

MENTOR

Mentors Empowering Now to Overcome Recidivism



The MENTOR Program, an initiative of the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania, seeks to reduce criminal recidivism by providing mentoring services to individuals returning to the Philadelphia community after incarceration.

MENTOR TRAINING MANUAL



MENTOR is a Project of the First Judicial District
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The MENTOR Training Guide was created in 2014
Please direct any questions about this manual to mentor@courts.phila.gov

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Chapter 1: Introduction

SECTION 1: Welcome

It is well known inside and outside the criminal justice system that recidivism plagues Philadelphia. Recidivism is a vicious cycle of crime, incarceration, more crime, more incarceration and so on. Approximately 23% of our convicted offenders who begin supervision pursuant to county sentences are arrested within one year; 37% and 45% incur a new arrest in years two and three. For incarcerated offenders, the outlook is even bleaker: 38% recidivate within a year of their release and 56% in three years. Perhaps most telling is the fact that of the 42,482 defendants charged with crimes in 2012, more than 30,000 had previously been arrested.

The costs of recidivism are staggering for our courts, law enforcement, crime victims, and neighborhoods, and are particularly detrimental to offenders and their families. These realities of recidivism have driven courts and other criminal justice stakeholders to focus greater attention and resources on programs supporting successful reentry.

Ending this cycle of recidivism requires all of us to play a part in enacting positive change. That's where you and MENTOR play a critical role. By offering emotional and practical support, you will work with the courts, the probation department, and other service providers to guide men and women at this most critical and vulnerable point in their lives. As a part of MENTOR, you can play a supporting role in a participant's life, and at the same time, you can help us evaluate and improve MENTOR so the program can grow and flourish.

We are lucky to have you and appreciate all that you do for MENTOR and our participants.

Judge Michael Erdos & Judge Lisa Rau

SECTION 2: Acknowledgements

We are grateful for all of the creative ideas, advice, and support we have received during the development of the MENTOR Pilot Program from the many individuals and organizations involved in criminal justice, reentry, social work, legal services, and ministry. We are also grateful for the invaluable contributions of those who have lived the process of reentry themselves or with loved ones. If our contributors’ enthusiasm is any indication of the need for this program, the need is monumental. We wish we could thank each of our contributors by listing them individually but their number is too large. They know who they are and will find gratitude if this program succeeds. We welcome their continued input as the MENTOR Pilot Program continues.

SECTION 3: Contact Information

Please contact the MENTOR Program Coordinator in one of the following ways:



- Phone: Call 215-683-7047 and ask to speak to the MENTOR Program Coordinator
- Fax: Send a fax to the attention of the MENTOR Program Coordinator at 215-683-7049
- Email: Send an email to the MENTOR Program Coordinator at mentor@courts.phila.gov
- Mail: Send a letter to:
Attn: MENTOR Program Coordinator
Criminal Justice Center,
1301 Filbert St. Suite 1210
Philadelphia, PA 19107
- In person: Schedule an appointment to meet face-to-face with the MENTOR Program Coordinator

SECTION 4: Safe Meeting Places

The following locations are available for Mentors and Participants to meet at their convenience in a safe and private space. Please contact the MENTOR Program Coordinator in advance if you would like more information about using these designated meeting spaces.

The Center for Returning
Citizens
3850 Germantown Ave
Philadelphia, PA 19140
215-223-1680

The Friends Center
1501 Cherry Street, Suite 129
Philadelphia, PA 19102
215-305-8793

Institute for Community Justice
1207 Chestnut St, Philadelphia,
PA 19107
215-525-0460

Chapter 2: Nuts and Bolts

SECTION 1: What is a Mentor?

CONGRATULATIONS! As a Mentor, you are about to begin what we hope will be a rewarding and fulfilling experience. Your commitment indicates that you believe in supporting individuals who are transitioning back into our community. You recognize not only the impact the MENTOR Program will have on these individuals, but also the long-lasting effect it will have on our City, your fellow Philadelphians, and you. Thank you for your dedication and patience!

_Mentoring is not a cure for all the problems and decisions facing the Participants as they transition back to their community after incarceration. Rather, the essence of mentoring is a sustained human relationship: a one-on-one relationship that, with a commitment to work and support, can empower Participants to make a successful and positive transition back into society.

Mentors will work with Participants to establish mutual respect, trust, motivation, and measurable goals. The Mentor’s commitment and dedication to their Participant may be the most profound opportunity of the entire MENTOR Program. The quality of the relationship between the Mentor and the Participant may directly influence the life and future of the Participant and his or her family. Mentors must exert every effort to maintain professional standards and boundaries, improve mentoring skills, and prioritize Participants’ needs first when engaged in any activity involving the Participant.

A Successful Mentor:	A Mentor is NOT:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commits to establishing a strong relationship with their Participant • Encourages the Participant to abide by the law and follow conditions of their probation • Builds and maintains trust by honoring confidentiality • Sets and maintains high expectations for their Participant • Sets and adheres to appropriate boundaries • Listens to their Participant’s feelings, opinions, decisions, and desires • Models maturity and emotional stability • Empathizes with their Participant • Models confidence and self-esteem • Shares their personal experiences wisely • Respects their Participant as an individual with different needs and goals and is comfortable with those differences • Respectfully agrees to disagree when necessary • Sets expectations and standards based on their Participant’s needs • Is open and flexible • Affirms Participant’s experiences and offers encouragement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judgmental • Critical • Overbearing • A parent • A probation or parole officer • A savior • A disciplinarian • A case manager • A psychologist • A lawyer • A counselor • An ATM • A friend

SECTION 2: Who Are the Participants?

Participants in the MENTOR Program are between the ages of 18 and 30 and returning to their communities after incarceration or contact with the criminal justice system. Participants are capable of successful reentry with the appropriate support and encouragement.

Part A: Participant Selection Process

In general, Participants are selected for the MENTOR Program after they have been approved by the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office and the Defender Association of Philadelphia. These stakeholders will determine if they find a Participant suitable for the MENTOR Program based on their prior criminal record (if any), the nature of their present offense, and the terms of their guilty plea. Defendants with current firearm offenses, violent felonies, or sex crimes— or a history of such offenses— will be ineligible for the program.

Identified candidates will choose for themselves if they want to participate in the MENTOR Program. They will have discussed the program with their attorney and have agreed that they wish to engage in a year of mentoring. Participants will then sign a contract as part of their guilty plea (also signed by their attorney, a representative from the District Attorney's Office and the Presiding Judge), which outlines the requirements of the MENTOR Program.

Part B: Participant Program Requirements

Participation in the MENTOR Program is voluntary and will last 12-18 months. Participants will be assigned a Mentor for the duration of their obligation to the program.

Participants will be required to engage in two contacts per week with their Mentors (in person, over the phone, or via the Internet). At least two contacts per month must be in person and last a minimum of thirty minutes. Participants are also required to appear for monthly status meetings where they will discuss their progress with the Presiding Judge and have mediated group conversations with their fellow Participants.



Successful completion of the program requires that Participants meet these obligations to connect with their Mentors and attend status hearings. Successful Participants will receive a meaningful reduction of their probation or parole. This reduction will incentivize participation in the program.

Participants who do not meet their obligations may be disqualified from the program. Certain behaviors, such as failure to appear at status hearings, consistent non-responsiveness to Mentor contacts, or getting re-arrested for any violent crimes may be considered as justification for disqualification. Although the Presiding Judge will make the final decisions about disqualification, Mentors, as well as Participants, are encouraged to contact the Program Coordinator with issues or concerns regarding the MENTOR relationship.



SECTION 3: The Match

Matching - The MENTOR Program Coordinator will create the Participant/Mentor match. Whenever possible, matches will be made on the basis of gender (same), schedule availability, geographical location, common interests and experiences, and other factors which enhance the potential for a positive relationship. Both Mentors and Participants will fill out a

matching questionnaire to help the MENTOR Program Coordinator make an effective match.

The First Meeting - The MENTOR Program Coordinator will contact both parties to schedule the first meeting between Mentor and Participant. If the Participant is incarcerated, Mentors are encouraged to meet with their Participant before they are released. Prison visits can be arranged either in person or via videoconference from the Philadelphia Criminal Justice Center. Mentors should contact the Program Coordinator to arrange prison visits or teleconferences.

SECTION 4: How Does the MENTOR Program Work

Below is a list of rules for the MENTOR Program. If you ever become confused or unsure about these guidelines, please do not hesitate to ask questions. The MENTOR Program Coordinator is available to assist in any way possible.

Part A: Mentoring Rules- The 5 “Musts” of Mentoring

1) Mentors Must Attend Training: When mentors are selected for the Program, Mentors must attend or watch an initial six-hour training session. After completing the training and filling out a matching questionnaire, Mentors will be assigned a Participant for the duration of the 12- to 18-month program. During this time, Mentors will be asked to attend several mandatory trainings and additional educational workshops will be offered as optional. All mandatory and voluntary trainings will correspond with the MENTOR coaching curriculum.

2) Mentors Must Have One-on-One Meetings: Mentors are required to have one-on-one contact with their Participants twice per week. These can be in person, over the phone, or via the Internet. In addition, at least two contacts per month must be in person and a minimum of thirty minutes in duration. In-person meetings can be a planned activity such as preparing for a Participant’s job interview, going to a café or coffee shop, or simply getting together to chat (for more details see Section 4, Part B6).

3) Mentors Must Abide by the Confidentiality Policy: In order to build trust, Mentors are required to keep conversations and information about the Participants in confidence. It is important to establish at the beginning of the relationship that all communication between the Mentor and the Participant will remain confidential. However, there are four exceptions to the confidentiality rule, and these exceptions will be made clear to the Participants by the Presiding Judge:

Confidentiality Exception 1: Speaking with the MENTOR Staff. A mentor may talk to the MENTOR Staff at any time about any information or issues brought up in the mentoring sessions. The MENTOR Staff is there to help problem-solve and to assist the parties with the dynamics of the relationship.

Confidentiality Exception 2: Conversations with fellow Mentors during group sessions. During status reviews and mentor meetings, mentors are allowed to discuss their respective participants so that they can receive feedback and suggestions from fellow mentors, the MENTOR Staff, and the Court. However, mentors must maintain a “group confidentiality”— that is, they are not allowed to discuss anything about other participants to anyone outside of that group setting.

Confidentiality Exception 3: Consent. The participant may give the mentor permission to talk to others about him or her when a situation arises where the participant is seeking outside assistance or support.

Confidentiality Exception 4: When there is a risk to health or safety. A mentor must immediately contact the MENTOR Staff if the Participant poses a threat to his/her own health and safety. A mentor must also contact the MENTOR Staff if the participant poses a threat to the or safety of another.

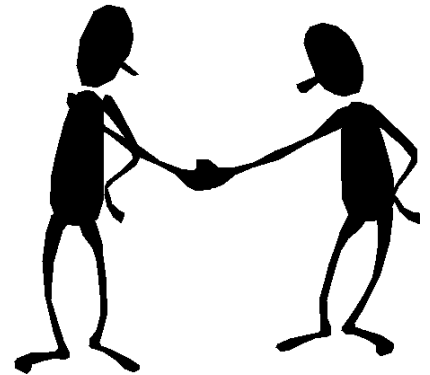
The mentor may also contact help directly when they believe there is an immediate threat to the health or safety of their participant or another person.

Examples of health and safety risks that must be reported to the MENTOR Staff are:

- Reports of abuse of an identifiable child, elder, or disabled individual by Participant or others
- Suicidal ideation: Intentions of Participant to kill or attempt to kill themselves
- Homicidal/Assaultive Ideation: Intentions of Participant to kill or seriously hurt another identifiable person

For more information, visit

<https://www.compass.state.pa.us/CWIS/Public/ReferralsLearnMore>



4) Mentors Must Not Cross Ethical Boundaries



Money: Participants will often be facing difficult circumstances in their life. Financial constraints will almost always be a concern. Mentors should offer guidance but not money. Providing money to the Participant alters the dynamics of the Mentor/Participant relationship, creates power roles that can be unhealthy, encourages dependency, causes jealousy between Participants, and can foster guilt or shame if the Participant cannot return the favor. Moreover, Mentors need not spend a lot of money for activities, birthdays, and so on. However, it may be appropriate for a Mentor to pay for the cost of various activities that the Mentor and the Participant engage in together, such as attending movies, sports games, or having a modest meal together. In addition, it is appropriate for the Participant to accept any limited financial assistance provided through the MENTOR Program, including SEPTA tokens.

Romantic and/or Sexual Relationships: It is important to establish and maintain physical boundaries as necessary for each person, and address any issues immediately if they arise. Handshakes, high fives, fist bumps, and side hugs are all welcomed as a form of greetings and goodbyes, as long as mentor and participant are both comfortable with such physicality. We ask that no other excessive touching happen during meetings, i.e. holding hands, touching someone’s hair, long hugs, etc. Additionally, it is not acceptable for mentor/participant to engage in any sort of romantic behavior

Housing: Participants might experience difficulties with their living situation. Mentors may assist the Participant in exploring housing options. However, the Mentor should not permit their Participant to either stay or meet in their homes.

Religion & Personal Agendas: All Mentors should offer guidance in a manner that respects the religious freedom of the Participants. This means that Mentors can answer questions about their own religion or faith but must never force their own religious viewpoint onto Participants or coerce Participants into a religious activity. The Mentor may not push any personal agenda including faith, religion, or politics during interaction with the Participant. The Mentor should never talk about an individual's race, sex, gender/gender identity, national origin, religious beliefs, marital status/family structure, or sexual orientation in a negative way. If Mentors and Participants mutually agree on attending religious based ceremonies as an activity, it is permitted.

Transportation: Participants may have difficulties coordinating transportation to different appointments and meetings. Mentors can offer to drive Participants to and from their appointments or meetings when appropriate, but neither Mentors, nor Participants, should be lending their cars or allowing one another to drive their cars for any reason. Mentors must have automobile insurance and a driver's license in order to drive a Participant in their car. Public transportation will often be a viable alternative.

Storage: Mentors should not store or hold any items for their Participant, nor should Mentors agree to deliver anything for the Participant.

Meeting Locations: Mentors should not invite Participants to meet at their homes. This is both a safety measure and a matter of confidentiality for the Mentor. It may be appropriate for a Mentor to visit a Participant's home in certain circumstances, such as if a Mentor is helping a Participant move into a new home or assisting with the first grocery shopping trip where many items must be transported. There will also be a safe default meeting location in the Participant's neighborhood made available for such meetings. Please contact the MENTOR Program Coordinator to learn more about these designated meeting locations. Other prohibited meeting locations include, but are not limited to:

- Casinos and any other gambling establishments
- Firing ranges
- Any location outside of Philadelphia without first gaining the consent of the MENTOR Program Coordinator. The Participant must also obtain written permission from their Probation Officer in advance.



Meeting Activities: Mentors should not engage in the following activities with their Participants:

- Gambling
- Using controlled substances/illicit drugs
- Hunting or any activity involving a firearm

5) Mentors Must Not Take Responsibility for Participant Discipline: There may be instances when a Mentor finds that a Participant's behavior is unacceptable, whether it be actions towards the Mentor, actions towards others in the community, or actions that may endanger the Participant personally.

Remember that the Presiding Judge and the Probation Officer are responsible for disciplining the Participant when necessary.

This does not mean that Mentors should turn a blind eye to all concerning acts by the Participant. It is the Mentor's primary role to help the Participant work through any negative actions that may damage his/her transition back into the community. The Mentor's job is not to identify every infraction a Participant may make but rather to discuss with the Participant why those actions are unhelpful and how he/she can respond more positively when they are in similar situations in the future.

Mentors should not use ultimatums or give the Participants the silent treatment to solve the problem. It is important to discuss concerns as they arise. If a Mentor believes the Participant may need further support to address issues, he or she should contact the MENTOR Program Coordinator directly.

Part B: Mentoring Guidelines- The 10 "Shoulds" of Mentoring

1) Mentors Should Try to be Available for Important Events: Mentors are asked, if possible, to be available at critical times in the Participant's life, such as the day of release, court dates, status hearings and program graduation. A Mentor's support is invaluable to a Participant's success during these challenging times.

2) Mentors Should be Patient: During the initial stages of the match, the Participant may be hesitant, unresponsive, or unappreciative of the mentor relationship. A guarded attitude in a new relationship of any kind, especially one with potential power dynamics, is common. If the Mentor works on establishing trust and building a positive rapport, these feelings will likely subside.

The Participant's personal or family life may be difficult to discuss, particularly early in the relationship. The Participant may be unwilling to share his or her criminal past, social status, family culture, financial problems and so on. It is important not to measure the success of the relationship by the extent of the Participant's disclosure. The Mentor should respect the Participant's choice to not disclose personal information and should never pressure him/her to discuss anything he/she is uncomfortable with.

3) Mentors Should Follow the Communication Guidelines: Mentors should not try to talk to their Participant like a probation officer, teacher, parent, disciplinarian, therapist, or babysitter. It is unproductive to assume these roles and can create a negative power dynamic. Mentors should present information carefully without distortion and give the Participant's point of view a fair hearing. It is important to listen carefully and offer possible solutions without passing judgment. Don't criticize or preach. Think of ways to problem solve together rather than lecturing or telling the Participant what to do. Never "*you should've...*" the Participant.

4) Mentors Should Establish a Contact Method: Mentors and Participants should establish and agree to a primary contact method: phone call, email, text, or regular meetings at a designated time and location.

5) Mentors Should Coordinate Contacts: Coordinating contacts and in-person meetings is primarily the Mentor's responsibility initially. However, Mentors should ask their Participant for assistance in making these plans after some time. In particular, Mentors should be conscious of the Participant's financial situation and the cost of transportation to various locations, as well as their schedule.

Generally, Mentors should not bring anyone else to meetings with their Participant. However, if the Participant consents, Mentors may include others (e.g., friends, other Participants/Mentors and relatives) from time to time.

6) Mentors Should Engage Participants in Goal/Expectation Setting: Mentors should work with Participants to ensure they are setting realistic expectations and goals for themselves. There is a big difference between *encouraging* and *demanding*. Mentors should assist their Participant in making the connection between his/her actions of today and the dreams and goals of tomorrow by breaking a large goal down into small steps or several attainable goals. Mentors should look for positive signs such as increased interest in job searching, questions about pursuing educational programs, showing up for meetings, and expressing appreciation as evidence that Participants are making progress toward a goal. Mentors should affirm Participants for their progress.

7) Mentors Should Thoughtfully Plan In-Person Sessions: Below is a suggested outline to use in planning in-person sessions

A) Set A Goal: Mentors are not to set goals for participants. Mentors should ask Participants to set goals for themselves and plan meetings around the goals set forth. Mentors should be coaching participants and responding to what they would like to discuss during meetings. Mentors can begin by building on past sessions and address new issues that surface.

B) Break the Ice: During the first few weeks, it is important to create opportunities to get to know the Participant and build trust. Use simple questions that both the Mentor and the Participant can share. This will put both people at ease, and give the Mentor an idea of how the Participant is doing.

Examples:

- What have you done this week to be good to yourself?
- Tell me about a time you were successful this week.
- What do you feel good/happy/proud about right now?
- Any challenges you want to discuss from the week?

C) Session Content: The content of each meeting will be largely determined by the Mentor's and Participant's set goals, and by the MENTOR annual coaching curriculum. Discussion of the Participant's goals and on-going support in achieving these goals must remain a priority. Mentors and participants can utilize the goal sheets located in the Appendix to organize and record goals and progress.

Mentors can use meeting time to:

- Discuss progress on goals
- Assist with planning action steps
- Engage in activities such as taking a trip to the DMV to get a driver's license, escorting them to a job interview for support, or attending a community event together
- Help their Participant identify the options available and possible consequences
- Facilitate problem solving
- Challenge Participant when their old patterns of thinking/behavior emerge (such as blaming, avoiding, etc.)
- Affirm Participants' progress

Appropriate topics for discussion are:

- Progress and challenges in the job search
- Progress in programs they are attending
- Meeting the requirements of the MENTOR Program, challenges that arise from the program, and possible solutions
- Challenges faced at home/with family
- Challenges faced on the job/at school
- Financial decisions or difficulties
- Plans for the upcoming week/end
- Participants' feelings about any of the above, the reentry process, being on probation, being in MENTOR, etc
- Ask the Participant to discuss what is going well in their life



8) Mentors Should Submit Session Feedback Forms to the MENTOR Program Coordinator: Mentors should complete the following feedback form for each in-person meeting, including any specific concerns or needs for assistance, and submit it to the MENTOR Program Coordinator by the last day of every month. The form can be sent via email (photo or scan of document), fax, or postal mail.

9) Mentors Should Know Their Limitations: Mentors can share and advise but should know and respect their own limitations. Problems regarding substance abuse, mental health, certain family issues, and legal concerns are best handled by professionals. Mentors are encouraged to suggest programs and professional assistance to their Participants. Information on such programs can be found on the MENTOR website, in the resource section.

10) Mentors Should Contact the MENTOR Program Coordinator with Questions: If you have a concern you feel is beyond your ability to handle, or if you otherwise need advice, do not hesitate to contact the MENTOR Coordinator. We are all in this together!

Part C: Troubleshooting

What if there is an emergency? It is important for Mentors to be aware of the protocol in the case of a serious emergency involving their Participant.



There are times when disclosed information **MUST** be reported to the authorities, such as when a Participant indicates that he or she might immediately cause harm to him/herself or someone else (as described above in Section A3 regarding “confidentiality”). If the Participant reports a life-threatening emergency, the Mentor must first call 911 for assistance.

For other serious issues which are less time-sensitive, Mentors should first contact the MENTOR Program Coordinator with their concerns. The MENTOR Program Coordinator is available to assist Mentors in determining whether problems are serious enough to report to the appropriate authorities. In some instances, the MENTOR Program Coordinator may decide to convene a meeting with the Participant’s Probation Officer and/or other service providers in order to reach a consensus on an action plan. Although calling the Program Coordinator may initially result in the Participant feeling angry or betrayed, it is critical to the well-being of both Participant and Mentor that Mentors seek help in such an emergency.

Remember, the most important thing a Mentor can and should do is help guide the Participant to the appropriate source of professional help.

What if I cannot mentor anymore? This is a very serious concern. Be as honest as possible with yourself when committing to be a Mentor—for everyone’s sake. Mentoring is a serious commitment. Remember that your Participant will come to depend on you for support. It will do far more harm than good to enter your Participant’s life, build up trust, and then abandon the relationship. If you are having difficulty with your Participant, it is your responsibility to contact the MENTOR Program Coordinator and work together to develop a plan to improve the relationship. However, if something unexpected occurs which absolutely prevents you from continuing as a Mentor, such as a job transfer, moving, illness, etc., contact the MENTOR Program Coordinator immediately so she can make other arrangements to assist your Participant.

What if my Participant returns to prison? Feelings of self-doubt can be overwhelming if the Participant goes back to prison. Mentors might wonder, “*Did I say the right things?*” “*Did I do enough?*” “*Was I too soft-hearted or too hard on my Participant?*” “*Why didn’t I see this coming and intervene sooner?*” The Prison Handbook can provide insight into Philadelphia’s Department of Prisons policies and procedures. The link to the handbook is provided below.

http://www.philadelphiabar.org/WebObjects/PBAReadOnly.woa/Contents/WebServerResources/CMSResources/PPS_Inmate_Handbook.pdf

Just as it is not the Mentor’s success when the Participant makes positive changes, it is not the Mentor’s fault if the Participant returns to prison. It is important to remember that Mentors are not miracle workers. Participants must be ready to change their thinking and behavior and fully commit to putting these changes into action. Some Participants will be more ready and able to make these changes right now than others. The MENTOR Program is an opportunity to plant the seeds of change now and hope Participants will grow when the time is right for them. Mentors should rest assured that a strong, supportive relationship can continue to impact their Participant in the future.

Chapter 3: Practical Mentoring Skills

SECTION 1: Active Listening

Active listening is a helpful technique for Mentors to use when establishing an open and honest relationship with the Participants. Active listening is listening constructively, with interest and acceptance, and focusing on understanding the other person's feelings. It is hearing the other out and refraining from interruption.

Mentors should use both verbal and non-verbal listening methods when talking with the Participants. Non-verbal cues are extremely important to help the Participant feel comfortable opening up to the Mentor. Mentors should try to maintain eye contact, avoid disapproving looks, and maintain a relaxed posture when having a conversation with their Participant.

Verbal cues are also important to let the Participant know that what they are saying is important. Mentors should try to state verbal acknowledgement of what the Participant is saying and be sure to ask questions or paraphrase for clarification.

- a. *Open Questioning* - Asking questions allows information to be gathered and clarified. It also encourages the Participant to be active in the conversation. Questions are a good place to start any conversation. Asking open-ended questions – that is, questions that cannot be answered with only one word – invites the Participant to elaborate and can demonstrate that the Mentor cares what the Participant has to say. This technique may get the Participant to share something that they have not disclosed before and bring them closer to the Mentor.

Example of a closed-ended question: Do you trust your friends? (yes or no answer)

Example of an open-ended question (or statement): Tell me about your support network.

- b. *Paraphrasing* - Mentors can, in their own words, recite back what is said by the Participant in order to verify that the message was heard and interpreted correctly. This will give the Participant an opportunity to clarify if the Mentor heard them wrong or misinterpreted what they said. Making sure the Mentor and the Participant are on the same page is extremely important and can avoid unnecessary problems or hurt feelings.

Example of paraphrasing: What I hear you saying is that you're feeling frustrated that you haven't found a job yet, even though you've been working hard applying and improving your resume.

SECTION 2: Problem-Solving

Mentors should give the Participant every opportunity to solve their own problems. In assisting a Participant in problem-solving, it is best to help the Participants answer questions themselves. This will help them develop their own problem-solving process. If the Mentor simply tells a Participant to do something and it works, it might disempower the Participant because the Mentor is the one who made the decision. Likewise, if the Mentor tells the Participant to do something that doesn't work, he or she will think, "It didn't work, but it wasn't my fault. Someone told me to do it."

Problem-Solving Model - Mentors might have their own methods of helping people to solve problems, but we have listed a sample model below. Mentors may wish to consider some of the following questions:

1. *What is your specific problem, concern, or issue?* (The more they talk about it, the more they will understand what's involved, and potential solutions.)
2. *What have you tried so far? How has it worked?*
3. *Have you ever had a similar problem? What did you do to try to solve it? How did it work out that time?*
4. *Do you know of anyone else who has had a similar situation? How did they attempt to solve the problem?*
5. *What are some options you have to solve this problem? What do you think you should do?*

SECTION 3: Positive Reinforcement

Positive reinforcement is an effective way to encourage Participants to display good behavior. Positive reinforcement should be used whenever possible, rather than relying on discouragement or dissatisfaction when Participants display bad behavior. Positive reinforcement motivates Participants to continue the good behavior.

Positive reinforcements do not have to be costly or difficult. Depending upon the circumstances and the extent to which the Participant's positive behaviors are new or repeated over time, these might include:

- Words of praise
- A token of appreciation (e.g., a written note of acknowledgement or a certificate)
- Acknowledgement of accomplishment in front of others (e.g., praise in public, acknowledgement by a person in an authority position)
- Scheduling a special activity for the next meeting



SECTION 4: Dealing with Common Challenges

Participants will encounter different roadblocks along the way to successful reentry. Some common roadblocks might include:

- No high school diploma or GED
- History of substance abuse
- Mental or physical health issues
- A neighborhood without adequate resources to create social bonds and support networks conducive to reintegration
- Discrimination and lack of employment opportunities, often made worse by criminal history
- Lack of a connection to and engagement in the community
- A history of trauma and/or physical, emotional, or sexual abuse
- Generational poverty and incarceration

PART A: Drug and Alcohol Relapse

Some Participants may have a history of drug and alcohol use. While the Participant alone can work toward recovery, there are ways in which others can support them in their efforts. Mentors can watch for the following signs of potential relapse and support their Participant in working through and/or avoiding these challenging situations.

Common Indicators of Potential Relapse:

- 1) Exposure to drugs or alcohol, people who use drugs or alcohol, or places where they have used drugs or alcohol in the past.
- 2) Unusually negative feelings, e.g., anger, sadness, loneliness, guilt, fear, or anxiety
- 3) Unusually positive feelings or having something to celebrate
- 4) Boredom or lots of down time
- 5) Recent use of a drug or alcohol other than the substance from which they are in recovery, including a prescription drug with an intoxicating effect A recent serious injury or high level of pain
- 6) Thinking a lot about drinking or getting high.
- 7) Sudden access to a lot of cash, e.g., first paycheck or student loan refund.
- 8) Belief that they are “cured” and therefore able to safely drink or get high on occasional

If Mentors are concerned that their Participant might use drugs or drink alcohol during a relapse or violation of parole/probation, they should **call the MENTOR Program Coordinator**. They are also welcome to check in with their Participant. Participants may be willing to discuss their thoughts and feelings about drug and alcohol use and/or recovery with their Mentor. By discussing thoughts about and challenges to recovery or abstinence from drugs or alcohol, Participants may be able to consider alternatives to their methods of coping and exposure to triggering situations.

Some participants might be interested in achieving recovery through a drug and alcohol counseling program. Mentors may want their Participant to seek professional, but Mentors cannot demand that the Participant attend a drug and alcohol program. Mentors can provide support and talk with their Participant about treatment (if the participant shows interest in seeking treatment), but the ultimate decision to attend treatment is the Participant’s.

PART B: Mental Health Issues

Anyone can experience mental health issues at any time. Mental health issues are particularly prevalent among people who have experienced stress and trauma, e.g., a period of incarceration. Mentors can support Participants as they learn to cope with stress, anxiety, depression, fear, or other mental health concerns.

One of the most valuable things a Mentor can do is listen to their Participant’s feelings/fears, discuss how their Participant is doing, and support their Participant if they seek mental health treatment. In our society, seeking therapy or mental health care is highly stigmatized, so Mentors should let Participants know that their feelings are normal and ok. Alternatively, if Participants do not want to talk about their mental health or therapy with their Mentor, Mentors should not try to coerce Participants into talking about this.

Mentors are not counselors, psychologists, or psychiatrists and they **should not try to provide mental health treatment**. Mentors also should not provide referrals to Participants. Rather, if a Mentor is worried about a Participant's mental health, they should call the Program Coordinator who can provide the Participant with a referral if necessary and help the Mentor identify ways to support their Participant.



Common Symptoms of Stress, Anxiety, Depression, or Trauma:

- Eating too much or too little
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Having low or no energy or feeling jittery or unable to sit still
- Feeling numb or like nothing matters
- Having unexplained aches and pains
- Feeling helpless or hopeless
- Smoking, drinking, or using drugs more than usual
- Feeling unusually confused, forgetful, on edge, angry, upset, worried, or scared
- Yelling or fighting with friends or family
- Experiencing mood swings that cause problems in relationships
- Having persistent thoughts and memories they cannot get out of their head
- Believing things that are extremely illogical or unlikely, e.g., That everyone in a restaurant is looking at or talking about you, that friends suddenly dislike you because they canceled plans
- Thinking of harming themselves or others
- Difficulty completing small tasks like getting to work on time

Mentors should not be afraid to start the conversation. If the Mentor is having a hard time coming up with the best way to talk about a Participant's mental health, consider asking an open-ended question and actively listen to the response. Examples of good questions you can ask or supportive statements you can say are:

- You seem down/stressed/on edge lately. Would you like to talk to me about what you are experiencing? If not, is there someone else you are comfortable talking to?
- Can I do anything to support you when you're feeling this way?
- Who or what has helped you deal with similar issues in the past?
- Do you know anyone who's experienced this/felt this way? Are you comfortable talking to them? How did they deal with their feelings/situation?
- It seems like you're going through a difficult time right now.
- That sounds really hard.

There are also some general suggestions that Mentors can make to help Participants maintain healthy habits and cope with their mental health issues. Keep in mind that not all of these methods are

immediately available to or feasible for all Participants at all times. Ways to maintain positive mental health include:

- Seeking therapy or counseling
- Maintaining a safe and stable home life, e.g., improving communication with your partner, keeping your living space clutter-free, spending quality time at home
- Engaging in meaningful daily activities, e.g., time with family, reading/drawing, cooking
- Regular phone calls and face-to-face meetings with friends
- Identifying good things that happened during the day, even on bad days
- Being physically active, e.g., walking, playing with kids, working out at home or at the gym
- Helping others, e.g., helping children with homework, giving others suggestions about how to solve a problem
- Getting enough sleep and keeping a regular sleep schedule
- Avoiding certain substances like caffeine, alcohol, or nicotine

Mentors and Participants can always call the MENTOR Program Coordinator if they need assistance accessing the service.

What to do if your participant expresses “suicidal ideation” or suicidal thoughts: please refer to Appendix C for information about responding to Participant crisis.

Appendix A: Training Materials

Realistic and Unrealistic Mentor Expectations

Example 1:

Unrealistic: My Participant will attend each and every meeting, be on time, and fulfill his/her entire time commitment to the program.

Realistic: I do not know if my Participant will show up on time or fulfill his or her commitment to the program. I recognize that this program is voluntary for my Participant, and they have a lot going on in their life. Still, I pledge to show up on time for all meetings, and I pledge to fulfill my commitment to my Participant. If my Participant drops out of the program, I will not take it personally by thinking I have failed. Instead, I will let the Program Coordinator know if I would like to be matched with a new Participant in the future.

Example 2:

Unrealistic: As a result of spending time with me, my Participant will make immediate changes in his or her behaviors. My Participant will stop using drugs, make choices that I consider to be good, and maintain gainful employment.

Realistic: I don't have control over my Participant. I hope that he or she will succeed in achieving their goals and making the changes they want in their life. Even if they don't, I will continue offering my time and support. I understand that there are often setbacks during the reentry process and that change happens slowly. I also understand that my support might not become meaningful to my Participant for several months or even years.

Example 3:

Unrealistic: My Participant will thank me for my time and support.

Realistic: I realize many returning citizens face significant barriers to reentry and their priorities involve the well-being and stability of themselves and their families, not thanking me. My Participant may never thank me. This is okay. I will not expect gratitude.

Frequently Asked Questions for Volunteers

1. Am I always supposed to contact my participant first?

This depends on the agreements you and your participant establish together. Initially, you may need to be the one reaching out regularly to your participant so they can begin to develop trust. After some time, you can encourage your participant to reach out and communicate as well in order to promote accountability and responsibility for meeting the requirements of the program. Some participants may struggle with this for a variety of reasons, and it is important to understand why this might be hard for a participant (it does not always indicate indifference, and it does not indicate “laziness”). MENTOR’s Program Coordinator can talk through this with you if it becomes an issue.

Keep in mind that, while you put a lot of thought, effort, and time into deciding to volunteer, your participant likely chose to participate in MENTOR following two brief conversations with their public defender and the Program Coordinator – meaning they had significantly less time to prepare to engage in the mentoring relationship. Participants also join MENTOR for a variety of reasons, including the substantial reduction in probation time, so it is normal and ok, especially in the first few months, for your participant to be more focused on this incentive than their relationship with you.

2. What are the rules with spending money and gifts for my participant?

We encourage mentors to establish boundaries with their participant right away, and financial boundaries are extremely important. We do not require mentors to spend money on participants. You may choose to purchase small food and drink items during monthly meetings or pay for your participant to join you in a fun outing. However, we ask that spending on outings and gifts for special occasions (such as a birthday gift or graduation gift) are reasonable and not excessive. Giving cash to your participant, paying their bills, buying them tokens, or taking them shopping is highly discouraged. If you have questions/concerns about paying for a particular item/event for your participant, you may talk this through with the Program Coordinator.

3. What spaces can I use to meet with my participant? Am I allowed to go to my participant’s house, or invite my participant to my house?

We prefer that mentors and participants meet in public spaces (like the Free Library, parks, coffee shops, pizza parlor, or meeting space designated in the handbook). While some participants have invited mentors into their homes to meet their family, and vice versa, MENTOR staff highly discourages this, especially early on in the relationship. MENTOR is not liable for anything that may happen while in someone’s home. In order to maintain appropriate boundaries, we ask that mentors and participants never spend time in each other’s homes or other private spaces alone.

4. What can I do with my participant when we get together in person?

So many fun things! Sporting events, “pay what you wish” museum nights, art/theater performances, free concerts, movie screenings, walks around the city, trying a new café, and anything else that you and your participant find interesting. While mentor/participant may both be above the age of 21, we discourage drinking alcohol with your participant. Mentors should also be

mindful of any probation restrictions their participant must adhere to.

5. What should I keep in mind in terms of physical boundaries/contact with my participant?

While participants and mentors are all adults, it is important to set and respect physical boundaries. Handshakes, high fives, fist bumps, and side hugs are all welcomed as a form of greetings and goodbyes, as long as you your participant are both comfortable with such contact. We recommend that mentors ask participants directly if they are ok with this physical contact. Some forms of touching should never happen during meetings, e.g., holding hands, touching someone’s hair, long hugs, etc. Additionally, MENTOR prohibits mentor/participant from engaging in any sort of romantic or sexual behavior.

If any issues regarding physical contact arise, please address this with your participant and, if you need to, the Program Coordinator.

6. Can I drive my participant, or vice versa, when we meet up?

Participants and mentors are only allowed to drive each other if they have a valid driver’s license and car insurance MENTOR is not liable for accidents or other situations that occur when mentor/participant drive one another. Additionally, participant and mentor cannot leave the City of Philadelphia, as leaving the city is a violation of probation.

7. What should I do if my participant has an emergency?

This depends on what sort of situation is happening. If your participant tells you they are planning to commit suicide and have the means to carry out that plan, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline immediately (1-800-273-8255) to get help, and then call the Program Coordinator to report the situation.

If your participant tells you they have a plan to commit homicide or assault and are going to act on that plan, call 911, and then call the Program Coordinator to report the situation.

If your participant is in a situation that is serious but not life-threatening (e.g., death in the family, loss of housing or employment, benefits or utilities cut/shut off, childbirth or pregnancy, feeling extremely sad or stressed, warrant issued for their arrest), your involvement is not required. It is up to you to decide how comfortable you feel supporting them or connecting them to other resources. Whatever you choose to do, call the Program Coordinator in order to report the situation and/or get help formulating a plan of action for you and your participant.

8. Can my participant or I bring a friend or family member along to a meeting?

That’s up to you and your participant. We ask that you and your participants not bring any friends or family to the first few meetings – we want you two to get to know each other first. Later, if you or your participant wants to meet a close friend, family member, child, or partner, we ask that you both discuss this and make a plan to meet them. Neither you nor your participant should bring someone else to a meeting without first discussing it with each other (the possible exception being if your participant is responsible for their child that day and unable to find childcare).

Contact the Program Coordinator with any concerns regarding a third party attending mentoring meetings/activities.

9. Can I communicate with my participant via social media?

Absolutely! Social media use is encouraged, especially as an alternative to phone calls and email. We ask that social media communication remain appropriate in terms of language and photos shared.

10. If I take a picture with my participant, can I post it to social media?

That's fine, as long as you ask your participant first and they say they're ok with it. Pictures taken with/of your participant should never be posted on social media unless you have gotten verbal consent from your participant. We ask mentors to be respectful of their participant's involvement in the program and understand that participants may not want their mentoring experience made public. We encourage mentors to reflect on their reasons for wanting to post photos of their participant and, if the reason is due to the mentor wanting to promote their own service, decide against posting the photo.

11. Is there anything I'm not allowed to talk to my participant about?

What you discuss with your participant and how much personal information you share is up to you. We ask mentors to establish boundaries around personal disclosure at the start of the mentoring relationship and remember that you are not your participant's "friend" but source of support while they return home. Additionally, mentors should focus on their participants' needs and refrain from dominating the conversation with their own sharing.

12. Why is it so important to submit my mentor reports on time and fill them out thoroughly, in addition to keeping in touch with the Program Coordinator?

We want to know what is going on, and your feedback matters to us! MENTOR can't support you and your participant if we aren't kept in the loop. Reports allow us to provide guidance, feedback, and resources to you and your participant. Additionally, we need to know if MENTOR is working, and in order to do that, we need data. Your mentor reports are essential for us to effectively evaluate program outcomes and impact.

13. What if I'm having a really hard time connecting with and relating to my participant?

MENTOR staff is available to assist with any interpersonal issues that arise between mentor and participant. The Program Coordinator, MENTOR coach Rory, and other mentors are all good resources for discussing, reflecting, and problem solving. We ask that mentors reach out to the Program Coordinator with any concerns in order to receive support and/or connections to other resources.

14. Why is it so important that I commit to my participant for the entire 12-18 months?

When a mentor leaves early, it impacts the program and has the potential to deeply harm their participant, who may feel abandoned and unwanted. Additionally, MENTOR staff will have to choose a new match for the participant, and the participant will need to go through the stressful early

stages of building a relationship all over again. Please commit to the program only if you are able to follow through with the entire 12-18 months.

If any emergencies or extraordinary circumstances arise (e.g., death in the family, serious illness, moving out of Philly), call the Program Coordinator immediately and work with her and your participant to make your departure as smooth as possible.

15. When my participant graduates, do I have to stay in touch with them?

Only if you both want to keep in touch. We would love for mentors and participants to develop relationships that are positive enough to make you want to stay in touch, but we know that some mentors and participants will not want to continue the relationship after the program ends. Additionally, we respect the enormous amount of time and effort that mentors give during the program and don't expect you to keep up this level of commitment after your participant leaves MENTOR. In order to honor the relationship and efforts of both parties, all mentor/participant pairs will complete a formal closure when the participant exits the program.

If you feel strongly that you do not want your participant to contact you at all after the program ends, please let the Program Coordinator know so she can explain the situation to your participant.

Mentor vs. Case Manager Roles

TOPIC	MENTOR	CASE MANAGER
Housing	Conflict resolution skills due to housing issues (i.e. roommate or in-house issues), help participant understand basic paperwork or how to look for housing online, emotional support during the process of moving or obtaining affordable housing	Address eviction issues or rent nonpayment, homelessness and shelter referrals, provide affordable housing options, connect participant to PHA, connect participant to legal services
Employment	Resume writing, job applications, job search, reference letters, support in developing time management skills, organizational skills, mock interviews/interview prep (e.g., talk about some commonly asked questions in interviews)	Job referrals, employment resources, manage any discriminatory job denials due to criminal record, navigate issues of job/field ineligibility due to record
Benefits	Encourage follow through on provided resources i.e. Benephilly. Assist with scheduling appointments and follow through if needed	Connect participant to appropriate benefits and resources based on need, Help participant find or obtain required documentation (e.g., paystubs, social security card)
Education	Talk about education or vocational programs/options, help fill out school and financial aid applications, supporting the process of returning to school and time management skills	Link participant with appropriate education sites and personnel for higher education, identify GED , education, and vocational programs, tutoring services and resources for financial aid
Substance Abuse	Understand the stages of substance abuse recovery and support participant through each of those stages. Understand that relapse is part of recovery. Never cast judgement on participant. Understand that some participants use substances to manage/cope with anxiety, depression, PTSD, insomnia, etc. Reach out to Program Coordinator if participant begins using substances again.	Connect participant with treatment services as needed, Advocate for participant in status hearings and Steering Committee meetings. Support mentor as needed.
Mental Health	Understand signs of mental illness and reach out to Coordinator if anything new arises or if participant is feeling unusually stressed/sad. Understand basic facts about mental illness and provide acceptance and support for participant. Be empathetic. Ask how they're doing.	Connect participant with treatment services as needed, Evaluate concerns raised by mentor regarding participant's MH and respond accordingly, Provide education/support to mentor as needed
Family	Conflict resolution skills. Support process of participant reuniting with family after incarceration (if applicable). Support participant if cases arise in family court. Listen to participant's needs/desires when it comes to family matters and understand that ending a relationship is preferable to reunification in some cases.	Connect participant with appropriate resources for family-related issues as they arise, e.g., child support, custody issues, grief therapy/support groups

Appendix B: Forms

Participation Paperwork for Mentors

I, _____, was born on _____, and am a resident of _____, Philadelphia, PA _____.

I have agreed to volunteer my time and participate in the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania's ("District") MENTOR Program, mentoring to individuals newly released from prison in order to facilitate re-entry and thereby reduce recidivism. The Mentor Agreement and Waiver of Liability describes in general terms the goals of the MENTOR Program, my agreement to participate in the program as described below, and as more fully described in the MENTOR materials provided to me from time to time, my acknowledgment that I have been informed of the risks inherent in my participation in this program and my release and waiver of liability for any damage or harm I may sustain during my participation in this program.

Mentor Agreements

- 1) I authorize the District to conduct a background check including criminal history _____
- 2) I understand that MENTOR is not obligated to provide a reason for their decision to accept or reject me as a mentor _____
- 3) I understand that the position of a mentor is strictly as an unpaid volunteer _____
- 4) I will participate in the initial training necessary to become a mentor, and any additional training required during the program commitment _____
- 5) I will adhere to all of the MENTOR Program policies and procedures set forth in the Mentor Agreements and Training Manual _____
- 6) I agree to participate for 12-18 months _____
- 7) I will be able to dedicate the necessary time support my participant to the best of my ability _____
- 8) I will provide non-judgmental encouragement and emotional support as well as practical support by actively helping my participant to overcome barriers to successful reintegration _____
- 9) I will make two contacts per week and meet with my participant in-person at least twice per month for a minimum of thirty minutes _____
- 10) I will do my best to attend monthly status hearings _____
- 11) I will try to develop a relationship of trust and respect with my participant _____
- 12) I will not push any "personal agenda" (i.e., faith, politics) during interactions with my participant _____
- 13) I will never come to a meeting while under the influence of alcohol or other drugs _____
- 14) I will notify my participant at least 24 hours in advance if I must miss a meeting or as soon as possible in the case of an emergency _____
- 15) I will complete and submit required monthly report forms _____
- 16) I will abide by the program's confidentiality policy _____
- 17) I will contact the MENTOR Coordinator if I experience any difficulties with my participant or with the program _____
- 18) I will refrain from communicating directly with a participant's Probation Officer and instead defer to the MENTOR Coordinator _____
- 19) I will participate in a closure process, when necessary, with my mentee _____
- 20) I will notify the Program Coordinator if I have any changes in address, phone number, or employment status _____
- 21) I will not engage in any sexual activity or romantic relationship with my participant or any other participant in MENTOR _____

- 22) If I plan to drive my participant anywhere within Philadelphia, I must have a valid driver's license and be using a legal and insured vehicle _____
- 23) If at any point in time I conclude that I am not able to meet the requirements of the Mentor Program, I will notify the Program Coordinator promptly so that I can be removed from the Program_____
- 24) I understand that upon match closure, future contact with my participant is beyond the scope of MENTOR and may happen only by the mutual consensus of the mentor and the participant_____
- 25) (optional) I allow MENTOR to use any photographic image of me taken while participating in the mentoring program. These images may be used in promotions or other related marketing materials _____

I agree to follow all the above stipulations of this program as well as any other conditions as instructed by the Program Coordinator at this time or in the future.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Waver of Liability

I do hereby remise, release and forever discharge and hold harmless The Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania, the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania, the City of Philadelphia, and all of their agents, servants and/or employees, from any and all claims, lawsuits, and/or liability accrued and hereafter to accrue on account of and from any and all manner of actions and causes of actions, claims and demands whatsoever in law or equity, property damage, and/or personal injury or death which may occur during the period of time which I volunteer in the MENTOR Program.

More specifically, I understand that if I travel with my participant in any personal vehicle, or go to my or a participant's home while mentoring, MENTOR is not held liable for anything that may occur.

I am executing this Mentor Agreement and Waiver of Liability of my free will, only after potential risks of participating in this program have been explained to me, that I understand and acknowledge the risks, with a full understanding that I can refuse to participate, and acknowledge that I have been given the opportunity to ask questions regarding this program and that all of my questions were satisfactorily answered.

Date: _____

Print (Name) _____

Signature: _____

Address: _____

WITNESSED BY:

Date: _____

Print (Name)

Signature: _____

Address: _____

Confidentiality Policy

Generally, all communication between the mentor and the participant is confidential unless it falls into one of the following exceptions:

Confidentiality Exception 1: Speaking with the MENTOR Staff. A mentor may talk to the MENTOR Staff at any time about any information or issues brought up in the mentoring sessions. The MENTOR Staff is there to help problem-solve and to assist the parties with the dynamics of the relationship.

Confidentiality Exception 2: Conversations with fellow Mentors during group sessions. During status reviews and mentor meetings, mentors are allowed to discuss their respective participants so that they can receive feedback and suggestions from fellow mentors, the MENTOR Staff, and the Court. However, mentors must maintain a “group confidentiality”— that is, they are not allowed to discuss anything about other participants to anyone outside of that group setting.

Confidentiality Exception 3: Consent. The participant may give the mentor permission to talk to others about him or her when a situation arises where the participant is seeking outside assistance or support.

Confidentiality Exception 4: When there is a risk to health or safety.

A mentor must immediately contact the MENTOR Staff if the Participant poses a threat to his/her own health and safety. A mentor must also contact the MENTOR Staff if the participant poses a threat to the or safety of another.

The mentor may also contact help directly when they believe there is an immediate threat to the health or safety of their participant or another person. See below for more information and to learn what to do.

In certain life-threatening circumstances, the MENTOR Staff is also obligated to contact the police, mental health resources, and/or other social service agencies.

Examples of health and safety risks that must be reported to the MENTOR Staff are:

- Reports of abuse of an identifiable child, elder, or disabled individual by Participant or others
- Suicidal ideation: Intentions of Participant to kill or attempt to kill themselves
- Homicidal/Assaultive Ideation: Intentions of Participant to kill or seriously hurt another identifiable person

I understand and agree to the above confidentiality policy:

Date: _____

Print (name): _____

Signature: _____

Appendix C: Responding to Crisis

Suicidal Ideation with plan and means to carry out plan:

Mentor should call a suicide crisis response center or helpline listed below, then Program Coordinator; Program Coordinator should call suicide crisis response center or helpline

The “GATE” Method¹:

1) Gather Information

- ASK DIRECTLY: “Are you thinking about killing yourself?”
 - This can be really uncomfortable—but it is *really* important to be direct.
 - *please note, wanting to “hurt oneself” and “kill oneself” are two different things.*
 - If the answer is yes...
- Is there an immediate threat to the participant’s safety?
 - Does the participant have a **plan** to commit suicide?
 - Does the participant have the **means** to carry out that plan?

****If yes, call a suicide crisis response center or helpline IMMEDIATELY****

**** ALWAYS (especially because most mentors are not trained mental health professionals) err on the side of caution. Your number one priority is to make decisions that keeps your participant safe by reaching out for professional help.**

Arrange for crisis center/helpline staff to call participant directly or meet participant in person – Philadelphia Mobile Emergency Team will meet somebody in crisis in person.

If you are on the phone with a participant, direct them to stay on the line with you until help arrives or calls them.

If you or someone else is with the participant, take them/direct that person to take them to the appropriate crisis response center or nearest emergency room.

IF NO, proceed to step 2.

2) Access Supervision

- Call the Program Coordinator (Kelly Sebetka, cell 319.343.7769; if no answer and it is an emergency, text with the information indicating that it is urgent).
- You are NOT in this alone. It is not your role or responsibility to be a mental health provider or therapist. Ask for help and support!

3) Take Action to Ensure Appropriate Care and Safety for the Participant

- This will hopefully be achieved in steps 1 and 2, but make sure that you **create a plan** with both the professionals whose help you incite, and your participant.
- Keep your participant in the loop—the care plan is not a secret.

¹ Center for Substance Abuse Treatment. Addressing Suicidal Thoughts and Behaviors in Substance Abuse Treatment. Rockville (MD): Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (US); 2009. (Treatment Improvement Protocol (TIP) Series, No. 50.) Part 2, Chapter 1, Addressing Suicidal Thoughts and Behaviors: An Implementation Guide for Administrators. Available from: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK64019/>

- There is often a stigma attached to suicidality, and it is vitally important to not beat around the bush. There is often the misconception that talking about suicide openly will induce suicide—**this is false**. In fact, sometimes speaking about suicide directly saves lives.
- Be honest with yourself about your comfort level in talking about this topic.

4) Extend the Action beyond the Immediate Situation to Promote Ongoing Treatment and Safety

- Suicide attempts and expression of suicidal thoughts are often a cry for help and indicative of a deeper problem.
- We want to work with your participant to get them the ongoing treatment and support they need.
- Continue to follow-up with your participant to support and encourage their ongoing treatment.

Elder Abuse:

Mentor should call MENTOR Program Coordinator; Program Coordinator will assess the situation and may be obligated to do the following:

Make an immediate and direct report of suspected elder abuse by calling 24 HOUR HOTLINE - 1-800-490-8505; or electronically at

[HTTP://WWW.DHS.PA.GOV/CS/GROUPS/WEBCONTENT/DOCUMENTS/DOCUMENT/C_168644.PDF](http://www.dhs.pa.gov/cs/groups/webcontent/documents/document/c_168644.pdf)

Intellectual/physical disability abuse:

Mentor should call MENTOR Program Coordinator; Program Coordinator will assess the situation and may be obligated to do the following:

Allegations of abuse or neglect must be reported orally to the Abuse Investigations Division of the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities, prior to submitting the PA6 Form. (860) 297-4300 or (800) 842-7303.

Adults hotline: <https://pa211.communityos.org/zf/profile/service/id/1833476>

Crisis Hotlines

Community Crisis Response Centers for Substance Abuse/Mental Health Emergencies

- **NORTHEAST:** Friends Hospital (215) 831-4600
- **NORTHWEST, GERMANTOWN, & ROXBOROUGH:** Einstein Hospital (215) 951-8300
- **NORTH:** Temple/Episcopal Hospital (215) 707-2577
- **CENTER CITY & SOUTH:** Hall Mercer at Pennsylvania Hospital (215) 829-5249
- **WEST & SOUTHWEST:** Mercy Hospital (215) 748-9525
- **UNDER 18:** Children's Crisis Response Center Project at Einstein Hospital (215) 951-8300

Suicide (for self): Philadelphia Suicide and Crisis Center (215) 686-4420 or National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-8255

Mental Health (for someone else): Office of Behavioral Health Emergency Line / Philadelphia Mobile Emergency Team (215) 685-6440

Rape/Sexual Violence: Women Organized Against Rape (215) 985-3333 or Philadelphia Domestic Violence Hotline (866) 723-3014

Homicidal/Assaultive Ideation:

Mentor should call 911 (if an emergency) and/or Program Coordinator; Program Coordinator should call 911 and/or target of homicide/assault to warn them

Child Abuse:

Mentor should call MENTOR Program Coordinator; Program Coordinator will assess the situation and may be obligated to do the following: <http://keepkidssafe.pa.gov/>

Make an immediate and direct report of suspected child abuse to ChildLine either electronically at www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis or by calling 1-800-932-0313.

Mentor Handbook Source List

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