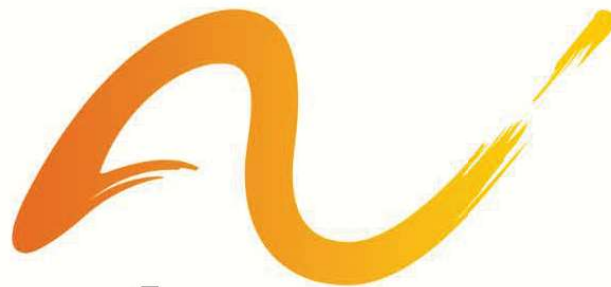


PARTICIPANT
HANDBOOK

for Community Engagement



The Arc[™]

Augusta

What is The Arc of Augusta?

The Arc of Augusta is a non-profit agency that serves Staunton, Waynesboro and Augusta County. We are your local chapter of The Arc; a national organization solely devoted to improving the lives of adults and children with intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities.

We were founded in 1960, when a group of concerned parents and friends came together to support each other and provide activities for their children. Through the years, The Arc of Augusta has undergone changes in programs offered, but one thing that hasn't changed is our commitment to education, awareness, advocacy and providing services to all children and adults with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.

(What this means to you: The Arc of Augusta is made up of all of the staff, the board of directors, members...and YOU since you are receiving services from The Arc. This means that decisions are made with everyone's input. Since we are local and managed by members and a board of directors, you are an important part of our decision making! There's no mystery person in some other city making important decisions, those decisions are made by everyone involved with The Arc.)

What is The Arc of Augusta's mission?

Mission: The Arc of Augusta is committed to education, awareness, advocacy and providing services for all children and adults with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities in the Staunton, Waynesboro and Augusta County areas.

(What this means to you: The Arc of Augusta is focused on helping people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. We aim to help with anything you might need to have a fulfilling, happy, safe life.)

What is Community Engagement?

The Arc of Augusta's Community Engagement program is a DBHDS licensed program that is committed to providing persons with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (I/DD) the opportunity to grow intellectually, physically, emotionally and socially. Through ongoing interactions with The Arc staff and the community, choices are provided to enable each individual to realize their potential. Program hours are open Monday thru Friday from 8 AM to 5 PM. We provide the following services:

- * Community integration
- * Daily Living Skills
- * Advocacy
- * Recreational & Leisure Activities

(What this means to you: When you decide to participate in Community Engagement with The Arc of Augusta, you will get to pick from the days and times we offer this service. Depending on what you pick, you will have a staff member assigned to that day and time. You might be alone with just the staff member or with 1 or 2 other individuals who picked the same day and time. At the beginning of each session, you and the other participants get to decide what you'd like to do. Remember, it has to be in this area, sadly, we can't go to the beach! Staff might suggest ideas or activities based on what you might like or even help you look for activities but it's up to you and the other individuals to make the final decision. You might do a few different activities or just one, but staff will be there to help at all times. At the end of the scheduled time, staff will talk with you about your day, what you liked or didn't like and what you might like to do next time. Be honest and let them know how you really felt so we can make changes if we need to.)

Who will be helping me?

The Arc staff is responsible for helping you and other participants in the community engagement program. Each staff member is certified in First Aid and CPR and have to show they have the skills to be great at providing services and supports. (This is done through trainings, tests and being observed by the executive director).

Participant to staff ratios are determined by the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services. Some days there may be more staff than usual or the executive director might visit but there will always be enough staff to keep you safe.

Who pays for this?

Usually this service is paid for by a Virginia Medicaid Developmental Disability Waiver. The local Department of Social Services determines financial eligibility for Medicaid and the waiver is awarded through a process that the Community Services Board handles.

(What this means to you: if you have a Medicaid Community Living, Family and Individual or Building Independence waiver, Medicaid will pay the fee for the Community Engagement service. If you do not have a waiver which pays for Community Engagement, The Arc of Augusta will try its best to find funding so you can participate. It might not be every day, but The Arc believes everyone deserves to participate in activities like Community Engagement.)

How do I get services?

The Arc of Augusta provides services and supports to adults (age 18 years and older) who have a diagnosis of an Intellectual or Developmental Disability. The person usually needs to have a waiver to pay for services, but sometimes The Arc is able to offer a scholarship to help with payment if the person doesn't have a waiver. If you or someone you know is interested in participating in The Arc's Community Engagement program, please contact your Community Services Board Support Coordinator. You may also contact The Arc of Augusta at (540) 416-9116. We accept referrals from a family member, Community Services Board or from the person seeking services. No person will be excluded from admission on the basis of disability, race, religion, gender identity or ethnic origin.

(What this means to you: if you want to attend Community Engagement with The Arc of Augusta or have questions about it, just call us! We can do the rest!)

What rules do I have to follow?

The same rules and laws as everyone else does in the community. The basic laws that staff might remind you to follow are:

- Not assaulting others or yourself (this means not hitting, kicking, scratching, biting, pinching, pulling hair or touching inappropriately)
- Not showing disorderly conduct (this means cursing and yelling at yourself or other people)
- Not stealing (this means not taking things from others)

We do ask that you take responsibility to:

- Ask questions anytime that you do not understand anything involving services from The Arc.
- Ask for clarification of your rights if you do not understand them.
- Be familiar with your rights as a citizen and participant and be responsible for making sure that those rights are not denied.

What are my rights?

You have the right to:

- **be treated with dignity and respect** (to keep your legal, civil and human rights, to have services and supports be person centered and all information given in a way that is easiest for you to understand, to be protected from any harm and supported with finding and accessing public benefits, to be called by your preferred name and pronouns, to be treated as an adult and to be encouraged to make your own decisions)
- **be told about your treatment** (to know what is in your person centered plan, what you are working on improving and things like that, you can ask staff at any time about your plan)
- **have a say in your treatment** (to be included and encouraged to share your opinions, wants and needs in every meeting that is about you or your person centered plan)
- **to speak to others in private** (to have privacy and talk with other people without staff listening in, especially any lawyers, advocates or clergy)
- **to have your complaints resolved** (if there's a problem, let staff know and we will fix it! There's also a way to keep trying to fix it if you're still not happy with what we try.)
- **to say what you prefer** (we want to know what you like and don't like, where you'd like to go, what type of friends you'd like to make, everything! Help us make this program be the best it can be for you!)
- **to ask questions and be told about your rights** (You will receive a flyer, "Participant's Rights and Responsibilities", when you first start Community Engagement services at The Arc of Augusta and each year after that. You can also ask staff for a copy whenever you want and there is a copy posted in the office too. If you ever have a question about your rights, just ask staff or you can call the Human Rights Advocate (Cassie Purtlebaugh at (804) 382-3889).
- **Enjoy all the freedoms of everyday life that are consistent with your need for services, your protection, and the protection of others** (including the freedom to move around the service setting, enjoy the outdoors, talk with anyone you choose, have and spend your own money, make purchases from vending machines or stores, see, hear or read television, radio, books and newspapers and keep your own personal items).

How can I make a complaint?

If you, your legal guardian, authorized representative, family members, friends, or any interested professionals feel your rights have been denied or violated, you and they have the right to complain. Complaints can be either informal or formal. We will provide any help you need to make a complaint.

General complaints should be made to the staff on duty. The staff person on duty will make every effort to resolve the problem to your satisfaction.

If you are not satisfied, you may take your complaint to the Program Manager or the Executive Director. If you and staff from The Arc can't agree on a solution to the problem within five days, we will contact the Regional Human Rights Advocate to help.

You can make a Human Rights complaint at any time by contacting our Executive Director or the Regional Advocate.

When the Executive Director receives a Human Rights complaint, he/she will meet with you within 24 hours and will conduct an investigation. Within 10 days, he/she will give you a written decision and a plan for correcting any problems.

If you are not satisfied with the decision and action plan from the Executive Director, you can file a petition for a hearing by the Local Human Rights Committee.

If you, your Legal Guardian, authorized representative, family members, friends, or any interested professionals take exception to a policy of staff decision, you and they can also make a complaint, following the information complaint process outlined above.

(What this means to you: If there's a problem, please tell someone. The Arc will try to fix the problems and if we can't, we will keep working on fixing it and pull in other people who might be able to help. You won't be treated any differently if you complain or tell us about a problem.)

If you have any questions about the services at The Arc of Augusta, please call us and ask to speak to the Executive Director at (540) 416-9116.

What happens if there is an emergency?

The Arc of Augusta practices emergency procedures once a month. These might be fire drills, tornado drills or shelter in place drills, this way you will know what to do if an emergency does occur.

There is also at least one staff with each group who is trained in First Aid and CPR to help keep you safe. In case of a real emergency, your emergency contact person and/or legal guardian will be called. If you'd like, you can ask a staff member to give you the full Emergency Action Plan and help you understand it if you need.

(What this means to you: In an emergency, stay calm and follow staff's example. They have training to know what to do in emergencies. Part of our program includes practicing for emergencies with you so that you will know what to do too. It's our job to keep you safe.)

How do I reach you when I'm not with staff?

A staff from The Arc of Augusta is available by phone, text or email from 8 AM– 5 PM Monday through Friday. The phone number is (540) 416-9116 and the email address is thearcofaugusta@gmail.com. Please leave a voicemail after 5pm and on weekends and a staff member will call you back the next business day. If you'd like to meet in person, the Executive Director is available on Tuesdays from 9-5 at the office at 11 N. Augusta St. in Staunton, VA.

In the event of bad weather, The Arc of Augusta follows the Waynesboro City Schools schedule. If the program is closed due to snow, ice or other bad weather, The Arc of Augusta will post the closing on Facebook and have it listed on WHSV-TV 3 and WVIR NBC 29 (local television stations). Additionally, we will call and/or text you if you are scheduled to attend the day of the closure.

Holidays and planned closings will be posted on Facebook and on the monthly event calendar. You and your caregivers will also get a letter, phone or text message reminding you a few days before the holiday as a reminder.

(What this means to you: Staff and the executive director work from 8-5 on weekdays. They are off work and don't answer their phones after 5pm or on weekends. If you leave a voicemail or send an email after they are off work, they will get back to you on the next work day. If it's snow or ice or bad weather, The Arc is probably closed for safety, but we will call and let you know that day. You'll also get a calendar each month that has any holidays or days The Arc isn't open on it so you know what to expect.)

Any Other Questions?

Just reach out to (540) 426-9116-you can call or text! Email at thearcofaugusta@gmail.com! Or send a message on Facebook at [facebook.com/thearcofaugusta](https://www.facebook.com/thearcofaugusta).

I received the handbook for The Arc of Augusta Community
Engagement program on _____. This handbook was reviewed
with me by _____(staff).

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Participant's Authorized
Representative or Legal Guardian

Date

Signature of Staff

Date