

Reflection Tool for Agencies

It can be valuable to reflect on the extent to which your agency views spirituality and religion as being important to people with disabilities and takes intentional steps to support this aspect of people’s lives. The following indicators can help prompt discussion among staff about this area of your services and supports.

Indicators	How well does this describe our agency?			What steps can we take to improve in this area?
Our mission statement reflects a commitment to support the choices of people with disabilities, including those related to spiritual exploration and religious expression.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> Absolutely	
Our written policies explain the importance of supporting people’s religious preferences, as well as point to practical strategies for doing this well.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> Absolutely	
Our staff <i>and</i> the people with disabilities whom we serve are aware of and familiar with these policies.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> Absolutely	
We can identify someone (e.g., staff person, board member, advocate) who is responsible for ensuring that spiritual supports are addressed and that our policies are evidenced in practice.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> Absolutely	
We understand the different ways that we should be addressing the spiritual and religious needs of the people whom we serve.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> Absolutely	
We discuss with new staff the importance of listening for, seeking out, and supporting people’s choices and preferences, including their religious preferences.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> Absolutely	
We provide staff with the training they need to do this effectively and with confidence.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> Absolutely	
We ask about the spiritual needs, strengths, and connections of people with disabilities when they first begin receiving our services and supports.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> Absolutely	

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We revisit these conversations periodically to make sure we are continuing to meet their needs.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> Absolutely	
We orient people with disabilities and their families/advocates to the types of supports we make available for individuals interested in being involved in a faith community.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> Absolutely	
We provide the opportunities, space, and support people need to explore and express their spirituality at home, within a congregation, or elsewhere, if they so choose.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> Absolutely	
We periodically assess and seek to remove potential barriers that hinder us from addressing the spiritual and religious needs of people with disabilities.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> Absolutely	
It is clear that the people whom we serve are involved in the faith community <i>of their choice</i> .	<input type="checkbox"/> Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> Absolutely	
Participation in community activities, including attending congregational activities, is not used to reinforce good behavior or punish inappropriate behavior.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> Absolutely	
We have established relationships with local congregations and faith-based organizations as partners in this work.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> Absolutely	
We recognize and affirm the sense of calling and vocation held by our staff providing direct support to people with disabilities.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> Absolutely	
We respect the religious values of our staff and strive to define support roles and responsibilities that align with those values.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> Absolutely	
Other:				
Other:				

Adapted from Carter, E. W. (2007). *Including people with disabilities in faith communities: A guide for service providers, congregations, and families*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.