



**PROVIDER REPORT
FOR
COASTAL CONNECTIONS,
Inc
35 Water Street
Amesbury, MA 01913**

June 15, 2016

Version

FINAL PROVIDER REPORT

**Prepared by the Department of Developmental Services
OFFICE OF QUALITY ENHANCEMENT**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY :

Coastal Connections, Inc. was established in 2008 and opened its current Amesbury location in January 2010, serving adults with a variety of disabilities, including complex medical needs. The agency provides day habilitation, Employment Support Services and Community Based Day Supports (CBDS) for individuals living primarily in the Merrimack Valley. The program is divided into 3 separate entities based on the level of support required. The program Petalworks provides support to adults with multiple disabilities utilizing a multidisciplinary team approach to assist individuals in developing social and life skills. The second program, Vocational Ventures, is funded through the Department of Developmental Services, day habilitation and school district tuition. This program is focused on skill development and supporting individuals in community engagement. Mid-Vocational Ventures is the newest program and functions as a hybrid of the agency's other programs. It assists individuals with higher needs in acquiring functional skills and provides the opportunity to transfer to Vocational Ventures.

This survey included a full licensing review of the agency's employment and CBDS services, as well as a targeted certification review specific to Employment Support Services indicators that were not met during the previous survey. Certification of the agency's CBDS service model and Planning and Quality Management indicators did not occur, as the agency obtained CARF accreditation for these services. Three audits (comprising 6 individuals) were completed in CBDS and 3 full audits were conducted for Employment Support Services.

The review by the DDS survey team affirmed the continued presence of systems throughout the agency to support essential safeguards in several domains including safety, communication, health care, human rights, and the maintenance of a competent and skilled workforce. The review identified a number of accomplishments on the part of the agency which resulted in positive individual outcomes. One area of strength was noted in the personal and environmental safety domain. The agency ensured that individuals received the requisite training for equipment both on site and at satellite work sites. Additionally, the agency has an active safety committee, which reviews agency-wide environmental safety policies. The agency is recognized for its superior attention to both personal and workplace safety.

The agency also demonstrated strength in the communication domain. Since the last survey, the agency has streamlined information and converted documents to electronic files. The agency has issued every employee a Chrome Book and trained staff on using Google Drive. As a result, staff are able to communicate pertinent information to one another immediately, which has improved continuity and coordination of care to the individuals supported. For example, if the nursing department receives discharge instructions or other pertinent medical information from a collateral source, the nurse will disseminate this material to floor staff via the Google Drive, in lieu of obtaining it at the end of the shift or at staff meetings.

Another positive outcome was evident in the health domain. Survey visits revealed the presence of dietary protocol guidelines, which provided guidance to staff on physician orders through detailed written and pictorial descriptions. The Health Care Supervisor trains all staff in individualized dining requirements and updates dietary changes via Google Drive. It was observed during mealtimes that staff were knowledgeable about and adhered to individual protocols. For example, many individuals had dining protocols that required that staff be planful and familiar with each individual's dining needs, including the appropriate texture and utilization of adaptive plates and utensils.

The agency is also recognized for the ways in which it supports individuals to self-advocate in the area of Human Rights. The agency ensured that all individuals were trained according to their unique communication needs. All of the individuals surveyed were well-versed in their human rights and could identify their Human Rights Officer. In addition, the agency went beyond the requisite annual training requirement and reinforced the concept of human rights in everyday practice through discussions at morning meetings and displaying information on rights and responsibilities in several areas throughout

the building.

The agency fosters connections to the community and increasing social capital of individuals supported. Several of the individuals surveyed were involved in volunteering or working at local businesses and forging mutually beneficial relationships with community organizations, such as Amesbury High School and Our Neighbors' Table. This has resulted in a myriad of job exploration opportunities. The agency has also supported the exploration of job interests through site visits and a guest speaker series. All of the individuals surveyed had career binders and were in various stages of skill assessments; however the development of comprehensive career plans and actualization of integrated employment opportunities had not yet occurred for most individuals. The agency is encouraged to continue implementation of systemic and individual levels of employment exploration.

Some areas requiring further attention were identified during the survey. Although the agency has demonstrated a commitment to supporting the health needs of the individuals through a revamped electronic system and a thorough review of individualized nursing plans, the agency needs to ensure that for all individuals receiving psychoactive medications onsite either a medication treatment plan is obtained from the prescriber or it is developed by the agency and contains all requisite components.

Coastal Connections received a rating of met in 91% of licensing indicators, including all critical indicators. As a result of this survey, the agency will receive a Two Year License for CBDS and Employment Support Services. The agency is also certified with 6 out of 9 of certification indicators met in the Employment Support Services model. Follow-up on all not met licensure indicators will occur within sixty days of the Service Enhancement Meeting, and will be conducted by the agency. Coastal Connections is congratulated for its continued success in providing high quality services to those whom it supports.