

## POLICY AD-01-E

Title: <b>Companion</b>						Number: <b>AD-01-E</b>		
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Signature: Linda August								
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### A. POLICY:

1. The Social Service Department is responsible for co-ordinating companions at Donald Berman Maimonides and ensuring that the policies and care standards are respected.
2. The resident or family member remains the employer of the companion and is therefore responsible for the companion's hiring, schedule, payments, and **for ensuring that the companion conforms to Donald Berman Maimonides policies.**
3. Any serious concern with the companion of a resident should be brought to the attention of the social worker on the unit.
4. Employees of the centre may not work as companions at Donald Berman Maimonides.
5. All companions will be expected to wear at all times an identification tag that will be provided by the Centre.

### B. PROCEDURE:

1. Every companion must meet and be approved by the social worker of the unit before starting the assignment.
2. Every companion must be properly registered into the **Companion Central Registry** of the Social Service Department before starting any assignment at Donald Berman Maimonides.
3. Every companion must read the **Companions Brochure** and respect all its regulations.
4. The Companion's Central Registry will keep and update the following information: name, address, phone number(s), languages spoken, previous experience as a companion, specific history of experience as a companion at Donald Berman Maimonides (name of resident and dates), and actual schedule.

5. All companions will be expected to wear at all times an identification tag that will be provided by the Centre.

## **DEFINITION**

### **COMPANION:**

A companion is someone hired by a resident or a member of his/her family, at their expense, to attend to the social needs of the resident.

## **GUIDELINES**

These guidelines were developed to provide a framework for residents, family members, companions, and staff regarding the use of companions at Donald Berman Maimonides.

The Centre's role is to help residents maintain their optimal level of autonomy. Companions work in partnership with residents, families and staff. They are not intended to replace staff.

### **MINIMAL QUALIFICATIONS TO BE A COMPANION:**

- 18 years of age or over.
- Experience working with the elderly.
- Good health.
- Ability to speak English and/or French as well as language of resident.
- Respectful of Kashrut – (Jewish dietary laws).
- Willing to work with Centre's staff and be respectful of Centre's policies and procedures.
- Employees of the Centre, their families and relatives of residents are not permitted to work as companions.

### **HIRING AND REGISTERING A COMPANION**

Once a companion is chosen, the resident or family must contact the floor social worker to fill out the Companion Registration Form. Newly admitted residents (families) arriving with companions will be required to fill out a Companion Registration Form as part of the admissions' process.

If the companion has been replaced, or there is a change in the companion's schedule, the floor social worker should be contacted to fill out the Companion

Registration Form, or update the form, if the companion had been previously registered.

This form provides the Center with the companion's name, address, telephone number and current work schedule. The companion is expected to advise the resident/family and social worker of any changes to the information. After completing the form, it must be submitted to the social worker who in turn, will give the companion an identification badge, after registering the individual in a data base maintained by the head of Archives and Patient Information.

The Companion Guidelines will be given to the resident or family, and reviewed with the companion. The companion will be asked to sign the Companion Registration Form that indicates they have been given the guidelines.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The following is a list of responsibilities that a companion **may** perform for a resident while at Maimonides:

- Provide social contact and comfort.
- Talk and stimulate interaction with resident.
- Take resident to centre-wide activities and/or programs on the resident's floor (with approval of nursing staff).
- Accompany resident on outings.
- Take resident to appointments:
  - Hairdresser/barber
  - Synagogue
  - Physiotherapy, occupational therapy, art therapy, therapeutic recreation
  - Medical appointments
- Perform other tasks such as:
  - Resident laundry
  - Tidy-up resident's room
  - Manicure
  - Make-up
  - Combing hair
  - Tidy drawers and cupboards

Following approval by designated inter-disciplinary team members, a companion **may**:

- Assist in the feeding of a resident who does not have swallowing difficulties, while encouraging independence in this activity.
- Assist in the feeding of a resident who has swallowing difficulties **only** when approved by dysphagia team.
- Walk resident who requires only visual supervision and/or physical guidance. Physical support of resident while walking is **not** permitted.

## **DUTIES WHICH A COMPANION IS NOT PERMITTED TO PERFORM:**

- Nursing care functions such as washing, dressing, toileting, transferring or positioning a resident on or off a chair, wheelchair, bed or toilet and changing incontinence briefs.
- Assisting nursing staff and/or family with the above-mentioned functions

## **RESPONSIBILITY REGARDING COMPANIONS:**

- The resident or his/her family member is the employer of the companion and is therefore responsible for the companion's schedule, payments, and for ensuring that the companion conforms to the policies of Donald Berman Maimonides.
- Donald Berman Maimonides is responsible for establishing minimum standards for companions ensuring that approval by the designated interdisciplinary team members is given to a companion for specific tasks as indicated above.
- Donald Berman Maimonides does not take responsibility for injuries caused to companions while working within the Centre, on its grounds or on trips away from the Centre's facilities.

**Social service is mandated to ensure that a companion respects the policies and care standards as determined by the Centre.**

**Should a companion not conform to the Centre's policies, Donald Berman Maimonides reserves the right to address the issue immediately and, depending upon the concern, may ask the individual to leave the premises. In such cases, the resident and/or family will be informed as quickly as possible. A companion who is asked to leave under such circumstances, will be denied further access to the Centre.**

## **CONCERNS:**

Any changes in the resident observed by the companion **must be** immediately brought to the attention of the resident's primary nurse. This is to ensure that issues can be addressed promptly and that families receive correct and up-to-date information concerning their family member.

Any concerns about the companion of a resident, should be brought to the attention of the resident's primary nurse, the head nurse, the nursing coordinator or social worker.

## **DONALD BERMAN MAIMONIDES COMPANION DIRECTIVES**

### **1. DURING WORKING HOURS:**

- Companions must wear their name tags at all times.
- Companions must follow all policies of the Centre.
- Companions may only work for one resident at a given time.
- Use of private property of any resident (telephone, television) is prohibited unless invited by resident or resident's family.
- Companions may not enter other residents' rooms unless both residents benefit from these visits and both families are in agreement with this.
- If asked, companions are required to leave the room when interventions by staff take place.
- Companions must advise nursing staff before leaving the unit with the resident.
- Companions must be sensitive to the needs of residents when attending large group activities (i.e. when space is limited).
- Use of cell phones is not allowed while on duty.
- Smoking is not permitted in the designated resident smoking areas.
- Companions cannot bring children to work.
- Companions must follow basic rules of respect and courtesy towards residents, staff and visitors.

### **2. DRESS CODE:**

Companions are required to observe the dress code of the Centre, dressing appropriately and maintaining a neat, well-groomed appearance at all times.

### **3. TELEPHONE:**

No incoming calls may be accepted by companions except in case of emergency. Pay phones are available on the first floor.

### **4. SOLICITING:**

Companions are not permitted to solicit work directly from families or residents while on Maimonides' premises. If they are available for work, they

should inform a social worker who will then share this information with social service staff and families who are looking for a companion.

**IT IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN TO SELL GOODS, PRODUCTS OR SERVICES ON CENTRE PREMISES  
THE CENTRE RESERVES THE RIGHT TO VERIFY ALL PACKAGES**

## **5. CONFIDENTIALITY:**

Companions must respect rules of confidentiality by not disclosing private information about their resident to anyone else besides staff attending the resident or the resident's designated representative.

## **6. RESIDENT OUTINGS:**

If a companion wishes to take a resident off Centre's grounds, he/she must have the permission of the nursing staff and must sign-out on the appropriate form in the chart and sign-in when the resident is returned.

## **7. RESPECT OF RESIDENTS:**

All companions must follow basic rules of respect and courtesy towards others, including:

### **LANGUAGE:**

In view of the fact that many of our residents are confused, hearing other languages can be very disorienting to them. Therefore, to minimize confusion and maximize stimulation, the companion is expected to speak only English, French or the language preferred by the resident when in the presence of the resident.

## **8. FEEDING/EATING:**

- **Companions are expected to take the Dining Experience training.**
- Companions are not permitted to feed or give food to residents with whom they don't work.
- During therapeutic recreation activities, companions may not eat before all residents are served.
- Companions may not eat resident's meals.

- Companions must respect the rules of Kashrut (e.g. not bringing in food from outside the Centre into the resident's dining room, etc.).
- Companions are not permitted to buy food or snacks for residents unless authorized to do so.

## **9. ATTENTION TO RESIDENTS:**

During their working hours, companions are requested to devote their entire hours and attention to the needs and well-being of the resident with whom they work. Companions must refrain from socializing with friends or being involved in tasks not related to the resident.

## **10. ABSENCE FROM WORK:**

Companions must inform the resident's family and nurse or social worker when they are unable to come to work. If a companion has found a temporary replacement, this information must also be communicated to the family and nurse or social worker ahead of time. The temporary replacement must be a companion who is registered with the Social Service Department.

## **11. REASONS TO RESTRICT A COMPANION'S ACCESS TO THE CENTRE**

- The companion is not respecting the policies of the Centre.
- Willful neglect or any form of abuse towards any resident or staff.
- Disrespect of the resident's confidentiality.

**In such a situation, a companion will be restricted access to the Centre.  
The companion will no longer be able to visit any person in the Centre.  
The Resident/Family will be notified should this occur.**