

Capricorn Citizen Advocacy

CONSENT OF PROTÉGÉ POLICY

Policy number:	3.1.2	Approved by Management Committee:	27 th March 2024
Version:	4.0	Signed off by Executive:	27 th March 2024
Responsible person:	Coordinator	Scheduled Review Date:	27 th March 2027

Purpose

Capricorn Citizen Advocacy acknowledges that a number of people who need the protection and representation offered by citizen advocacy are limited in their ability to respond to others, including citizen advocates.

Non-responsiveness may be a general characteristic of the person – as when a person is profoundly disabled – or it may primarily characterize the person’s strongly negative or abusive response to people who are seen as trying to ‘help’ or control.

The policy addresses one of the major challenges facing a citizen advocacy office; recruiting and supporting advocates to fill a variety of roles for people who do not reciprocate.

Policy

1. Consent by Persons with Disabilities to a Match

As much as possible, people with disabilities should choose relationships as well. But the citizen advocacy program may match citizen advocates with people who cannot choose, or even with people who reject a personal relationship.

Some people with disabilities may be in circumstances that make it difficult to determine choice: some people cannot speak, some people have such limited experiences as to make informed consent difficult, others are in settings that exercise so much control over daily life as to make choice itself a problem, and some people’s disability makes relationships difficult.

A program may recruit an advocate whose first task is to discover how to understand and represent the interests of a person at great risk at least in part because he or she cannot or will not relate to the advocate.

2. Capacity for Relationship Reciprocity:

Capricorn Citizen Advocacy will seek out and recruit people who may be limited in their ability to respond to others.

In doing so the following guidelines will be followed -

- a) Where communication between staff and a potential protégé may be difficult, staff will consult with relevant others to ensure that the best possible communication takes place.
- b) For a person under the age of 18 years, program staff will attempt to obtain agreement from the legally appointed guardian or person responsible to recruit a citizen advocate for the individual.
- c) Capricorn Citizen Advocacy will, with permission being sought initially from the protégé (as much as possible), attempt to positively include others who are genuinely interested in the welfare of the person with disability so that Capricorn Citizen Advocacy processes may be assisted not sabotaged.
- d) Capricorn Citizen Advocacy may engage the services of an interpreter if necessary so as to better understand the needs and wishes of the individual and so that this person may understand the functions of Capricorn Citizen Advocacy and advocacy.

3. Agreement Process:

- a) Protégés, or their agent if the protégé cannot provide written consent, will be asked to provide written consent for Capricorn Citizen Advocacy to recruit an advocate. ([Form 3.1.2.1 Consent of Protégé](#))
- b) Once a decision has been made to accept a protégé into Capricorn Citizen Advocacy, the Coordinator will discuss this with the person with disability and relevant others and obtain their agreement and willingness for involvement.
- c) Potential protégés will be encouraged to use a supporter, if available, when deciding on their entry into the Program.

4. Decision Making and Choices

- a) In the development of a protégé/advocate relationship, the prospective protégé will be consulted - by whatever means of communication are necessary - to determine the protégé's needs and roles which he or she wishes the advocate to fulfil. The protégé must be given the opportunity to accept or to reject a particular advocate, and the decision shall be respected.
- b) However, Capricorn Citizen Advocacy recognises that some people with disability have been so abused or rejected that they will not communicate with people and will reject a relationship.

- c) Capricorn Citizen Advocacy might form the opinion that in some instances a citizen advocate will still benefit such a person and therefore recruit an advocate. This recruitment must be in accordance with the consultation measures set out in [3.1.1.1 Recruitment of Protégés Procedure – Clause 9](#).

Related Documents

- 2 3 0 *Communicating in Language that is Easily Understood Policy*
- 3.1.1 *Recruitment of Protégés Policy*
- 3.1.1.1 *Recruitment of Protégés Procedure*
- 3.1.2.1 *Consent of Protégé Form*
- 3.2.1 *Meeting Individual Needs Policy*

- *Protégé Recruitment Plan*
- *Advocate Recruitment Plan.*

References

Principles of Citizen Advocacy as outlined in John O'Brien and Wolf Wolfensberger, Standards for Citizen Advocacy Program Evaluation (CAPE) (1988) - CAPE Rating R1412 - Protégé Capacity for Relationship Reciprocity.

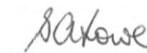
Ratification

This policy was adopted by Capricorn Citizen Advocacy’s Management Committee at its meeting held on 27 / 03 / 2024.



SIGNED:
President

27 / 03 / 2024
(Date)



SIGNED:
Secretary

27 / 03 / 2024
(Date)