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LETTERS OF INTENT

Nobody knows more about the unique needs of an individual with special needs than the individual themselves and those who support them. While there are many tools available to maximize opportunities and improve quality of life for the individual, an often underutilized tool is a Letter of Intent. A letter of intent serves two important roles. First, it helps the person with disabilities to advocate for themselves. Second, it attempts to minimize disruption in the event that a caregiver is no longer able to provide support, and a new person must step in.

The process of developing a Letter of Intent presents an excellent opportunity to explore the person's needs. The individual should be included in this process, with the result being a person-centered document. A well-written letter of intent also serves as a roadmap for others in the future.

The letter of intent should discuss the person's likes, dislikes, needs, and preferences and should communicate the person's values, hopes, and dreams. The letter should discuss:

- Daily schedule/routines
- Residential arrangements
- Employment preferences and goals
- Educational requirements and goals
- Dietary preferences and needs
- Medical history and health/wellness concerns
- Family history
- Recreation and leisure preferences
- Contact information for trusted friends and family members
- Spiritual beliefs
- Benefits received by the individual

The letter of intent should be shared with others who interact with the person and feedback should be encouraged. It is an evolving document and will likely change over time. After completion, copies should be distributed to support providers and the Letter of Intent should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

This document is for informational purposes only and is not legal advice. You should consult with an experienced special needs planning attorney before executing anything discussed in this document. While every effort has been made to ensure that the information in this document is accurate, Atlantic Law PLC assumes no responsibility for any errors contained therein and is not responsible for any damages that may result.

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