

COMMUNITY SKILLS

VII. AWARENESS OF COMMUNITY AGENCIES AND GOVERNMENT

391.1 BASIC AWARENESS OF GOVERNMENT

The purpose of this skill is to provide client with an overview of government from the local to the federal levels. It is suggested speakers be invited to give presentations about your local and state governments. Instructor is encouraged to add tasks regarding other information pertinent to the local area.

CITY

- "How is our city run — who makes decisions about buildings, streets, parks, etc.?" (City government)
- "What title is given to the head of city government?" (Mayor . . .)
- "What is the current mayor's name?": ■ "How often is the mayor elected?" (Every four years . . .)
- "Where does the city government meet?" (City hall . . .) ■ "Where is the city hall located?":
- "Name two kinds of decisions the city government can make that might affect you." (Transportation, recreation facilities . . .)

COUNTY

- "What are the areas into which our state is divided called?" (Counties . . .)
- "What county do you live in?": ■ "Where is the county seat?":

STATE

- "How is our state run — who makes decisions about the state?" (State government)
- "What title is given to the head of state government?" (Governor)
- "What is the current governor's name?": ■ "How often is the governor elected?" (Every four years)
- "What are the legislative bodies of the state government called?" (State house of representatives and state senate)
- "Where does the state government meet?" (Capitol building . . .)
- "Where is the state capitol located?" (Names capital city):
- "Name two kinds of decisions the state government can make that might affect you." (Taxes, funding for public services . . .)
- "If you have a concern about state government, who can you contact?" (State senator or representative for your district . . .)
- "Who is the state representative for your district?":

FEDERAL

- "How is our country run — who makes decisions about the country?" (Federal government)
- "What title is given to the head of the federal government?" (President)
- "What is the current president's name?": ■ "What is the current vice-president's name?":
- "How often are the president and vice-president elected?" (Every four years)
- "What are the legislative bodies of the federal government called?" (Senate and House of Representatives)
- "Where does the federal government meet?" (Washington, D.C.)
- "Name two kinds of decisions the federal government can make that might affect you." (Taxes, minimum wage, low cost housing . . .)
- "If you have a concern about federal government, who can you contact?" (U.S. Senators for your state, U.S. Representative for your district . . .)
- "Who are the U.S. Senators for our state?": ■ "Who is the U.S. Representative for your district?":

391.2 AWARENESS OF VOTING

- "How old must you be to vote?" (Eighteen) ■ "What do you need to do before you can actually vote?" (Register to vote)
- "Where can you register to vote?":
- "Why is it important to vote?" (Have a voice in government, elect people you believe will work for you . . .)
- For client who is a registered voter**
 - "Which party do you belong to?":
 - "Name two reasons you would need to re-register to vote." (Change of name or address, change of party affiliation, failure to vote in several consecutive elections . . .)
 - "What is a poll?" (Place you go to vote . . .) ■ "Will your poll be the same for each election?" (No) ■ "How can you find out where your poll is located?" (Check newspaper, call election office . . .)
 - "When there is an election, how can you find out about the candidates and issues?" (TV, newspaper, literature that comes in mail, discussion with knowledgeable person . . .)
 - "What is a ballot?" (Paper on which you mark your vote . . .) ■ "If you need assistance marking your ballot, who can help you?":
 - "If you will be out of town on election day, how can you vote?" (Arrange in advance for absentee ballot)

391.3 POLICE DEPARTMENT

It is suggested a speaker be invited to give a presentation about your local police department. Instructor is encouraged to add tasks regarding other information pertinent to the local area.

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POLICE DEPARTMENT (Cont.)

- "What is the police department?" (Agency to call for emergency assistance if you are lost, property is stolen . . .)
- "Give two examples of situations when it would be appropriate to call the police department." (Prowler in yard, property vandalized . . .)
- "In addition to help in emergency situations, name another way the police can assist you." (Give advice on home security, burglary prevention . . .)
- When asked, client locates police department telephone number (Use **skill 385.4** if formal training on calling police department is necessary)
- "If you need help immediately and can't find the police department number, what can you do?" (Call the operator . . .)

392.1 FIRE DEPARTMENT

It is suggested a speaker be invited to give a presentation about your local fire department. Instructor is encouraged to add tasks regarding other information pertinent to the local area.

- "What is the fire department?" (Agency to call if you have a fire or need emergency rescue assistance . . .)
- "Give two examples of situations when it would be appropriate to call the fire department." (House on fire, you smell gas . . .)
- "In addition to help in emergency situations, name another way the fire department can assist you." (Inspect your home for fire safety . . .)
- When asked, client locates fire department telephone number (Use **skill 385.4** if formal training on calling the fire department is necessary)
- "If you need help immediately and can't find the fire department number, what can you do?" (Call the operator . . .)

392.2 ASSOCIATION FOR RETARDED CITIZENS

It is suggested a speaker be invited to give a presentation about the services available through your local chapter of the Association For Retarded Citizens. Instructor is encouraged to add tasks regarding other information pertinent to the local area.

- "What is the National Association For Retarded Citizens?" (Organization with local chapters throughout the U.S. to help mentally handicapped people in their community . . .)
- "Is there a chapter of the Association For Retarded Citizens in our area?": ■ If yes, "What is it called?":
- "Name three ways the Association For Retarded Citizens can help you." (Advocacy, information and referral, counseling, education, training, housing . . .)

392.3 PUBLIC WELFARE

This skill is designed for a client who is a recipient of public welfare funds or who is receiving service at the habilitation facility that is funded by public welfare. Instructor is encouraged to add tasks regarding other information pertinent to the individual client.

- "What is public welfare?" (Agency that helps people with food, housing, training, medical expenses . . .)
- "Who pays for your training at (name of agency)?"
- "Who is your caseworker?": ■ "What is your caseworker's telephone number?":
- Client carries caseworker's business card ■ And presents it upon request
- "Give two examples of situations when it would be appropriate to contact your caseworker." (Change in income, question about payments . . .)

392.4 VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AGENCY

It is suggested a speaker be invited to give a presentation about the services available through your state vocational rehabilitation agency. Instructor is encouraged to add tasks regarding other information pertinent to the local area and/or the individual client.

- "What is the vocational rehabilitation agency?" (Provides job evaluation, counseling, training, placement services for people with disabilities . . .)
- "Are you presently receiving services through the vocational rehabilitation agency?": ■ If yes, "What services are you receiving through VR?": ■ "Who is your VR counselor?": ■ "What is your VR counselor's telephone number?":
- Client carries VR counselor's business card ■ And presents it upon request
- "Give two examples of situations when it would be appropriate to contact your counselor." (Need money for job-related expenses, have problem on the job . . .)

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393.1 STATE EMPLOYMENT DIVISION

It is suggested a speaker be invited to give a presentation about the services available through your state employment division. Instructor is encouraged to add tasks regarding other information pertinent to the local area and/or the individual client.

- "What is the state employment division?" (Agency that helps people who are competitively employable find jobs . . .)
- "What is unemployment compensation?" (Money paid to unemployed workers . . .)
- "Where is the nearest state employment office located?"
- "If you are unemployed, what other agency can you go to for help?" (Vocational rehabilitation . . .)

393.2 PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY

It is suggested a speaker be invited to give a presentation about the services available through your local public health agency. Instructor is encouraged to add tasks regarding other information pertinent to the local area and/or the individual client.

- "What is a public health agency?" (Agency providing free or low-cost medical services . . .)
- "Name two services available at a public health agency." (Immunizations, TB test, family planning, VD test, diagnosis, treatment . . .)
- "If you are ill and cannot afford medical treatment, where can you go for help?" (Public health agency . . .)
- "If your employer requests that you have a TB test, where can you get one?" (Public health, family doctor . . .)
- "If you want information about birth control, where can you go?" (Public health, family doctor . . .)

393.3 POST OFFICE

- "What do you need to put on a letter before you mail it?" (Postage stamp)
- "What will happen if you mail a letter without any postage?" (Post office will not deliver it)
- "What might happen if you mail a letter with insufficient postage?" (May be returned to you, arrive postage due and inconvenience recipient . . .)
- "How much does it cost to mail most letters?"
- "Why do some letters require additional postage?" (Weight, size, special handling like registered mail or special delivery . . .)
- "Where can you buy postage stamps?" (Post office, stamp machine . . .)
- "Where is the post office that is most convenient for you?"
- "Which usually is cheaper — buying stamps at the post office or buying them in a stamp machine?" (Post office)
- "Where can you take a letter to mail it?" (Post office, public mail box, home mail box . . .)
- "When you have a package to mail, how can you find out how much it will cost?" (Take it to the post office . . .)

Instructor accompanies client to the post office to purchase stamps. It is recommended client buy stamps for his or her own needs using client's money rather than purchasing them for instructor or others. It also is recommended post office used be the one most convenient for client.

- Client goes to post office independently (Use pages 374–382 if formal training on walking or riding bus to post office is necessary)
- Waits for turn appropriately ■ Goes to available clerk
- Indicates denomination(s) ■ And quantity of stamp(s) to be purchased
- Has sufficient amount of money ■ Pays independently ■ Collects purchase ■ And change (if due)
- Leaves immediate area quickly enough so others waiting are not inconvenienced
- Puts stamp(s) and change (if any) in secure place (i.e. does not keep in hand)
- Returns to habilitation facility or home independently

Instructor accompanies client to the post office to mail a package. It is recommended the package is from client rather than asking client to mail a package for instructor or others. It also is recommended post office used be the one most convenient for client.

- Goes to post office independently ■ Waits for turn appropriately ■ Goes to available clerk
- States how package is to be mailed (e.g. 1st class, air, surface)
- If needs to purchase insurance: Clearly requests to purchase insurance ■ Purchases appropriate amount of insurance
- Has sufficient amount of money ■ Pays independently ■ Collects change (if due)
- Leaves immediate area quickly enough so others waiting are not inconvenienced
- Puts change (if any) in secure place (i.e. does not keep in hand)
- Returns to habilitation facility or home independently

393.4 USE OF STAMP MACHINE

- "Where are stamp machines often located?" (Grocery stores, drug stores, department stores . . .)
- "Where is the stamp machine that is most convenient for you to use?"
- "What are two disadvantages of buying stamps in a machine?" (More expensive, you might not get exactly what you need . . .)

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USE OF STAMP MACHINE (Cont.)

- “When might people buy stamps in a machine?” (When they need only a few stamps, need a stamp quickly, post office is closed . . .)

Instructor accompanies client to purchase stamp(s) from machine. It is recommended client buy stamp(s) for his or her own needs using client’s money rather than purchasing for instructor or others. It also is recommended stamp machine used be the one most convenient for client.

- Client goes independently to store with stamp machine (Use **pages 374–382** if formal training on walking or riding bus to store is necessary)
- Locates stamp machine in store independently ■ Decides on a selection ■ Chooses correct coin(s) for selection
- Inserts coin(s) in coin slot ■ Activates item-release mechanism (e.g. by depressing lever, pushing button)
- Collects stamp(s) ■ Collects money from coin-return if does not receive stamps
- If machine malfunctions: Informs management ■ Explains problem appropriately ■ States amount to be refunded
- Puts stamp(s) or coin(s) in secure place (i.e. does not keep in hand)
- Returns to habilitation facility or home independently