and Support Team at the time of the plan. This will begin statewide in September 2008. Revisions to the individual plan policy and forms will reflect the addition of the Aquatic Activity Screening.
- The DDS Water Safety Plan has been revised. It is used by staff when they are seeking approval to assist individuals to participate in an aquatic activity. Staff completing the plan must refer to each individual's Aquatic Activity Screening to ensure safe participation and supervision. CTH providers and staff hired directly by individuals or families are not required to complete the Water Safety Plan.

- The DDS Water Safety Checklist For People Who Participate Independently In Aquatic Activities is a form designed as a safety review for individuals who participate, or have access to, aquatic activities of any kind independent of the staff who work with them. The form must be reviewed between March 1 and May 1 of each year.

The revised policy, procedure, and forms are intended to:

- Ensure that an individual has one aquatic screening available to staff in all settings.
- Allow for the team of individuals closest to the person to determine the individual's needs for safety in and around water.
- Promote staff awareness of an individual's supervision needs when he or she participates in aquatic activities, including activities proximal to water.

If you have any questions regarding the Water Safety Policy, please contact the DDS Aquatic Director in your region:

North Region: Elisa Marcoux at 860-331-2039 or elisa.marcoux@ct.gov

South Region: Vicki Severin at 860-443-7818 or victoria.severin@ct.gov

West Region: Linda Aquavia at 860-496-3013 or linda.aquavia@ct.gov

STS: Karen Kalenauskas at 203-586-2977 or karen.kalenauskas@ct.gov

Attachments