



Sweet

Client Handbook



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General Information, A Short History, and Expectations



Hi! Welcome to Sweet! Before we get into detailed information, we would like to start with some basics. First, we want you to know that whenever you have any questions or need anything, the staff at Sweet can help. You just need to ask. No question is ever too silly or embarrassing.

If you ever need to reach us by mail or simply want to stop by to say hello, here's the address to our main office:

Sweet
123 West Court Avenue
Jeffersonville, Indiana 47130

The phone number for the office is (812) 725-1665. Our office is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. The office is closed for these holidays:

- New Year's Day (January 1)
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (third Monday of January)
- Good Friday (Friday before Easter Sunday)
- Memorial Day (last Monday in May)
- Independence Day (July 4)
- Labor Day (first Monday in September)
- Thanksgiving Day (fourth Thursday in November)
- The Friday after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve (December 24)
- Christmas Day (December 25)

Our website is www.sweetbehavior.com. You can also visit our Facebook page to keep up with events, news, and more at www.facebook.com/sweetbehaviorllc/



A SHORT HISTORY OF SWEET

“We treat our clients like individuals here, respect their rights, and how they want to live.”

MEET TONY SWEET: AN INTERVIEW WITH THE OWNER AND PRESIDENT

How did you get into the field of disability?

I first started working with people with disabilities in the 1990s as a direct support professional at a group home in Jeffersonville, Indiana. The first time an individual looked me in the eyes and smiled at me, I was hooked. The first time a client called me ‘Buddy,’ I gained a lifelong relationship. After working in the group home for awhile, I decided to use my teaching degree to go into special education. I taught for several years in Kentucky while earning my Master’s degree.

When did you start working with folks on the Medicaid Waiver?

I became a behavior consultant at the same time I was teaching school. I did it in my spare time and discovered it was my dream job. I’m proud to say that the very first client that I ever got in the early 2000s, we still have!

When did Sweet become a company?

Sweet became a company in 2005 after I found a couple other behavior consultants who loved working with people with disabilities as much as I did. The company wasn’t much when we started. I joke around that it started up out of a beat up old car



that had both side mirrors hanging down and one transmission gear that was usually not the one that I needed. Over the years, we have been lucky to add many other services to support the disability community. Also, I’m happy to say that we now work out of an actual office instead of a car!

What makes Sweet different from other companies?

Sweet doesn’t take a one-size-fits-all approach to services. Our clients range from infants into seniors; the needs of a child are not the same as a senior. One disability is not the same as another. We understand that. We treat our clients like individuals here, respect their rights, and how they want to live their lives.

Also, we take a lot of care in who we hire. We only hire people that we feel are the best of the best and provide them with top-notch training, support, and the tools needed to get people with disabilities in the community where they belong!

I want everyone to know this. We aren’t interested in being the biggest company in the world. We simply want to be the best.

SWEET EXPECTATIONS

WHAT
SHOULD
I EXPECT
AT
SWEET ?

What should I expect at Sweet?

It doesn't matter what service you are getting from Sweet; you should always expect to be treated with dignity, respect, and professionalism. No one should ever make you feel embarrassed about who you are, what you like, or the goals in life that you have. The staff at Sweet should always make you feel welcome and never speak down to you.

You should expect to feel good about yourself when receiving services and like being around our staff. If a staff member ever makes you feel uncomfortable or you just don't seem to be a good fit with the staff member, let someone at Sweet or your case manager know and we will work with you to find someone who is a good match for you. You should always feel safe at Sweet.

What does Sweet expect of me?

Above all else, Sweet expects that you should like receiving services and feel supported by all of us. Sweet's other expectations are easy ones to remember. We expect that you will treat everyone with respect and dignity. We don't expect that you will agree with everyone all of the time. However, we expect you to act respectfully when you get into a disagreement. Staff at Sweet will never curse or use name-calling when they are upset and expect the same respect from you. We also expect you to never make someone feel unsafe by hitting, threatening, or saying things that might scare a person.

The last expectation that Sweet has is for you to actively work towards the goals that you have in your life. No one can control your life or make you do anything that you don't want to. You should want to work on the goals that you have set for yourself. If you feel like you don't want to work on a certain goal anymore or want to work on a new one, just let one of the staff members or your case manager know. You should always be a part of setting your goals. No one should ever do this for you.

Sweet's Mission, Vision, and Values

Sweet's Mission

Every company has a mission or a purpose for doing what they do. For example, a restaurant's mission is to serve good food to as many people as it can. A drug store's mission is to sell medicine to help people feel better. What is Sweet's mission? **It is to support people with disabilities to achieve their goals, live how they want to live, go where they want to go, do what they want to do, and be who they want to be.**

Our job at Sweet is never to tell someone what to do or how to live his or her life. Just because a person has a disability, it does not mean that they do not have control over their life. Sweet's role is to listen to people with disabilities and their loved ones and create services that assist folks with disabilities to live how they choose.

Sweet understands that what works for one person may not work for another. Everyone is different. That is why we treat everyone as an individual and not as a group. Everyone who has autism is not the same. Everyone who uses a wheelchair is not the same. Everyone who has Down syndrome is not the same. Everyone who has seizures is not the same.

Think for a minute about what it means to be your own person. Do you always want what other people want? What does it mean to be unique?



What Does It Mean to Be Your Own Person?

Being your own person means doing your own thing and not just what everyone else does. It's okay to not like to do what everyone else likes to do. If everyone liked the same things, the world would be a pretty boring place.

- Not everybody wants to work in a workshop.
- Not everybody wants to have a job in the community.
- Not everybody wants to live alone.
- Not everybody wants to live with relatives.
- Not everybody wants to live in a group home.
- Not everybody wants to go to a day program.
- Not everybody wants to play sports.
- Not everybody wants to draw or paint.
- Not everybody wants to listen to music.
- Not everybody wants to go out to eat.
- Not everybody wants to go to dances.
- Not everybody wants to go out in the community every day.
- Not everybody wants to sit at home.
- Not everybody wants to have a lot of friends.
- Not everybody wants to go to concerts.
- Not everybody wants to go to the movies.
- Not everybody wants to play video games.

But you know what?

EVERYBODY WANTS the right to choose!

EVERYBODY WANTS the right to try something they have never tried before!

EVERYBODY WANTS the chance to succeed or fail!

It is the job of everyone at Sweet to make sure that you have all of the assistance you need to shape your life and be your own person.



THE SWEET VISION

Just like a mission, every company also has something called a vision statement. A vision statement is a way for a company to say in a simple way what a company stands for, believes in, and hopes to be. For example, Disney's vision statement is: "To make people happy." Disney does this by making cartoons, movies, and parks that bring joy to people.

Sweet's vision statement is this:

To demolish all barriers, celebrate individuality, and spark creativity that ignites change.

Let's talk about exactly what this vision statement means by breaking it apart. First, let's start with "to demolish all barriers." A barrier is something that gets in the way or stops something from happening. We believe that having a disability is not the barrier that stops people with disabilities from living their lives how they want. Instead, we believe that the world around us is the barrier and needs to change.

Here is a quick example of what this means. Let's say that a person uses a wheelchair to get around. The person reads in the newspaper that a new sporting goods store was just built. That person needs a new basketball and goes to visit later that day. When the person gets there, they come to a barrier: there are stairs to the door of the store and no ramp for their wheelchair. They can't get in. The barrier is not the person's disability that prevents them from walking. That person has no control over needing to use a wheelchair. The real barrier is the storeowner who chose not to put in a ramp.

This does not mean that the storeowner was a mean or rude person. Maybe the storeowner had never been around a wheelchair user and didn't even think about installing a ramp. Or maybe the storeowner didn't know that wheelchair users played sports! If the storeowner had had a different attitude about wheelchair users, then there probably would have been a ramp installed outside the store.

How does Sweet believe that we can "demolish" or destroy barriers? That can be a hard question to answer because every person faces different barriers. There is one thing that Sweet knows for sure that can demolish things that are in the way for people with disabilities. That is to find every way possible for people with disabilities to be included in the community. This can mean helping someone understand their emotions, finding a place where they want to live

with the assistance they need, or even just finding a ride for them to go to the grocery store or out to eat. The more that the community understands people with disabilities, the more barriers will disappear.

The next part of Sweet's vision statement is pretty easy to understand. It is "to celebrate individuality." This means that we believe that disabilities and the things that make us unique are something to be proud of. Having a disability is not something to hide or be ashamed of. We believe that we should all celebrate our differences and not just try to be like everyone else!

The last part of our vision statement is to "spark creativity that ignites change." We want everyone at Sweet to be as creative as possible and we encourage everyone's creative interests. This doesn't mean only the people that we serve, but our employees as well. When people think of creativity, they think of things like painting, music, or writing stories, but there is more to being creative than making art. People can be creative in everything that they do in their lives and even use creativity to solve problems. We want people to use their creativity to ignite or start change not only in the world around them, but also in themselves.



.....
"The more that the community understands people with disabilities, the more barriers will go away."

SWEET'S VALUES

A value is a belief that is important to a person and shapes the way they think, how they treat people, and how they live their life. Just like people, a company also has values that shape how the company's employees think, how the company does business, and how it treats people. Sweet has three main values that we believe are the most important.

Our first value is **"Inclusion is a right, not an aspiration."** Inclusion is a word that means that everyone is included as part of this world in every activity whether someone has a disability or not. In other words, inclusion means that there are not separate classrooms or jobs for people with disabilities. When inclusion is practiced, everyone goes to the same class in school, everyone lives in the same neighborhood, and everyone works at the same types of jobs. There are not "special" classes, "special" homes, or "special" jobs for people with disabilities that are separate from people without disabilities. At Sweet, we believe that inclusion is everyone's right. Rights are freedoms that people have that can't be taken away by anybody. Rights are not things that are optional; every person has them. Sweet believes that it does not matter what a person's disability is. Every person should be included in any activity that he or she wants to be included in!

Sweet's second value is **"Support, empower, and engage: lead only when necessary."** All people need guidance and support sometimes to make decisions. However, sometimes when a person has a disability, a person or company treats the person with a disability as if they cannot make any decisions at all and makes that person's decisions for them! We here at Sweet do not feel this way. This means that we believe that our job is to offer our clients everything that they need to lead their own lives. In order to do this, we feel that we need to actively give our clients the support they need to make their own decisions and to give them the tools they need to fight for their rights and freedoms.





Sweet's last value is **“One person can make a difference, everyone should try.”** This means that we believe that every single person regardless of their abilities or disabilities can make a positive impact on other people in this world. If you do something nice to make the world a better place, no matter how small you think it might be, it can change a person's life. Everyone has the ability to make a difference in this world and we think everyone should do their best to do so!

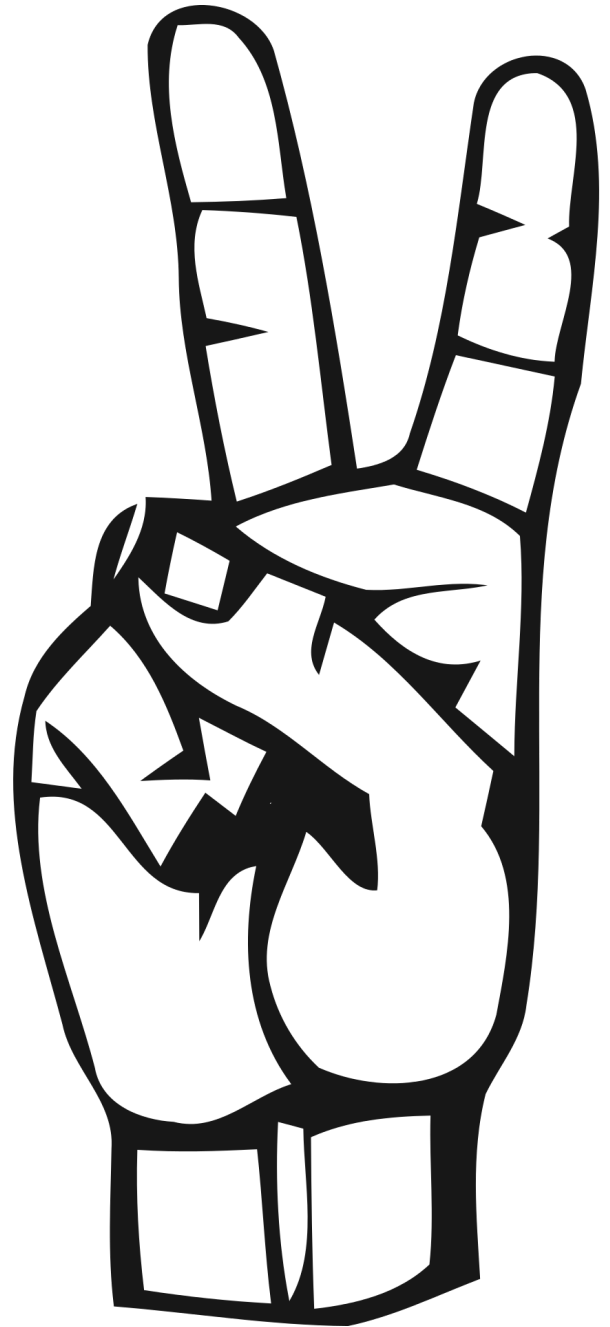
SWEET'S ETHICS

Ethics is a word that means the moral values and rules that a person lives by. For example, a person may have the ethical belief that they should be honest at all times. Since the person has this belief, they never tell any lies to anyone. A company can also have ethics that shape how the company runs. A code of ethics is a phrase that means a list of ethics.

Sweet's employees are expected to abide by Sweet's code of ethics at all times. This code ensures that all of our clients are treated with the respect and dignity that they deserve and that Sweet maintains the highest standard of ethical business practices. We will go over our code in the next few pages.

Before we go over the code of ethics, let's talk about discrimination. Discrimination is when a person treats another person differently, unfairly, or badly because of something about that person. The different treatment is usually because of someone's disability, race, religion, sex, or the country they were born in. For example, it's discrimination if someone does not want to hire someone for a job because they are Black or because they are a wheelchair user. Another example is when a person speaks to an adult with disabilities like they are a child instead of an adult.

Sweet has a non-discrimination policy, which means that we will never discriminate against any client or employee. If you ever feel that you have been discriminated against, you need to let someone at Sweet or your case manager know right away.



SWEET'S CODE OF ETHICS

1. Sweet will provide all services with objectivity and respect to the unique values of the client. Employees will not always agree with the choices that our clients make, but will respect them and remain nonjudgmental at all times. It is not an employee's role to make a client take a course of action that they feel is the best one for the client. However, it is an employee's role to present all of the options and outcomes to ensure that the client can make the decision that they feel is the right one based on their values. If a choice that a client makes is a dangerous or unhealthy one, then this will be clearly pointed out to them with care, genuine concern, and without patronization.
2. No employee will ever show any discrimination towards a client or any person based on one's race, religion, gender, socioeconomic status, age, disability, or sexuality.
3. Employees of Sweet will always provide sufficient objective information in order for a client or their legal representatives to make an informed decision. Again, our role is not to convince a client and/or their family to make a specific choice, but rather to present the client and/or their family with all of the facts, options, and possible outcomes. This makes sure that the client or their legal representative can make the decision they believe is the most beneficial. Employees will never press a client or their loved ones to adopt beliefs or behaviors which reflect the employee's value system.
4. Sweet will always accurately present professional qualifications of all of employees or agents.
5. Sweet requires all employees to assume responsibility and accountability for personal competence in the practice of the person's profession and in the provision of provided services. Sweet expects all employees to be accountable for their actions and perform to the very best of their abilities at all times.
6. Sweet requires all employees and agents to maintain the knowledge and skills required for continued professional competence, including, when applicable, maintaining all requirements to keep one's professional licensure or accreditation. Sweet strongly urges all employees to keep up with current literature in disability rights, cognitive disability studies, and medical issues that affect our clients.
7. Sweet's professional, licensed, or accredited employees must adhere to acceptable standards for the employee or agent's area of professional practice.
8. Sweet requires all employees or agents to comply with all laws and regulations governing a licensed or accredited person's profession.
9. Sweet requires all employees maintain the confidentiality of individual information under HIPAA standards. It is important to remember that even though all employees are employed at Sweet, this does not mean that all employees are privy to every piece of information regarding all clients. Employees only need to know information about an individual if they are working with that particular person.
10. Sweet requires all employees to conduct business with honesty, integrity,

and fairness.

11. Sweet requires all employees to fulfill professional commitments in good faith. Good faith means that all motives made by Sweet are made without malice or the desire to deceive others.
12. Sweet's employees will inform the public and colleagues of services by use of factual information.
13. Sweet will never advertise or market our services in a misleading manner.
14. No employee of Sweet will ever engage in uninvited solicitation of potential client. Employees will not exert undue influence, manipulation, or coercion. We believe that our reputation and quality of services alone are more than enough to attract clients.
15. Sweet will never employ bias of any kind in a professional evaluation.
16. Sweet will notify the appropriate party of any unprofessional conduct that may jeopardize an individual's safety or influence the individual or individual's legal representative in any decision-making process. Appropriate parties may include: Indiana Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services (DDRS), Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH), a licensing authority, an accrediting agency, an employer, or the office of the attorney general-consumer protection division.
17. Sweet's employees will never give any gifts to employees of the state of Indiana, special state of Indiana appointees, the spouse or un-emancipated child of a state of Indiana employee, the spouse or un-emancipated child of a state of Indiana appointee, an individual potentially receiving services from Sweet, and any guardian or family member of an individual that potentially may choose Sweet as a provider.
18. Sweet's employees will never engage in any activity that could be construed as exploitation of clients or their loved ones for personal gain, be it sexual, financial, or social.
19. Sweet's employees will never use their influence with a client or the client's loved ones in a coercive manner. Employees will not promote dependence, but rather will help clients and their loved ones to empower themselves.
20. Sweet's employees will respect the rights and views of their colleagues and coworkers and treat them in good faith.
21. Sweet's employees will do no harm to any client or their loved ones physically, psychologically, or verbally nor will they tolerate similar behavior from others towards clients.
22. Sweet's employees will not use gift giving to an individual and/or their guardian, family members, or advocates as a means to entice them to stay with the company in a manipulative manner. If a gift is over \$25, the employee must divulge to their supervisor the intent to give such a gift and have approval to do so. There may be times in which Sweet will present a client with an item of necessity. This is not to be considered an act of gift giving, but a responsibility that Sweet feels it owes to all its clients and families.
23. Sweet's employees will remain aware of their own professional skills and limitations. They will never attempt to counsel or advise a client or the client's loved ones on matters not within the employee's own area of expertise. If an employee does not have expertise in an area, then they will refer the client to other programs, individuals, or entities that can assist.
24. Sweet will never allow for nepotism while conducting, reviewing, or at any point during an investigation into an allegation of abuse or neglect. Friends and relatives of an alleged perpetrator are prohibited from engaging in these types of investigations.



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Types of Services and Staff Members at **Sweet**

Sweet offers a lot of different services to people with disabilities. We focus on assisting people to live their lives the way they choose. We believe that everyone has the right to choose how they want to live. Our job is to use our services to work with people to break down barriers.

Although we may not offer all of the services we are going to talk about in this section, we thought it would be helpful and informative to describe many common services that are available to you. If you have any questions about the services we offer, simply ask anybody who works here to explain them further.

Behavior Support Services

Behavior support is a service that helps people understand and deal with their emotions and feelings. Sometimes people get mad, sad, or stressed out and they don't understand why. When someone doesn't understand his or her emotions, this can make it hard to pay attention at home, school, or work. People who don't understand their emotions may also sometimes make poor choices that may hurt themselves and risk hurting others. Sweet employs "behavior consultants" who can work with a person to help them understand their feelings and have better control over their emotions.

Music Therapy

Music therapy is a service where people use music to work on a bunch of different skills. A music therapist might help a person express their emotions by playing an instrument or writing songs together. A person might also work on improving their muscle strength or hand and eye coordination by playing an instrument. You don't have to play an instrument to enjoy music therapy. A lot of people sing or just listen to music in their music therapy sessions.

Recreational Therapy

Recreational therapy is a service where a recreational therapist works with a person to meet their personal goals through different fun activities. For example, if a person has a goal to get healthy, a recreational therapist may take the client to go swimming or go to a park to play basketball. Another example would be if a client has a goal to make more friends. To work on this goal, a recreational therapist might go with the person to an art class in the community or go to a music concert. Recreational therapy is about being active and having fun doing things you like.

Community Habilitation

Community habilitation is a service where people go into the community to work on their goals. What do they do? Well, that depends on the goals that the person has. For example, if a person has a goal to go shopping for groceries then someone at Sweet would take them to the store and help them do that. Sometimes a small group will go out into the community and work on goals together. For instance, if several people have a goal to explore the community, they might all go visit a museum, go to a ballgame, or check out a new restaurant.

Respite

Respite is a service where a staff person from Sweet gives a parent or a caregiver a break for some time to themselves. For example, let's say that a parent wants to go to a movie and their kid doesn't want to go because the movie sounds really boring. The parent can have someone from Sweet come over to hang out with their kid while they go to a "really boring" movie.

Participant Assistance and Care (PAC)

PAC (rhymes with the word "back") is a service that people can use to get assistance to go out in the community and to get help at home. For example, if a person does not have their driver's license, then someone from Sweet could come over and take them shopping. If a person needs help keeping their apartment clean, then someone could also come over and help them with that. PAC services aren't just for chores. They also can be used for fun things like going out to eat, going to a movie, or visiting with friends.

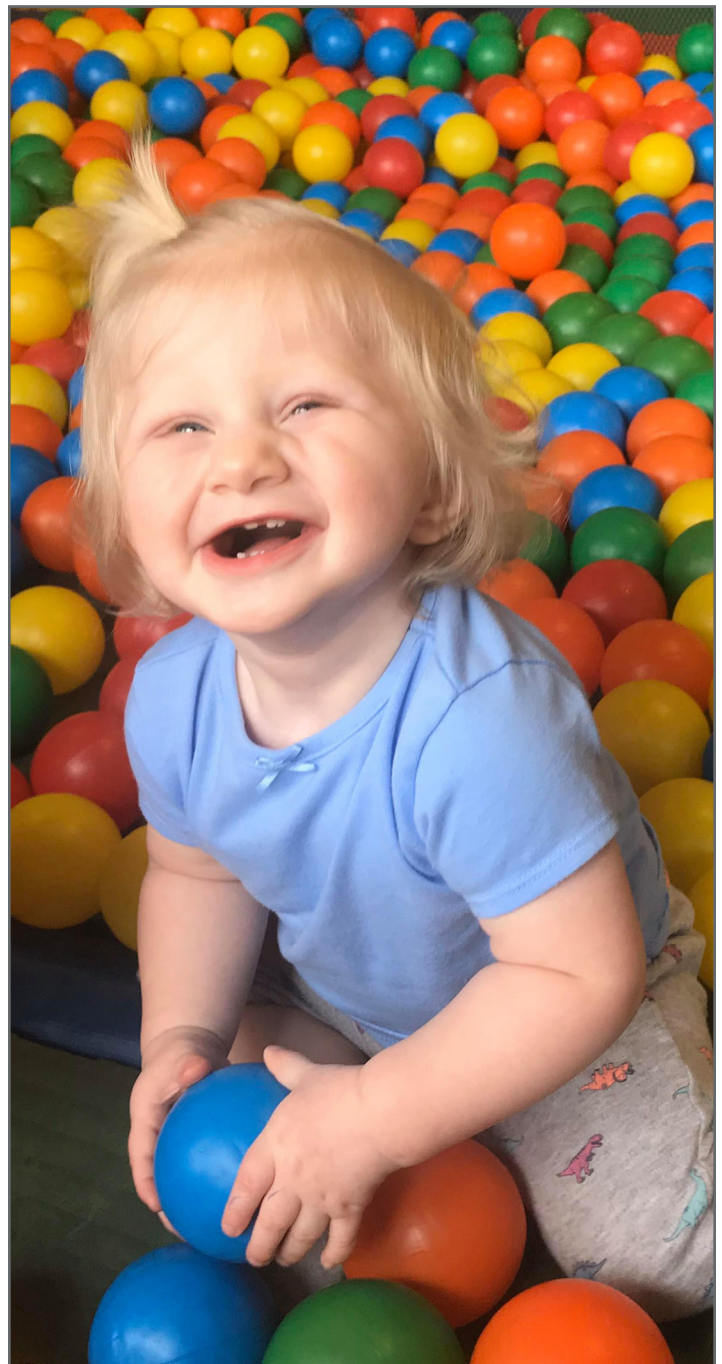
Residential Services

Residential services are a lot like PAC services. They are services for people to get assistance with activities at home (like chores, personal care, or taking medicine) and to go out in the community. You don't have to live on your own to get residential services. A lot of people live with relatives or friends and get these services.

Structured Family Caregiving

Structured family caregiving is a service where a person with disabilities lives all the time with a person who works for Sweet and that person's family in their home. The staff person and their family help the person with developmental disabilities lead the most independent life possible. This means that the friend and their family assist the person with any personal care they need (like showers and eating), takes them out in the community to do fun things, helps with any medications, and helps with doctor's appointments.

"If you are ever interested in adding a new service or want to know more about a service, talk to your case manager."



STAFF MEMBERS AT SWEET

It is important that our clients understand how Sweet is organized and who does what here. Let's look at the different jobs at Sweet.

President

The president at Sweet is in charge of leading the entire company. It is their job to make sure that the company makes good business decisions, does the right thing always, and treats its employees well.

Chief Operations Officer

The chief operations officer, or "COO" for short, is in charge of managing the directors at Sweet and helping the president run the company.

Director of Behavior Supports

The director of behavior supports manages all of the behavior consultants at Sweet. They make sure that all of the behavior consultants are doing their jobs well and helps them with training. If you ever have a problem or a concern with a behavior consultant, then you need to talk to the director of behavior supports.

Director of Music Therapy

The director of music therapy oversees all of the music therapists at Sweet. They train new music therapists and makes sure that all of the music therapists are doing a great job. Anytime that you have a problem or concern with a music therapist, this is the person to call.

Director of Recreational Therapy

The director of recreational therapy is the manager of all of the recreational therapists at Sweet. When a new recreational therapist starts, they help train this person. They also make sure that all of the recreational therapists are doing the best job possible. If there is ever a problem with a recreational therapist, then you need to talk to the director.

Director of Community Supports

The director of community supports is in charge of making sure that the structured family caregiving, PAC, respite, and other community programs run the best way possible. They train all the staff in these programs and make sure that all of the clients are happy and their needs are all met. If you are ever unhappy with any service that you get in the community, then this is the person that you need to talk to.

Representative Payee

A representative payee is someone at Sweet who helps a person manage their money from supplemental security income (SSI). This means that a representative payee pays a person's bills, cashes their social security checks, helps them

with their budget, and makes sure that the person has plenty of money to spend on things that they choose. Sometimes you will hear people call a representative payee a “rep payee.”

Music Therapist

A music therapist works with people to use music to achieve their goals. Since everyone’s goals are different, this can mean that a music therapist might help a person express their emotions playing an instrument or writing a song. A person might also have a goal to improve their muscle strength and a music therapist can work with them by playing an instrument. You don’t have to play an instrument to get music therapy. A lot of people sing or listen to music in their music therapy sessions.

Direct Support Professional (DSP)

Direct support professionals are people who work with people with disabilities in their homes or in the community. A direct support professional does all kinds of things like helping people go shopping, taking people to activities in the community, assisting with giving

medicine, and helping people take baths. Basically, anything that a person needs assistance with, a direct support professional is there to help! You may hear people use the letters “DSP” when they talk about direct support professionals. It just a shorter way to say direct support professional. DSPs are some of the most important people in the world when it comes to assisting folks with disabilities.

Behavior Consultant

Sometimes people get mad, sad, or stressed out and they don’t understand why. When someone doesn’t understand his or her emotions, this can get make it hard to pay attention at home, school, or work. People who don’t understand their emotions can also sometimes make poor choices that can hurt themselves or others. A “behavior consultant” is someone who can work with a person to help them understand their feelings and have better control over their emotions.

.....
“Remember: if you ever have a problem or concern you can talk to any staff member at Sweet and they will help you.”





YOUR RIGHTS

Rights are freedoms that people have that can't be taken away by anybody. You have rights as a person and as a client of Sweet. It is very important that you understand these rights. If you ever have any questions about what these rights are or need them explained in detail, ask anybody who works at Sweet. Later on, we will talk about what happens if anybody ever tries to take away one of these rights. This part of the handbook may seem long, but we really want you to understand your freedoms. **Remember: it doesn't matter if you have a guardian, power of attorney, or other legal representative, you still have rights as a citizen.**

Freedom from All Abuse, Neglect, Mistreatment, or Exploitation

This is one of your most important rights. No one (not even your friends and people you love) ever has the right to do any of these things:

- Hit you, pinch you, scratch you, bite you, or any other thing that hurts your body
- Hold you down or tie you up so that you can't move
- Give you any type of medicine or alcohol that makes you sleepy or feel weird
- Put you in a room or place that you can't get out of on your own
- Touch you in your private areas or make you touch their private areas. Anytime a person touches you and it makes you feel uncomfortable, you need to let someone know
- Say something or do something that makes you feel scared, feel bad about yourself, or embarrassed. Take things away from you like food, drinks, going to the bathroom, doing things you like, sleeping, getting medical help, getting medicine, or going to the doctor
- Deny care. For example, if you need help feeding yourself or taking showers, no one has the right to refuse to help you as a punishment



- Make you do a job or work for free. This doesn't mean chores. For example, it means if someone made you go cut a neighbor's grass without getting anything in return
- Make you feel bad or mistreated in any way
- Take your money or your personal property

The Right of Respect, Dignity, and Individuality

You have the right to never be treated rudely and the right to always be treated politely. It also means that you have the freedom to be yourself by choosing your own clothes, expressing your own beliefs, and having your own opinions.

Right to Happiness

Everyone is allowed to find things to do and be around people that make them happy. What makes someone happy is different for every person, but here are some examples of what this can mean. You have the right to eat and drink what you like, watch movies and TV shows that you like, play video games that you like, go where you want in the community, join any club or sporting team that you want, listen to music that you like, live where you want to, and be included in your healthcare decisions. Just like everyone else, there are limits to what you can do to be happy. You can't do anything illegal or anything that hurts other people. Sometimes people may not be allowed to do certain things that hurt themselves either.

If someone does something over and over again to himself or herself that is harmful, they may have what is called a "restriction" put into place. A restriction is when something is taken away or someone isn't allowed to do something anymore. This is only done if a person is in danger and several meetings are held by a lot of people to talk about the restriction. Here are some examples. If a person is sad and wants to hurt their body, then things like knives and razors might be locked up. Another example would be if a person has problems swallowing and can't eat peanut butter because they might choke. If the person really likes peanut butter and might try to eat it anyway and risk death, then peanut butter may not be allowed in the house.

The Right to Privacy

This means a lot of different things. First, it means that everyone has the right to have time alone without anyone around. It also means that everyone has the right to be alone with another person or group of people without someone spying on you. Another thing that it means is that you are allowed to send emails, get mail, or have phone conversations on your own without someone snooping in your business. Sometimes someone may not be allowed to do some of these things, though, because it would be dangerous for themselves or other people. For example, if

a person wanted to themselves, then it would not be a good idea to leave that person alone.

The Right to Confidentiality

You have the right for all of your business to be kept private. In other words, no one at Sweet should ever talk about your disabilities, medical info, or any personal information without you or a guardian's permission.

The Right to Have Access to Personal Advocacy, Representation, and to File a Grievance

Everyone has the right to speak to their advocate (a person who sticks up for you), lawyer, or advocacy agency (a company that sticks up for people with disabilities) at any time. No one can stop you from talking to someone outside of Sweet if you are having a problem. You also have the right to file a grievance against Sweet at any time. This means that if anybody at Sweet does something that you do not like, then you can do something about it by writing a complaint. We will talk about how to do this in the next section of the handbook.

Right to Refuse Treatment and/or Medications

You have the freedom to say no to any medications or medical treatments (like having a bandage changed). At Sweet, we will explain to you exactly what will happen if you say no to a medicine or a treatment so that you can make an informed decision. We will ask you three times. After the third time, we will not ask you again. At Sweet, we want everyone to be safe and healthy. If a person refuses medicines or treatments a lot, we might ask the person to find another provider. It hurts us too much to see someone do harm to themselves.

Right to Assume Appropriate Risks

Some other words for 'risk' are chance or gamble. This right means that you have the freedom to take safe chances. You have the freedom to succeed or fail. Succeeding and failing is part of being independent and growing as a person. The word appropriate is in this right because it means that the chance has to be safe and can't endanger others.

Right to Environmental Access and Personal Dress

You have the right to live in a safe, comfortable, and normal home. You have the right to go wherever you like in your home, as long as it is a shared space. However, you don't have the freedom to go into rooms that are private to others, like someone else's bedroom or bathroom. You also have the right to dress as you like, cut your hair how you like, and wear makeup how you like.

Rights as a Citizen

A citizen is a person who lives in a country. Since you live in America, you are an American citizen. This means you have the freedom to express your beliefs, protest, and vote. Just because your friends, parents, or relatives think or believe something, doesn't mean that you have to think or believe that way. You are your own person. If you ever need help registering to vote or a ride to go vote, please let someone know at Sweet and we will get you there!

Right to Work in a Fair Manner

You have the right to have a job that pays you at least minimum wage. No one ever has the right to make you do a job and not pay you. You may want to volunteer at a place, like an animal shelter or nursing home. This is different from having a job, though. Volunteers never get paid, but choose to spend their time at a place because it makes them feel good.

Right to Practice Faith

You have the right to go to any church, temple, synagogue, or any other place of worship that you want to. No one should ever make you go to a church that you don't want to or ever make you feel bad about going to a church you like.

Right to Pursue Educational Pursuits

You are allowed to take any school course or class out in the community that you want.

Informed Consent

Informed consent means that you are allowed to have all decisions explained to you in a way that you can understand. After a decision is explained to you, then you have the freedom to say yes or no to the decision. For example, let's say you go into the hospital and a doctor tells you you need a surgery. You have the right to have this surgery explained to you until you are able to understand. Then you have the right to say yes or no to the surgery.

The Right to Individualized Support

Everyone is different. You have the freedom to have your own goals and have your own plan to reach them.

The Right to a Periodic Review by Qualified Persons

This is a fancy way to say that you have the right for your support plan and goals to be looked at by your team anytime you would like. If you ever want to change any part of your plan (like one of your goals), you just need to let someone know and we will take care of the rest.

Right to Individual Records and Access by Legal Representatives

You and/or your legal representative (guardian, power of attorney, or lawyer) have the freedom to look at any of your paperwork that Sweet keeps at any time.

Right to Not Participate in Research Projects

If Sweet ever works with a college or a person who studies working with people with disabilities, you have the right to refuse to participate in the study.

Right to Personal Finance Management

This means that you have the right to manage your own money or get assistance from someone else. If Sweet is in charge of managing your money, you have the right at any time to see how much money you have and what it is being spent on.

Right to Program Information Access

Any time that you want to know about the programs that you participate in, someone at Sweet or your case manager



will tell you anything that you want to know. This means explaining services to you and talking about how they are paid for.

Right to Transfer or Discharge from Services

If you ever want to switch from Sweet to another provider of services, then you may do this at any time. Your case manager can tell you all about how to do this. You don't have to tell us, but we would like to know why if you decide to leave. Another right that you have is the right to stop services at any time. This means telling the State of Indiana that you no longer want any assistance from the waiver program. This is a major decision that you would want to have meetings and talk a lot about.



Rights Violations and Our Complaint Procedure



What Do I Do If Someone Violates My Rights?

If someone ever violates your rights or you think they might have violated your rights, you need to let someone know right away. This person can be anyone that you trust: a friend, a family member, your case manager, or even a trusted staff member. Remember that no one will know your rights have been violated unless you speak up! You have our word that if you let someone at Sweet know that your rights have been violated that we will do everything in our power to help you, including helping you get a lawyer if that is what is needed.

What Do I Do if I Have a Complaint About Something at Sweet?

We try hard to make sure that everybody is happy at Sweet, but want you to know what to do if you ever have a problem or are unhappy. This can mean that someone at Sweet has done something that you didn't like, hurt your feelings, or taken away one of your rights. It can also mean there is a way that we do things at Sweet that you don't like. If you ever have a problem or complaint, we want you to mention it! You will never get in trouble or punished for letting us know that you have a concern. We will work with you to get the problem solved in 14 days.

If you ever have a problem or a complaint with Sweet, here is what you do and what you can expect:

1. All complaints have to be written down or audio-recorded. The reasons we want you to write it down or audio-record it are because this way we can make sure that we understand it and can accurately share it with people who need to know. If you have trouble writing or don't have a way to record audio, no problem! Ask your case manager, a friend, or anyone you trust to help you. If you can't find anyone, then you should ask the person at Sweet that you trust the most to help you find someone to help you write or record the complaint. We don't want someone at Sweet to help you write or record it because we think this might make you feel uncomfortable. After you write the problem down or audio record it, then you or

- someone you trust can give it to anybody at Sweet.
2. After we get the complaint, we will spend the next couple of days talking about it and finding out how we can solve the problem. After that is done, we will write you a letter back about what we did to fix the problem.
 3. If you think that we didn't fix the problem, then you or someone assisting you needs to write back a letter. The letter just needs to say why you think the problem wasn't fixed. Your letter will then be taken to a group of people called the Human Rights Committee at Sweet. Their job is to make sure that everyone at Sweet is being treated well. The Human Rights Committee will then send you a note back that says that they got your complaint and may ask to talk to you and look at your files. Then they will spend the next several days looking into the problem and write you a letter back telling you how they will fix the problem.
 4. If you still don't think that we fixed the problem, then you get together your complaint and all of the letters we sent you talking about the problem. Then, you send everything to the Chief Operations Officer at Sweet. The Chief Operations Officer will then take several days to look into the problem and talk to a bunch of different people about it. After the Chief Operations Officer finishes up, they will write you a letter about how the problem will be fixed and send a letter to the Human Rights Committee to make sure that they know all of the details, too.
 5. If this doesn't solve it, then you need to call the Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services to talk about the problem. If you don't know the number, you can ask someone at Sweet or your case manager. When you call, ask to talk to somebody about a problem you are having with waiver services. Your case manager can also help out with this.



Client Council

Sweet believes that any social service agency dedicated to people with disabilities should always have people with disabilities shaping and developing programming, providing oversight, contributing ideas, providing input, and discussing concerns. In other words, we believe firmly in the disability rights slogan, “Nothing about us without us!” To ensure that people with disabilities are always a part of Sweet’s development and growth, we have in place a client council that is made up of individuals whom we serve.

The client council has three main duties: Duty of Care, Duty of Loyalty, and Duty of Obedience. Let’s look at each one of these closer to describe what they mean.

- **Duty of Care-** This means that the council should always make sure that Sweet is taking care of all of its clients, using its facilities in a way that supports the disability community, and that Sweet is always expressing good will and promoting inclusion in the community.
- **Duty of Loyalty-** The client council also has the duty to ensure that Sweet’s activities and services are always advancing our mission to support people with disabilities to achieve their goals, live how they want to live, go where they want to go, do what they want to do, and be who they want to be.
- **Duty of Obedience-** Sweet wants everyone to ensure that we stay true to not only the law, but also to make sure that we are following our own mission, vision, and values. The client council has the duty to make sure that Sweet’s obedience always lies with people with disabilities.

Rather than assigning roles to certain people and making the council limited to a select few representatives, the council is open to all who wish to be a council member. The council meets once a month. If you are not able to attend in person, let someone with Sweet know and we can arrange for you to either call in or attend via webchat.



Stopping Services at Sweet

What do I do if I no longer want services at Sweet?

Above everything else, Sweet wants you to be happy and successful. If for some reason you aren't happy, you aren't reaching your goals like you want, or you just want to try a new provider, you can leave Sweet at any time. Although we will be sad that you are leaving, we will never hold it against you or make you feel bad about your decision.

If you ever decide that you want to move on, you simply need to let your case manager know that you would like to look for another provider. Your case manager will let you know about other companies that you can look at. You don't have to let anybody at Sweet know that you are going to leave, but we would like to know in case there is anything that we need to change or any way we can improve services.

What happens if Sweet decides to stop my services?

Although it is a rare thing, there may be a time that Sweet decides that it is in the best interest of the client and Sweet to stop providing services. When a provider decides that it is going to stop serving a person, it gives the person what is called a 60-day notice letter. You may hear people call this "serving a person notice" or "giving someone a 60-day notice."

When a client gets a 60-day notice, this means that they have 60-days to find a new provider. The person's case manager will then help them find a new provider to provide services like the services they were getting from Sweet. Sweet will also help in any way it can to find the person another provider that will be a good fit. If at the end of the 60-days the client has not found a new provider, Sweet will continue to provide services until they find a new one.

Some possible reasons that Sweet might stop services for a client include:

- Sweet can no longer meet someone's medical needs. For instance, if an accident or something else happened to a client that meant they needed a nurse all of the time to care for them, Sweet would be unable to meet this need.
- If a client does not seem to be interested in receiving services any more by not wanting to participate. For instance, the person might cancel a whole lot or seem annoyed that a staff member is working with them.
- A client threatens, harasses, seriously injures, or makes sexual advances to a staff member.

Notice of Privacy Practices

This last section of the handbook is about how Sweet is not allowed to share information about you to anyone unless you give us permission. It also explains that you have the right to look at any information that we have about you.

Sweet is required by law to maintain the privacy of your health information and to provide you with notice of its legal duties and privacy practices with respect to your health information. If you have questions about any part of this notice or if you want more information about the privacy practices at Sweet please contact:

HIPAA Privacy Office
123 West Court Avenue
Jeffersonville, IN 47130

I. How Sweet May Use or Disclose Your Health Information

Sweet collects health information from you and stores it in a chart that is your medical record. The medical record is the property of Sweet, but the information in the medical record belongs to you. Sweet protects the privacy of your health information. Except for the purposes described below, we will use and disclose health information only with your written permission. You may revoke such permission at any time by writing to our Privacy Officer.

The law permits Sweet to use or disclose your health information for the following purposes:

1. **Treatment.** We may use personal health information about you to provide you with medical treatment or services. We may disclose information about you to doctors, psychologists, pharmacists, nurses, social workers, therapists, technicians, or other personnel involved in providing services to you. Different departments of Sweet may also share medical information about you in order to coordinate the various services you need.
2. **Payment.** We may use and disclose personal health information about you so that the treatment and services you receive at Sweet or other providers from whom you receive treatment or services may be billed to, and payment may be collected from you, an insurance company, a third party, Medicaid, or other payer. To the extent possible, our staff and outside contractors or consultants will make reasonable efforts to assure that the use and disclosure of your personal health information is conducted in a secure and confidential manner.
3. **Regular Health Care Operations.** Sweet may use and disclose personal health information about you for agency operations. These uses and disclosures are necessary to manage the operation and to monitor your quality of care. For example, we may use personal health information to evaluate our agency's services, including the performance of our staff. We may also use personal health information for training purposes or to develop new policies, procedures, or

programs that may benefit you or other individuals we support. Your personal health information may be shared with survey reviewers, auditors, and other accreditation bodies in accordance with current and on-going procedures.

4. **To Avert a Serious Threat to Health or Safety.** We may use and disclose health information when necessary to prevent a serious threat to your health and safety or the health and safety of the public or another person. Disclosures, however, will be made only to someone who may be able to help prevent the threat.

5. **Business Associates.** We may also use and disclose personal health information for the purpose of providing services, administering those services, and processing transactions requested by you. We may also disclose personal health information to affiliates and to business associates of Sweet if they need to receive personal health information to provide a service to us and will agree to abide by specific HIPAA rules relating to the protection of personal health information. Examples of business associates include: billing companies, data processing companies, or companies that provide general administrative services.

6. **Information Provided to You.**

7. **Directory.** We may list your name, where you are located in our facilities, your general medical condition and your religious affiliation in our directory. This information may be provided to members of the clergy. This information, except for your religious affiliation, may be provided to other people who ask for you by name. If you do not want us to list this information in our directory and provide it to clergy and others, you must tell us that you object.

8. **Notification and Communication with Family.** We may disclose your health information to notify or assist in notifying a family member, your personal representative, or another person responsible for your care about your location, your general condition, or in the event of your death. If you are able and available to agree or object, we will give you the opportunity to object prior to making this notification. If you are unable or unavailable to agree or object, our health professionals will use their best judgment in communication with your family and others.

9. **Required by Law.** As required by law, we may use and disclose your health information.





10. **Public Health.** As required by law, we may disclose your health information to public health authorities for various purposes. These activities generally include disclosures to prevent or control disease, injury or disability; report births and deaths; report child abuse or neglect; report reactions to medications or problems with products; notify people of recalls of products they may be using; report a person who may have been exposed to a disease or may be at risk for contracting or spreading a disease or condition. We may also contact and report to the appropriate government authority if we believe a patient has been the victim of abuse, neglect or domestic violence. We will only make this disclosure if you agree or when required or authorized by law.

11. **Health Oversight Activities.** We may disclose your health information to health agencies during the course of audits, investigations, inspections, licensure, and other proceedings. These activities are necessary for the government to monitor the health care system, government programs, and compliance with civil rights laws.

12. **Judicial and Administrative Proceedings.** If you are involved in a lawsuit or a dispute, we may disclose health information in response to a court or administrative order. We also may disclose health information in response to a subpoena, discovery request, or other lawful process by someone else involved in the dispute, but only if efforts have been made to tell you about the request or to obtain an order protecting the information requested.

13. **Law Enforcement.** We may release health information if asked by a law enforcement official if the information is: (1) in response to a court order, subpoena, warrant, summons or similar process; (2) limited information to identify or locate a suspect, fugitive, material witness, or missing person; (3) about the victim of a crime even if, under certain very limited circumstances, we are unable to obtain the person's agreement; (4) about a death we believe may be the result of criminal conduct; (5) about criminal conduct on our premises; and (6) in an emergency to report a crime, the location of the crime or victims, or the identity, description or location of the person who committed the crime.

14. **Deceased Person Information.** We may disclose your health information to coroners, medical examiners, and funeral directors in the event of your death.

15. **Organ Donation.** If you are an organ donor, we may use or release health information to organizations that handle organ procurement or other entities engaged in procurement, banking or transportation of organs, eyes or tissues to facilitate organ, eye or tissue donation and transplantation in the event of your death.

16. Research. We may disclose your health information to researchers conducting research that has been approved by Sweet *only with your express permission in writing*.

17. Public Safety. We may disclose your health information to appropriate persons in order to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the health or safety of a particular person or the general public.

18. Specialized Government Functions. We may disclose your health information for military, national security, prisoner, and government benefits purposes.

19. Worker's Compensation. We may release health information for workers' compensation or similar programs. These programs provide benefits for work-related injuries or illness.

20. Marketing. We may contact you to provide appointment reminders or to give you information about other treatments or health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you. Prior authorization may be required.

21. Health plan. We may disclose your health information to the sponsor of your health plan.

22. Change of ownership. In the event that Sweet is sold or merged with another organization, your health information and record will become the property of the new owner.

II. When Sweet May Not Use or Disclose Your Health Information

Except as directed in this Notice of Privacy Practices, Sweet will not use or disclose your health information without your written authorization. If you do authorize Sweet to use or disclose your health information for another purpose, you may revoke your authorization in writing at any time.

III. Your Health Information Rights

1. You have the right to request restrictions on certain uses and disclosures of your health information. Sweet is not required to agree to the restriction that you requested.

2. You have the right to receive your health information through a reasonable alternative means or at an alternative location. For example, you can ask that we only contact you at work or by mail. To request confidential communications, you must make your request in writing to:

HIPAA Privacy Officer
123 West Court Avenue
Jeffersonville, IN 47130



.....
“The most important thing to remember about HIPAA is that YOU are always the one in control of who sees your health-related information.”

Please request how or where you wish to be contacted. We will accommodate all reasonable requests.

.....
“If you feel that information about you has been shared with people that it was not supposed to be shared with, tell a staff member at Sweet immediately.”

3. You have the right to inspect and copy your health information that may be used to make decisions about your care or payment for your care. This includes medical and billing records, other than psychotherapy notes. To inspect and copy this health information, you must make your request, in writing, to the Human Resources Department. We have up to 30 days to make your protected health information available to you and we may charge you a reasonable fee for the costs of copying, mailing, or other supplies associated with your request. We may not charge you a fee if you need the information for a claim for benefits under the Social Security Act or any other state or federal needs-based benefit program. We may deny your request in certain limited circumstances. If we do deny your request, you have the right to have the denial reviewed by a licensed healthcare professional that was not directly involved in the denial of your request, and we will comply with the outcome of the review.

4. You have the right to request that Sweet amend your health information that is incorrect or incomplete. Sweet is not required to change your health information and will provide you with information about Sweet’s denial and how you can disagree with the denial.

5. You have the right to receive an accounting of disclosures of your health information made by Sweet except that Sweet does not have to account for the disclosures described in parts 1 (treatment), 2 (payment), 3 (health care operations), 5 (business associates), 6 (information provided to you), 7 (directory listings), and 17 (certain government functions) of Section I of this Notice of Privacy Practices. You have the right to request a list of certain disclosures we made of Health Information for purposes other than treatment, payment and health care operations or for which you provided written authorization. To request an accounting of disclosures, you must make your request in writing to the Human Resources Department.





IV. Changes to this Notice of Privacy Practices

Sweet reserves the right to amend this Notice of Privacy Practices at any time in the future, and to make the new provisions effective for all information that it maintains, including information that was created or received prior to the date of such amendment. Until such amendment is made, Sweet is required by law to comply with this Notice. You will receive a copy of any revised notice from Sweet by mail or by e-mail, but only if e-mail delivery is offered by Sweet and you agree to such a delivery.

V. Complaints

Complaints about this Notice of Privacy Practices or how Sweet handles your health information should be directed to:

Sweet
HIPAA Privacy Officer
123 West Court Avenue
Jeffersonville, IN 47130

If you are not satisfied with the manner in which this office handles a complaint, you may submit a formal complaint to:

Department of Health and Human Resources
Office of Civil Rights
Hubert H. Humphrey Building
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Room 509 F HHH Building
Washington, DC 20201

You may also address your complaint to one of the regional Offices for Civil Rights. A list of these offices can be found online at: <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/>



**“THE PURPOSE
OF LIFE IS TO
CONTRIBUTE IN
SOME WAY TO MAKE
THINGS BETTER.”**

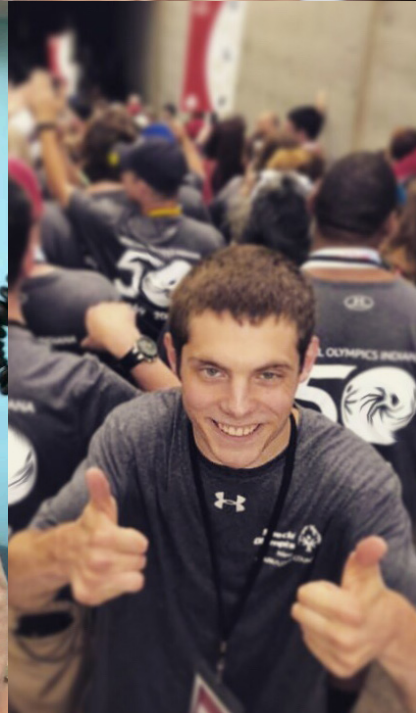
-ROBERT F. KENNEDY





**“THERE ARE SOME
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EVERYTHING ABOUT US.”**

**-BETTY WILLIAMS,
HOOSIER DISABILITY
RIGHTS ACTIVIST**



SWEET