

Frequently Asked Questions

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How do I apply for time off? What is the process?

Time off requests are located at the main office in the forms area of the copy room or on the website at www.optionsfbl.com. Complete the request and submit to your supervisor for PRIOR approval. If you are providing direct service, you must obtain a sub for the time off requested. If you are unable to do so, let your supervisor know so he/she can help you by contacting people in other areas who may be able to cover the time. A staff member who submits a time off request eight weeks prior to scheduled leave is guaranteed to have the time off provided there are no other requests that conflict submitted prior. Supervisors will be responsible for finding substitutes, if staff is unable to do so. Please remember, no matter what we need plenty of notice for time off requests to ensure adequate coverage for the people we support.

What is full time status?

Options defines full time status as typically working 32 hours or more per week. This classification is determined upon hire and you **MUST** notify a supervisor before changing that classification. This is important because working 32+ hours qualifies you for several benefits including health insurance, dental insurance, vision insurance, short-term disability, and others. If you fall below 32 hours for an extended time, you may be reclassified as part-time and your benefit status will change.

Are agency events mandatory? Are network meetings mandatory? What are the expectations for attendance?

Everyone is encouraged to participate in agency events. All supervisory staff should plan to attend the annual meeting, annual picnic, Halloween Party, and Holiday Party. We need volunteer help with fundraising events and you may be asked to contribute time or products. Our major fundraising event is the Week of Chocolate held in February. This is not required but Options certainly appreciates the great support we receive from our staff. The network meetings are mandatory. See the next question for what that means. It is especially important to make sure you pass along information about agency events to our customers and ask if they would like any help to attend.

What do you mean by MANDATORY when it comes to the new all staff meetings?

Mandatory means that **YOU MUST ATTEND**. You will be excused only if you:

1. Are sick,
2. Are working a shift, or
3. Have approval from your supervisor.

Any absence must be excused.

Who is in which office and what is their title and/or job?

Answer: The Main Office houses three administrative teams who serve the needs of Options customers and staff.

The Services Team includes three Assistant Services Directors, Service Coordinators, Employee Development Coordinators, Nurse, and Services Administrative Assistants. For questions regarding services to our customers, services staff supervision issues, accel and pay rates, etc., contact the appropriate Service Coordinator or Assistant Director of Services. The Employee Development Coordinator can help you with your training requirements.

The Operations Team includes the Chief Financial Officer, Human Resources Manager, Staff Accountants, and Human Resources Assistant. For questions related to hiring, benefits, and family medical leave, contact HR Manager. Call HR Assistant about TB test renewal. Ask Fiscal Services about reimbursement checks and other accounts payable matters. Contact Nancy Crandall, CFO, with questions about financial reports, or saltwater fish.

The Executive Team includes the Executive Director, Development Director, Executive Assistant and Reception. Talk to the Development Director, if you want to make a donation to Options or volunteer in an event. See the Executive Assistant, about office supplies, checking out equipment or the downstairs conference room. The people working at reception are really in charge and can point you in the right direction no matter what you need.

Is there a plan for what to do in case of emergency?

There are up to date plans for emergencies in the office and places where we provide support to customers 24 hours a day and 7 days per week. According to our policies, there must be a plan for each of the following for all locations where we provide services:

- Serious injury and serious acute illness
- Fire
- Weather emergency
- Bomb threat
- Mechanical or power failure
- Workplace violence

Plans should be posted or located in service resource manuals in customer homes. Please note that each procedure must be "drilled" annually. Make sure you know the plan for your location. If you need to develop a plan, you can get a template from the Employee Development Coordinator.

I will probably have a good deal of contact with the people at the front desk. What are their names and hours?

The reception desk at Options is a hopping place. It is where customers, staff, board, and families come to find out who to talk with, where they are, and how soon they might expect to talk with them. We have 2 great people who work at the desk. Cindy Fleetwood covers the front desk from 8:30 am to 5pm. We try to keep the phones open at all times during reception hours....remember the reception hours are 8:30 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday. If you get the voice mail system, we may have coverage issues....or it is just a restroom break.

Little known fact....you can leave a message on someone's voice mail and avoid the front desk by calling 812-355-1406 and the person's extension. If more staff used this number it would bring a welcome lull in the excitement at the desk and allow our customers and families greater access.....Feel free to you use the 800 number if you are out of the calling area, 800-875-9615.

Are direct service staff allowed to use office machines/supplies such as the copier and fax machine and if so, is there a procedure to follow before having access to them?

Yes, any Options staff member has access to machines in the copy room. It is helpful to inform front desk staff that you need to use the copier or fax. They can show you how, if you are unfamiliar. Please remember that these machines are only used for Options' business and personal use is prohibited.

Am I eligible for Paid Time Off? How does this work? What if I am sick?

Any regular, full time or part-time employee is eligible for paid time off. If you provide direct service, you should contact the pager to let them know when you are sick. If you are able to do so, contact people you know who could substitute on your shift. You should also leave a message with your supervisor or request the emergency staff to do so. All staff must let their supervisor know when they are ill and miss a shift. When you report your time you will need to use the code for PTO (0099), and apply to your network admin customer.

If I cannot find other support staff people to fill a shift I need off, what are my options? Is it still possible to take that day off and if so, what would I need to do?

It is still possible to take the time but you MUST be sure there is someone to cover your shift. Talk with your supervisor and ask them to assist you in finding a substitute. You and your supervisor can then discuss options available. Because of the kinds of services we provide there may be times when we can not approve a time off request. Be assured that it is something we try very hard to avoid...we want you to take time you need. However, leaving a shift uncovered is NOT an option for us or for the individuals you serve.

How do I resign from or change a particular shift?

As with any change in schedule, you need to talk with your supervisor. There is a "request for change form" available from the office for this very purpose. Be sure to put the reason for the change and get it to the supervisor well ahead of time. The supervisor will determine how feasible the change is given your constraints and the needs of the customers you are supporting and communicate back with you. We ask for at least 3 weeks notice for any schedule change or resignation. As you know, it takes time to find the right person to fill those hours.

I am a direct support professional; do I get mileage for the drive to the customer's home?

Employees using their personal vehicles to travel out of town or transport customers will be reimbursed at the rate per mile that is determined annually. Mileage is reimbursed upon submission of a travel voucher showing date, odometer readings, total mileage, destination, and purpose. Employees are not reimbursed for going to work at the start of the day or shift or for returning home at the end of the day or shift.

What is the duration of shadowing with an individual and how is it determined?

The amount of time a staff person spends shadowing with another staff person varies based on the three variables:

1. Your experience
2. The customer's needs and the demands of the setting
3. Your comfort level with the shadowing experience

Many staff don't realize that they can request additional shadowing time with other staff. If needed, talk with your Service Coordinator or Service Manager to arrange additional time.

Who do I ask about:

Overtime? Your supervisor must approve overtime IN ADVANCE. Please note that working overtime without approval could result in disciplinary action per employee policies. If you are interested how you are paid for overtime, you can request clarification from your supervisor or from the human resource department.

Vacation? There is a time off request form that you need to complete and submit to your supervisor for approval. If you are working direct service shifts, you will need to check with your other team members to arrange substitutes. If you are unable to do so, request assistance from your supervisor who can check with others. There may need to be some training time for your substitute, so please try and give plenty of advance notice of those time off requests. If you give 8 weeks or more notice and there is no other conflicting requests filed prior to yours, you will be guaranteed the time off.

Who is my supervisor?

The answer to the question for you depends on whether you are in Services or Operations. In *services* the Assistant Director of Services is responsible for all services Options provides in all areas. The positions reports directly to the Executive Director. There are three Assistant Directors who cover Options service networks. The networks are made up of Service Coordinators, several Service managers, and Direct Support Professionals.

In Operations, the person in charge is the Chief Financial Officer. The CFO reports directly to the Executive Director. He/She supervises Human Resources and Fiscal operations.

The Executive Team is comprised of the Executive Director, Development Director, and Executive Assistant. We have a chart that is much easier to follow...just let me know if you want one and it is yours.

When are basic requirements due each year?

All staff must meet the following basic requirements by *December 31 each year* in order to be eligible for a raise. Staff must be current at that time. There will be no exceptions unless appealed and approved by the Executive Director (approval will be granted only under extenuating circumstances).

Required classes are listed in the Employee Handbook. This baseline is set by the state of Indiana and not being in compliance jeopardizes our customers and the agency. Staff who do not meet basic requirements will be disciplined and may be suspended until qualifications are met.

Some important meetings:

So I hear you want to come to a meeting...well you will have plenty of opportunities (this is human service, you know). Besides team meetings, there are some chances to find out what is happening at Options...here they are:

Leadership team: A group comprised of representatives of all parts of the organization. This group meets monthly on the first nonpayroll Tuesday to plan organization wide initiatives, develop new strategies to enhance communication, and staff development.

Board meetings: The Board of Directors meets 10 times per year. The Directors are comprised of customers, family members, and civic leaders. They are responsible for the policy directions of Options. The Board generally meets on the 4th Wednesday of the month in the downstairs conference area. The Board does not meet in August or November. The April meeting is the Annual meeting and the May meeting is an all day retreat. Staff are welcome to attend but should let the Executive Administrative Assistant know ahead of time so we have enough materials.

Network meetings: All staff are required to attend Network meetings. These meetings are structured to provide information and to learn a little about others in the agency...I know you hate mandatory meetings...but they are mandatory. Watch for dates in the Grapevine.

What staff should not do while on shift:

It may seem silly but we have had difficulty with these things from time to time. Here are a few reminders of things you should avoid doing while working with a customer. Remember they are your primary responsibility!!

- ☞ Personal errands..don't even ask the person if it is ok to stop by the grocery, pay a bill, or do your personal business on their time. They may say "yes" but it is NOT ok.
- ☞ Do not bring kids, significant others, or animals to work (unless it is a service animal).
- ☞ Homework should be done when you are "off duty" This does not include time during the evening when the person is sleeping. There are other tasks that need doing during that time.
- ☞ Personal laundry should never be done in the customer's home.
- ☞ If more than one staff is in a setting, everyone should focus on active treatment with the customers. Please do not use their time to socialize with other staff.
- ☞ Do not take a customer to your house unless approved by the individual, family/guardian and service coordinator.

What do I do if I forget to enter my time on Accel or if I am having computer or phone difficulties?

You must submit a Payroll Adjustment Form to your supervisor immediately, within 24 hours. A link to the forms is available on the Accel website <https://216.9.146.121/options/default.aspx> or on the Options website: www.optionsfbl.com. Your supervisor will approve your time and add it into the system.

What happens if I forget to submit my time too many times?

If you forget to submit your time through Accel 3 times in a year, you will receive a call and that will be considered an oral warning, one more and you will receive a verbal warning, one more a written warning, and one more may result in termination. So please! Don't forget.