

# Essential Elements for the Building Full Lives Service Model

**B**uilding Full Lives (BFL) is an individualized community-based day service model that creates pathways to competitive integrated employment (CIE) by supporting people in small group activities, usually involving 3-4 people and one staff, to explore their communities, identify their preferences and goals, develop life skills and contribute to/be involved in their communities in meaningful ways. BFL services can also be a wraparound option that expands social lives and well-being and helps sustain employment for people already working in CIE. Additionally, it can be an HCBS compliant service option for people who do not want to work in CIE.



BFL services embrace an Employment First philosophy by supporting working-age people to consider, learn about, and make progress toward CIE – not forcing them to work in CIE but keeping CIE ‘on the table’ as an option, should they so choose at some point in their lives. The types, length, and frequency of exploration/exposure and skill building activities are based on individualized goals and preferences.

BFL supports are very different than traditional day and prevocational services models. Staff providing BFL supports have had to shift their paradigm about people with disabilities and learn new approaches for supporting people to become genuinely involved in what their communities have to offer. These service providers take on a high level of accountability and strive to see people gain independence and succeed in every way possible.

## A. BFL services happen in the community.

1. All supports occur in typical/natural places in the community.
2. The agency has “meet up” and “drop off” locations in the community, so people do not have to be transported to a facility-based program to access services.
3. Staff engage in initial and ongoing Community Mapping – both broadly/generally and on an individualized basis.
4. Staff are given initial and regular opportunities to learn how to provide person-centered, meaningful supports in the community.
5. Schedules focus on a mix of volunteerism and community contribution, cultural and enrichment activities, health and wellness, and activities of daily life.
6. People are taught to learn how to safely navigate and use transportation to get around the community.

## B. People are engaged in discovery and exploration opportunities to learn about themselves and the community.

1. Staff get to know people in both familiar and novel community environments.
2. Staff actively look for and highlight people’s strengths and skills.
3. People are supported to explore and learn about resources and opportunities in their communities (e.g. library, police/fire department, post office, chamber of commerce, job center, community center, fitness clubs, hospital, Kiwanis/Rotary, events, community groups and learning opportunities, businesses, museums, etc.).
4. People are supported to learn about current events and community happenings.
5. Staff take time to reflect with people on their current and emerging interests, skills, preferences and goals.



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### C. Staff provide active, purposeful support.

1. Staff are aware of and focus daily supports on achievement of people's individualized goals.
2. Intentional teaching techniques and systematic instruction are used to teach people a mix of community life skills (hard skills and soft skills).
3. Staff understand their role as "connector" and use strategies to build relationships, natural supports, and genuine inclusion.
4. People are taught how to initiate and engage in social activities and hang out with friends without staff around.
5. Fading plans that lead to increased independence in the community are regularly established and implemented.
6. Staff support people to acquire self-advocacy skills.
7. Staff support people to understand their personal budgets and how to responsibly spend money.
8. People are treated with respect, in age-appropriate ways, and are engaged in age-appropriate activities.

### D. The agency demonstrates accountability and progress through routine, strategic documentation.

1. The community resources and opportunities gleaned through Community Mapping are stored and updated regularly in a database or living document of some kind.
2. Each person has a Positive Personal Profile, which is routinely updated.
3. The service provider uses the Assessment of Skills for Independence or Assessment of Skills for Self-Reliance during initial discovery.
4. The service provider updates the Assessment of Skills for Independence or Assessment of Skills for Self-Reliance every 3-6 months.
5. 2-3 individualized, measurable skill-related goals are established based on the results of the skills assessment and the individual's preferences/priorities.
6. Direct service staff routinely document: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Data on progress toward skill acquisition</li><li>■ Emerging skills</li><li>■ Nature of supports required</li><li>■ Environmental reactions</li><li>■ New interest areas and preferences</li><li>■ Connections people are making</li></ul>
7. Pictures and videos of people demonstrating competence in the community are kept in the person's file, shared with team members, or incorporated into personal profiles and resumes.
8. The agency routinely engages people, family and other stakeholders in measuring and improving the quality of their services.

### E. Planning is highly person-centered.

1. The agency works to establish, educate and engage a person-centered planning team for the people they support.
2. The agency gets input from team members and other important people/key informants in the person's life to complete the skills assessment and Positive Personal Profile (PPP).
3. The skills assessment and PPP drive individualized goal setting and schedule of activities.
4. Goals are reviewed and updated every three to six months.
5. The service provider supports the individual to take a lead role in their planning meanings.
6. A case coordinator/manager/service team lead is designated to review and give feedback on documentation completed by direct service providers.
7. The agency has a process in place to identify and prioritize people for CIE services.
8. The agency has a process for transferring information about people to job developers who will be looking for CIE opportunities.
9. Job developers are competent with Customized Employment strategies.