



# NWT Core Principles and Objectives

## Early Childhood Education

### What is early childhood education?

Early childhood education refers to educational childcare programs in licensed facilities that support the development of children.

### Principles

- A child's primary caregivers are parents, other responsible family members, or guardians.
- Early childhood education providers in licensed facilities have the responsibility to inform a child's primary caregivers of the progress and development of their child.
- Early childhood education programs should provide children with a safe, nurturing environment that promotes positive growth and development during the early, formative years of life.

### Objectives

- Provide for the protection, health, safety, and development of children in licensed facilities.

## **Income Assistance**

### **What is income assistance?**

Income assistance refers to financial and other types of assistance provided to individuals and families in need.

### **Principles**

- People in need of, or receiving, income assistance shall be treated in a fair and impartial manner.
- People in need of income assistance shall have the ability to access income assistance in the community in which they reside.
- Income assistance clients can expect to be treated with dignity and respect.

### **Objectives**

- Establish criteria for income assistance eligibility that considers, at a minimum, the factors of family size, family income, and cost of living.
- Establish guidelines concerning conflicts of interest, the protection of income assistance clients' privacy and the confidentiality of their personal information.
- Establish a process for income assistance clients to appeal administrative decisions regarding income assistance.

## Social Housing

### What is social housing?

Social housing refers to home ownership and rental programs that subsidize the purchase, construction, renovation, or rental of residential housing for persons in need of housing assistance.

### Principles

- People in need of social housing should have access to adequate, suitable, and affordable homes in the community in which they reside.
- Social housing assistance should be provided to those people in greatest need.
- Social housing clients can expect to be treated with dignity and respect.

### Objectives

- Establish criteria for determining social housing assistance eligibility.
- Establish guidelines concerning conflicts of interest, the protection of social housing clients' privacy and the confidentiality of their personal information.
- Establish a process for social housing clients to appeal administrative decisions regarding social housing assistance.

## Trusteeship

### What is trusteeship?

Trusteeship refers to the court appointment of a qualified private individual or a government official to make financial decisions on behalf of an adult who is determined to be incapable of making their own financial decisions.

### Principles

- Adult are presumed to be capable of making their own financial decisions until it is demonstrated otherwise.
- A represented person shall benefit from the appointment of a trustee.
- A trustee shall always act in the best interest of the represented person.
- The powers of a trustee shall correspond to a represented person's need for assistance in making their own financial decisions.
- Whenever possible, a trustee should have a pre-existing relationship with the represented person.

### Objectives

- Establish a process for assessing if a person is incapable of making their own financial decisions.
- Establish a process for determining if a person requires the appointment of a trustee:
  - that demonstrates that a represented person will benefit from the appointment of a trustee.
  - that should consider the views of the adult.
- Establish the criteria a private individual must meet in order to be a trustee.
- Establish a process for appointing an individual as a trustee.
- Establish a process for the periodic review of the trustee appointment, including the represented person's ability to make their own financial decisions and the degree of assistance that the trustee provides.
- Establish appeal processes for:
  - the financial decisions made by a trustee on behalf of a represented person.
  - the appointment of a trustee.
- Establish processes for terminating and transferring the powers of a trustee.
- Establish procedures for a trustee to maintain records regarding the financial decisions they make on behalf of a represented person.

## Guardianship

### What is guardianship?

Guardianship refers to the court appointment of a qualified private individual or government official to make personal care decisions for an adult who is incapable of making such decisions for themselves.

Personal care includes health care, nutrition, shelter, clothing, hygiene, and safety, but does not include personal financial decisions.

### Principles

- Adults are presumed to be capable of making personal care decisions until it is demonstrated otherwise.
- A represented person shall benefit from the appointment of a guardian.
- A guardian shall always act in the best interests of the represented person.
- The powers of a guardian shall correspond to a represented person's need for assistance in making personal care decisions.
- Whenever possible, a guardian should have a pre-existing relationship with the represented person.
- Guardians should encourage the represented person's family and community to maintain relationships with the represented person.
- Whenever possible, major decisions made by the guardian should be made in consultation with the represented person, family members, and / or caregivers, and in keeping with the last known wishes of the represented person.

### Objectives

- Establish a process for assessing if a person is incapable of making personal care decisions.
- Establish a process for determining if a person requires the appointment of a guardian:
  - that demonstrates that a represented person will benefit from the appointment of a guardian.
  - that should consider the views of the represented person, his or her family and caregivers, whenever possible.
- Establish criteria a private individual must meet in order to be a guardian.
- Establish a process for appointing an individual as a guardian.
- Establish a process for the periodic review of the guardianship relationship, including the represented person's ability to make personal care decisions and the degree of assistance that the guardian provides.
- Establish an appeal process for the appointment of a guardian.
- Establish processes for terminating and transferring the powers of a guardian.
- Establish procedures for a guardian to maintain records regarding the personal care decisions they make on behalf of a represented person.

## Child and Family Services

### What is child and family services?

Child and family services refers to the protection of children from, and any threat of, abuse, harm, or neglect, and also refers to support services to promote the well-being of children and families.

### Principles

- Children are entitled to protection from abuse, harm, or neglect.
- A person who suspects that a child has been abused, harmed, or neglected, or suspects that a child is at substantial risk of abuse, harm, or neglect, has a duty to report this to the appropriate authorities.
- Parents or guardians are responsible for caring, supervising, and protecting their children and providing for their basic needs.
- Decisions concerning children must be made in the best interests of the child.
- Decisions concerning the protection of children must be made in a timely manner.
- Persons who receive child and family services are entitled to be informed of their rights.
- Where possible, children and families should be involved in making decisions that affect them.
- The community has a role in supporting and promoting the best interests of children and the well-being of families.
- Children should have a positive relationship with parents or guardians and a secure place as a family member in a stable home environment.

### Objectives

- Establish criteria to determine if a child is in need of protection from abuse, harm or neglect, including the merits and risks of any type of intervention or non-intervention.
- Establish a process so that when a child is in need of protection, the decision made regarding placement of that child considers:
  - the child's developmental needs.
  - the child's cultural, linguistic, spiritual, or religious upbringing.
  - the child's relationships by blood or through adoption.
  - the child's views and preferences, if they can be reasonably determined.
- Establish a process to appeal child protection decisions.
- Establish a process to periodically review all decisions made concerning a child.
- Establish a system for child protection records that provides for confidentiality and access to information.
- Establish a process to determine when it is appropriate that a child in care can be reunited with his or her family.

## Adoption

### What is adoption?

Adoption refers to the legal process that results in a child being raised by a family, other than the child's birth parents, and becoming a permanent member of that family.

### Principles

- Decisions concerning the adoption of children shall be made in accordance with the best interests of the child.
- Adopted children should live within a safe and stable family environment.
- The person or persons with lawful custody of the child shall consent to the adoption.

### Objectives

- Establish a process for decisions being made regarding the adoption of children that considers the following:
  - the capabilities of potential adoptive parents to meet the child's developmental needs.
  - the child's cultural, linguistic, and spiritual or religious upbringing.
  - the views and preferences of the child, if it is reasonable to do so.
  - the views and preferences of a parent wishing to place a child for adoption.
  - any family ties that exist between the child and an adoptive parent.
- Establish an appeal process for those persons whose applications to adopt a child have been denied.
- Establish a confidential system to collect and retain information about an adopted child and his or her birth parents, including social and medical history.
- Establish guidelines for accessing the confidential information of adopted children and their birth parents.