Texas Self-Directed Care

Guidelines for TX SDC On-Line Discussion Forum

Purpose of this Policy: The Texas Self Directed Care program provides a Discussion Forum for use by members of the program. It is intended to help participants share their challenges and triumphs, inform each other about valuable services and resources, and stay connected with others. This policy describes the rules and responsibilities governing use of the Discussion Forum. The policy may be reviewed and changes proposed by program members through their representatives on the Texas SDC Advisory Committee.

Policy: The TX SDC online Discussion Forum is funded by state and federal funds. Because the content of discussion on the Forum may be sensitive, rules have been established for its use. Although these rules are intended to be as comprehensive as possible, the program reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to terminate or restrict access to the Forum. The Forum Moderator is the SDC Program Director Walter Norris. As Moderator, his role is strictly limited to reading Forum posts to ensure that all rules are followed. He will not be a Forum participant since participation is for program members only. Should he determine that a participant has violated any part of the Forum policy, he will contact that individual privately to discuss the situation and receive assurances that the violation will not occur again.

Disclaimer: The Discussion Forum is a private Forum for SDC members only. Ethical standards of privacy and confidentiality apply and must be respected. The program will not be held responsible for the content of messages posted to the list or actions taken by those who subscribe.

Rules for Forum Use

1. The discussion group is dedicated to providing a forum to share information about TX SDC and related matters. Postings must be related to this topic. Do not post commercial, political, religious, or other unrelated messages.
2. When posting a message, please include your first name.
3. Please treat everyone with respect. It is not acceptable to post messages that are defamatory, profane, threatening, offensive, or condescending. Opinions and differences of opinions are welcome, but challenging or attacking others is not acceptable.
4. Peoples' names and other personal information about them are not to be shared with anyone other than Forum participants.
5. Please do not post full content from web pages in a message. Instead, provide a link to the web page. If you do not know how to do this, contact the SDC Webmaster by phone or at the email address below.
6. Use of the Forum to collect program participants' email addresses for the purpose of unsolicited email marketing is strictly prohibited.

7. TX SDC will not be responsible or held liable for any unique, indirect, consequential, or other damage whatsoever resulting from the use of any information posted on the group.
8. TX SDC does not take editorial control of postings. However, in the event that inappropriate postings are identified by the Forum Moderator, the program reserves the right to take whatever action it deems appropriate.
9. TX SDC reserves the right and privilege to restrict, moderate, deny, or terminate access to this Forum in its sole and complete discretion.
10. Computer viruses can be transmitted over the Internet. Forum participants must try to ensure that the computers they use to access the Forum have up-to-date antivirus software. Participants who use the Forum are at their own risk and agree to release TX SDC and other Forum participants from any and all damages that might be caused by transmitted viruses.

Guidelines for Creating a Safe and Welcoming Forum

1. **Keep your messages short.** If you write a longer document like an essay, put it on a web page or somewhere else where people can look at it if they choose, then send a short message to the Forum announcing it. The same is true for articles you might find that are relevant to SDC. Post the web link to these – don't paste the content into your message.

2. **Reply to the Forum *not* to the sender of the message.** Messages to a discussion forum are intended for public discussion. Remember that everyone will read your message.

3. **Be thoughtful and generous** in your response to other people's messages. Try to consider everyone's point of view even if you disagree with it. Some would say this is the most important guideline of all!

4. **Never be rude or dismissive** about someone's messages. If you have any complaints about other people's behavior on the Forum, take it up with the Forum Manager rather than trying to deal with it yourself. Being rude or dismissive will make other participants uncomfortable, not just the person you're responding to.

5. **Always sign your messages.** You must add your first name at the end of your message, in the way you would normally introduce yourself. It's up to you whether you want to include your last name.

6. **No not send attached files.** The Forum server will not pass attached files through to the subscribers. If someone raises a question that you think can best be answered by reference to an existing document, we suggest you either post a message telling people where to get a copy, or provide the link in your message.

How to Subscribe to the Forum

To subscribe, and for questions, more information, or comments, please contact your TX SDC Advisor.