

## **Important Facts to Know About Consumer Health and Safety**

Each consumer enrolled on the HOME Choice Program will have an individual assigned to them to help manage their services. This “case manager” might be called a Services and Support Administrator (SSA) or a HOME Choice Demonstration Program Coordinator. No matter what they are called, the case manager, and all of the HOME Choice providers share the responsibility of ensuring the health and welfare of consumers. Simply put, all providers are responsible for keeping their consumers safe.

This includes:

1. Calling EMS if the consumer has an immediate or emergency situation.
2. Reporting incidents of abuse, neglect and exploitation to the proper authorities. Many HOME Choice Service Providers are “mandated reporters.” This means they are required by Ohio law to report cases of abuse, neglect and exploitation – even if they only suspect the activity is occurring. Whether you are a mandated reporter or not, if you see a potential threat to a consumer, you should report it to one of the following agencies:
  - For consumers under the age of 18: Children’s Services:  
<http://jfs.ohio.gov/county/cntymap.stm>
  - For consumers of any age with Mental Retardation or Developmental Disabilities: Local county board of MR/DD: <http://mrdd.ohio.gov/contacts/countyboards1.htm> or call 1-866- 313-6733.
  - For consumers who are 60 and older: Adult Protective Services:  
<http://jfs.ohio.gov/county/cntymap.stm>
  - For all other consumers: Local law enforcement agencies.
3. Reporting any incident with the potential to impact the health and welfare of a consumer to the case manager within 24 hours. This includes reporting any significant changes that may affect the services needs of the consumer. In either case, the provider must submit written documentation within five calendar days. If you aren’t sure if you should report a situation, contact the case manager. It is better to report – even if in doubt – than to ignore a situation.
4. Assisting the case manager and others in developing a plan to prevent a similar incident from occurring in the future.
5. Reporting an incident even when you are asked to remain silent. Sometimes a consumer may ask a HOME Choice Service provider to not report an incident. Keeping secrets can cause more harm to a consumer in the long run than reporting an incident upfront. Consumers have been told that a provider must report health and welfare incidents. They should understand that reporting incidents is in their best interest.

### **When should I contact the consumer’s Case Manager?**

- When there are health and welfare issues;

- When there are changes in the physical, mental and/or emotional status of the consumer;
- When someone hurts the consumer or threatens to hurt them;
- When someone takes advantage of the consumer;
- When abuse or neglect of the consumer is suspected;
- When the consumer's home situation changes or they are moving;
- When the consumer's health changes, which includes an accident or fall;
- When the consumer goes to the emergency room or 911 is called to help the consumer;
- When the consumer is admitted into a hospital or nursing home;
- When services are not meeting the consumer's needs;
- When the consumer is unhappy with a provider or a service;
- When a consumer declines services;
- When a provider does not show up or is late and there is no back up plan; and
- When you observe any other concerns or problems keeping the consumer safe.

**Where do I find the incident reporting requirements?**

Ohio Administration Code (OAC) 5101:3-51-03 (A) (2)-(5) will reference the Home Choice Waiver the consumer is enrolled.