



# **MEMBER HANDBOOK**

Updated: October 2018



## **Welcome to On My Own of Michigan!**

We're so happy you're here.

You're joining an amazing collective of members who are working toward or are now living their dream of living independently.

We're excited to get started on our work together! And as we get started, we know you may be feeling anxious or have some lingering questions.

Please don't hesitate to talk with us as often as you need. Our goal is to make your time with On My Own productive and enjoyable, and if there is anything I can personally do to make your experience here better—please let me know.

I look forward to working with you!

Jennifer Roccanti  
Executive Director

## About On My Own of Michigan

On My Own of Michigan is a member-centered nonprofit organization that was founded in 1997 by a group of parents of young adults with developmental disabilities. In our twenty years of service to the Oakland County community, we've helped more than 100 individuals achieve and maintain a life of independence.

Our role (and mission) is to help make the transition to, and maintenance of, independent living a smoother journey for you and your family. We're here to help you live the life of your dreams.

## Our values and promise to you

When working with us, we promise to:

- serve as your **one-stop shop** for independent living support—if you have a question, we'll find the answer for you,
- offer you **peace of mind** and be there when you need us, and
- connect you with peers and help you build **long-lasting friendships**.

As we do this work, we want you to feel like:

- **you matter** to us,
- we're a **trusted partner**,
- you're making a **good investment**, and
- you're working with **experts**.

## **Our staff**

On My Own of Michigan is supported by a staff of seven. Five of those staff members are on our program team and dedicated solely to supporting your progress.

Our staff comes to On My Own with a range of experiences—personal, educational and professional. Some are trained social workers and counselors. Others are trained in nonprofit management. A few have family members with developmental disabilities. What we have in common though is a passion for helping you achieve your goals.

## **Who to contact**

If you have any questions, concerns or ideas, please don't hesitate to contact us. Because of the nature of our work, we respond most quickly to email communication but we're also happy to speak with you over the phone.

Here's a look at who you can talk to:

Jennifer Roccanti, Executive Director

[jennifer@onmyownofmi.org](mailto:jennifer@onmyownofmi.org)

(248) 649-3739 x 223

Expertise: our plans for the future, organizational finances and daily operations of On My Own

Lesley Scharfenberg, Development Director

[lesley@onmyownofmi.org](mailto:lesley@onmyownofmi.org)

(248) 649-3739 x 221

Expertise: our fundraising strategy

Amy Sullivan, Skill-Building Program Manager

amy@onmyownofmi.org

(248) 649-3739 x 230

Expertise: skill-building program classes and outings

Rachel Newbill, Independent Living Program Manager

rachel@onmyownofmi.org

(248) 649-3739 x 228

Expertise: independent living program support services

Alexa Cotter, Support Coordinator

alexa@onmyownofmi.org

(248) 649-3739 x 225

Expertise: independent living program support services

Abra Kitei, Support Coordinator

abra@onmyownofmi.org

(248) 649-3739 x 226

Expertise: independent living program support services

Michaela Smith, Member Aide

michaela@onmyownofmi.org

(248) 649-3739 x 229

Expertise: independent living program direct care services

Our offices are located at 1250 Kirts Boulevard, Suite 300 in Troy, Michigan. We're generally open from 9 am to 5 pm each weekday, with additional hours for member classes and outings as posted.

## **Our Board of Trustees**

Our work is governed by an all-volunteer Board of Trustees. Currently, our Board is comprised of seven members. Three of our Board members have family in On My Own programs.

The board's role is to ensure our organization is meeting the needs of our members and remains financially sustainable. They meet every other month to discuss the strategic progress our staff is making in growing the organization.

The Board of Trustees is currently led by President and On My Own family member Kathleen Tillson.

## **Our Family Support Organization**

The Family Support Organization (FSO) is made up of families of our members, and serves the purpose of supporting On My Own families, members, and the organization. The FSO oversees the bylaws for On My Own and appoints On My Own's Board of Trustees.

All families at On My Own are invited to join the FSO. Membership dues are \$25 per year, billed to you by the FSO Treasurer and paid in July. These dues enable you to become a voting member of the FSO, with each member represented by up to one vote at FSO meetings. These votes are primarily used to elect the Board of Trustees and approve any organizational bylaw changes.

Meetings include opportunities for families to share experiences, learn about and become involved in the organization's programming, and discuss common concerns and ideas.

The FSO is currently led by President and On My Own family member Nancie Munselle.

### **Program Eligibility**

On My serves adults (18+) who have a developmental disability and require no more than a moderate level of support from our staff to live independently.

After completing an application, meeting with our staff, and attending an outing and a class, prospective members are provided with an admission decision. From first contact to admission decision, we estimate the application process to take approximately two to eight weeks. If membership is not extended to an applicant, the reasons for which the applicant was found to be ineligible will be documented and shared, if requested, with the



applicant. Recommendations for alternative services will also be shared.

## **Programs**

### **Skill-Building**

Our skill-building program is designed to help you develop and refine your independent living skills, as well as build peer relationships and support networks.

Members come to the skill-building program at many different places on the journey to independent living. Some join us to begin learning and practicing the skills necessary to live in an apartment, while others stay with us to have a continual tune-up on the independent living and social skills they've learned while living on their own. Ultimately, we hope that most of our skill-building members are ready to make the transition to independent living within 18 months of joining our program.

As a member of our skill-building program, you have unlimited access to classes that focus on developing, practicing and mastering personal care, financial, apartment living, employment, transportation, leisure, and civic life activities; weekly social opportunities; free outings to local museums, sporting events and arts and culture activities; a peer mentor; independent living transition support; and caregiver classes and social opportunities.

Some activities have a limited number of member spaces available, as outlined in the registration book that is distributed at least quarterly by email. Registration for activities is confirmed on a first come, first served basis, and you're welcome to sign up for as many classes and outings as you wish.

As part of the skill-building program, you'll also be assessed by our program team every six months to determine your areas of strength and areas needing a bit of improvement. These short assessments, in the form of a checklist, will allow us to better understand where you are on the road to independence as well as to more accurately target our class and outing offerings to meet your needs.

## **Independent Living**

Our independent living program is designed to provide you with more customized support to begin and sustain the transition to independent living. When you select our independent living program, you'll be connected with your own On My Own support coordinator who is there to help build an individualized service plan, support you in reaching your goals, and provide peace of mind to both you and your family that someone is there when you need help.

You do not have to be living independently to use these services. Some members choose to connect with a support coordinator to accelerate their learning and transition to an apartment. Other members begin working with a support coordinator once they've moved into an apartment. The choice is yours.

You'll meet with your support coordinator on average once per week for one hour, and also have the option of adding an average of two hours of direct care each week to your membership. Our direct care is available to help fill critical transportation needs and practice independent living skills. The number of support hours available to you is a decision made with the guidance and support of you, On My Own support staff, and your family (if appropriate.)

As a member of our independent living program, you are entitled to a plan that is person-centered, created on an annual basis and is based on your strengths and abilities. At your annual planning meeting, goals will be created that are measurable and meaningful to you including but not limited to: food, clothing, shelter, employment, education, legal services, transportation, and social.

We follow a self-determination model which means that this is your plan, these are your goals, and you can make changes at any time. You have the right to choose who you want to be included or excluded in your planning process. We are not here to set goals for you but to support you in reaching your goals. We also follow a

strength-based practice, and focus on the strengths and skills that you have when creating your plan in order to help you reach your goals.

This plan will be put into action within 30 days of the start of services at On My Own or within 30 days after it has been reviewed at your annual plan meeting. If you are not satisfied with your plan of service, please speak to your support coordinator. You have the right to request a change and review of your plan to be completed within 30 days.

As a member of our independent living program, you'll also have access to a 24/7 emergency phone line. This phone is carried by trained On My Own staff and is used to help you through non-life threatening situations that may be unfamiliar or anxiety-producing.

Members of our independent living program will also be assessed every six months to determine areas of strength and areas needing improvement. These assessments, the same as those given in our skill-building program, will help us better plan our work with you.

## **Membership Options** (as of 1/1/19)

### Membership Option #1: Skill-Building

Designed for members who do not need or receive support coordination and direct care services elsewhere.

Skill-building membership includes:

- unlimited classes
- weekly social opportunities
- free outings
- a peer mentor
- independent living transition support
- independence assessments
- caregiver classes and social opportunities

### Membership Option #2: Skill-Building + Support Coordination

Designed for members who want one-on-one support.

Skill-building + support coordination membership includes:

- all benefits of membership option #1
- regular one-on-one assistance from your personal support coordinator
  - annual plan development, implementation and monitoring
  - government benefits coordination
  - direct care coordination
- access to our 24/7 on-call staff

### Membership Option #3: Skill-Building, Support Coordination + Direct Care

Designed for members who need more intensive one-on-one support and skill-building practice.

Skill-building, support coordination + direct care membership includes:

- all benefits of membership option #2
- an average of 2 hours per week of one-on-one skill-building assistance from your personal member aide
  - grocery shopping support
  - healthcare appointment assistance
  - money management help

### **Fees (as of 1/1/19)**

On My Own of Michigan is a nonprofit organization and receives its operating funds from both member fees (approximately 53% of total revenues) and donations (approximately 47% of total revenues.) Member fees are reviewed annually and compared against both the cost of providing services and the cost of similar services provided by other organizations in the community to determine fairness.

On My Own members will be assessed the following fees for membership, as applicable:

One-time application fee: \$100

Membership Option #1: \$3,300 per year

Membership Option #2: \$6,000 per year

Membership Option #3: \$8,700 per year

### Optional Costs

Short-term direct care (as available): \$25/hour

Short-term access to 24/7 on-call staff: \$15/day  
4-day trips: est. \$500-750 each (2 offered each year)

Members receiving support from Community Living Services Oakland County may qualify for a reduction in fees. Please let us know if you'd like to explore this option.

Invoices are sent to families by the end of each month for fees due in the following month. Payments are due on the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month, and can be made by check or credit card. Payments not received on time may be subject to late fees and/or a hold placed on activity registrations. After more than three months of non-payment, members will be subject to termination.

As an incentive to help us grow the On My Own community, you will receive a one-time \$300 reduction in your monthly invoice for each member that joins our program because of your referral. Just make sure to let Executive Director Jennifer Roccanti know that you were the one to introduce them to On My Own.

## **Program Policies**

There are times when classes, outings or support coordination meetings must be cancelled. We do our best to limit these instances and will inform you by phone or email as soon as possible of any changes to the schedule.

If you must cancel attendance at a class or outing, we ask that you call our cancellation line at (248) 649-3739 x 100. Attendance at outings must be cancelled no later than 3 days prior to the outing. If a ticket has already been purchased for the outing and you need to cancel, you may be subject to a charge for the outing.

If you need to cancel a meeting with a staff member, please call them directly. If you are more than 15 minutes late for an appointment with On My Own staff we retain the right to cancel or reschedule your appointment. If an On My Own staff is more than 15 minutes late to an appointment you have the right to cancel or reschedule the appointment as well.

If you are sick, please do not come to the office or attend class or outings. Many of us at On My Own get sick easily and we'd like to keep as many germs out of circulation as possible. Illnesses that prohibit participation in On My Own activities include:

- fevers in the last 48 hours
- vomiting or diarrhea in the last 48 hours
- cold or flu-like symptoms in the last 48 hours
- bacterial infections that have not yet been treated with antibiotics for at least 24 hours



## **Termination of Membership**

The following situations may result in the termination of membership in On My Own of Michigan:

- a member's expressed desire to terminate membership
- a medical condition requiring care beyond the scope and skills of On My Own staff
- habitual and severe behavioral issues which are unable to be resolved or result in significant disruption to the mission of On My Own
- demonstrated lack of ability or motivation to comply with On My Own policies and programs
- a member who has not paid service fees due to On My Own for more than 90 days

In the unlikely event that termination is recommended, we'll do all we can to recommend a more suitable placement for you and assist you in applying for other services if requested.

If you wish to terminate your membership as an On My Own member or change the level of support you're receiving, please let us know. When the termination process is in motion you and your guardian (if applicable) will need to complete the Termination of Support Coordination Services form.

## **Your Rights as a Member**

Your rights are important to us. Each year, we will provide you with an updated copy of this member handbook so that you can review your rights. We take responsibility for protecting your rights as we provide services to you, though you are encouraged to ask questions and make suggestions that you feel would help us in supporting you.

## **Competency**

Just because you have a disability does not mean that you are incompetent. You have the right to marry and divorce, buy property, have a driver's license, and decide most aspects of your life. You will continue to be treated as competent by On My Own of Michigan unless a court has determined that you are in need of a legal guardian and has had a guardian appointed for you.

## **Confidentiality**

You have the right to confidentiality.

Your information will be kept private in compliance with HIPAA standards. Information about you and the services that you receive cannot be given to anyone except as required or allowed by law. The following are situations when confidential information may be released:

- if a law or court order requires your records to be released,
- if you, your legal representative, or guardian consents,
- if needed to get benefits for you or to get reimbursement for cost of treatment,
- if it is needed for research or statistical purposes, with certain safeguards regarding your identification,
- if you die and your close relative needs the information to apply for and receive benefits, and
- if you inform On My Own staff that you are going to harm yourself or another person, then he or she may have to notify the police and the person who you threatened to harm.

## **Informed Consent**

You must give informed consent if you want On My Own of Michigan to give or receive any confidential information about you.

In order to be able to give informed consent:

- you should be told about the risks, benefits, and possible alternative options,
- you should be able to reasonably understand the information including the risks, benefits, and possible alternative options, and
- it must be voluntary and your decision.

This consent must be provided through one of the following documents:

- If you receive support only through On My Own of Michigan, the document is called: Consent to Release/Disclose Protected Information.
- If you receive Independent Support Coordination through Community Living Services and On My Own of Michigan, the document is called the Statewide Universal Consent to Exchange Health Information.

The consent will be completed and updated on an annual basis, ideally at your annual plan meeting. However, you may change your consent at any time by speaking to your support coordinator.

Providing informed consent is voluntary. Your support coordinator will review with you the risks and benefits of providing consent or deciding not to provide consent.

## **Video and Photo Rights**

On My Own of Michigan loves to celebrate your accomplishments as well as provide you with encouragement amidst setbacks. Sometimes, we celebrate by sharing your story and/or photo on our website, in printed materials or on social media.

You have the right to not be photographed, audiotaped, or videotaped unless you, your legal representative, or guardian agree in writing.

If someone wants to photograph, videotape, or record you for educational, social, or informational purposes you have the right to say no. If you say no, we will not proceed.

Your support coordinator will review the Photograph, Social Media, and Website Release form with you each year.

## **Privacy**

You have the right to privacy at the OMO office and in your home.

### Office Privacy:

In order to protect your privacy, you have the right to have meetings with On My Own support staff in a private office or setting, unless you agree otherwise. An example would be if you wanted the office door left open due to the temperature of the room.

### Apartment privacy:

On My Own staff will not enter your apartment without one of the following:

- You or your roommate letting staff inside
- A verbal agreement from yourself or your guardian allowing staff to enter

## **Freedom from Abuse and Neglect**

You have the right:

- Not to be physically abused or harassed
- Not to be sexually abused or harassed
- Not to be neglected
- Not to be taken advantage of financially
- Not to be a victim of retaliation
- Not to be humiliated

## **Record Access**

You have the right to see your On My Own record.

Upon request, you, your legal representative, or your guardian can request access to your On My Own record.

You may access and submit the Member Record Request Form through your support coordinator. If you, your legal representative, or your guardian believes your record contains incorrect information, you or they may have a statement placed in your record correcting the information. However, you will not be allowed to remove what is already recorded. If you have any questions about information in your record please speak to your support coordinator for clarification.

Member files are kept while you are a member and for 7 years after you leave the OMO program. After 7 years of non-membership, your files are shredded and disposed of.

## **Understanding**

You have the right for information to be communicated to you in a way that you understand.

On My Own of Michigan will work to accommodate you, how you learn, and your individual needs. Options include but are not limited to:

- Large print documentation
- Reading documentation out loud
- Explaining documents and summarizing instead of reading documents word for word

If you need any accommodations please speak to your support coordinator.

## **Office Environment**

You have the right to receive services in a place which is clean and safe.

The On My Own of Michigan office will have enough heat, lighting, hot and cold water, a bathroom with privacy, and be presented in a clean manner.

## Civil Rights

You have your civil rights including: the right to education, the right to vote\*, and the right not to be discriminated against because of your:

- Age
- Color
- Height
- National origin
- Physical or mental disability
- Sex
- Religion
- Race
- Weight

\*Information about how to vote may be obtained through your support coordinator

Your rights may also be protected under:

- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Fair Housing Amendments Act
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
- Michigan Handicappers Civil Rights Act

On My Own of Michigan also does not discriminate against your sexual orientation, gender identity or immigration status.



## **Dignity and Respect**

You and your family have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

You and your family have the most knowledge about you, and information we receive from you and your family is respected. In addition your family members have the following rights:

- Request and receive general education about the nature of developmental disabilities
- Request and receive information about available support services, advocacy, and support groups, financial assistance, and coping strategies

If you'd like your family to receive updates regarding your plan of service and progress, you must first provide us with your informed consent.

## **Formal Complaint Procedures**

If you ever have a concern about our services, please don't hesitate to let us know. We have a formal complaint procedure you may use, but you should also know that you can always talk with us about anything. We hope you'll share with us how you're feeling so that we may address any concerns you have.

If you'd like to talk, here are a few steps you can take to ensure you find resolution to your issue:

1. First, speak with the staff person involved in the situation you'd like to talk about.
2. If speaking with the staff person involved doesn't resolve your issue, please contact Executive Director Jennifer Roccanti. She will review the issue and propose a solution within 48 hours of receiving your communication.
3. If you are still unsatisfied with the resolution of your issue, please use the formal complaint form on the next page as a guide for submitting a note to the Executive Director. She will call a meeting of the Grievance Committee to review the situation. The Grievance Committee consists of On My Own's Executive Director, Independent Living Program Manager and Skill-Building Program Manager, the President of the Family Support Organization and the President of the Board of Trustees. The Grievance Committee will issue a written response within five days of meeting. You and/or your family may be asked to be present at the meeting. Decisions made by this committee are considered final.

Formal complaints submitted through this process will be kept confidential. On My Own also has a strict no-retaliation policy in regards to formal complaints received.

# Formal Complaint Form

Name:

Date:

Please describe your concern:

Please describe the resolutions that have been offered to you:

Please describe how you would like your concern to be resolved:

Signature:

## **Additional Resources**

There are additional sources of support available to you.

If you are interested in learning more about other local programs and organizations in the community, we will help you locate them. All known local agencies are provided on our website, [www.onmyownofmi.org](http://www.onmyownofmi.org) (under Programs/Resources.) You can also gain access to referrals for legal entities, self-help support services, and advocacy support services by viewing our referral binder in our member lounge or by speaking to our staff who will assist you in finding services that best suit your needs.

Many of our members take advantage of the following opportunities:

### Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

This is a federal program that provides monthly payments to adults (18+) who are disabled and have limited financial resources. The amount received depends on your income and living arrangements. If you receive SSI, you are automatically eligible for Medicaid, which can help pay for your healthcare expenses. For more information, please visit: [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov).

### Social Security Disability Income (SSDI)

This is also a federal program that provides monthly payments to adults (18+) who were disabled before the age of 22 and cannot work, as well as disabled workers and their spouse or children. The amount received depends on your work history and can be reduced if you are receiving other benefits. Your assets do not affect SSDI payments however, and in some cases you can receive both SSDI and SSI. After 24 months of receiving SSDI, you are eligible for Medicare health benefits. For more information, please visit: [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov).

### Community Living Services (CLS)

This community-based organization provides support to individuals of all ages with developmental disabilities. Our support coordinators are able to serve as your support coordinator through CLS, leading to a possible reduction in costs to you for On My Own support services. For more information, please contact us or visit: [www.comlivserv.com](http://www.comlivserv.com).

### Macomb-Oakland Regional Center (MORC)

This community-based organization provides support to individuals of all ages with developmental disabilities. For more information, please visit: [www.morcinc.org](http://www.morcinc.org).

### Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS)

MRS provides services to individuals with disabilities who require additional assistance in becoming job ready and finding appropriate employment opportunities. For more information, please visit: [www.state.mi.us/career](http://www.state.mi.us/career).

### The ARC of Oakland County

This advocacy and membership organization is dedicated to working with families to address their needs. For more information, please visit: [www.thearcoakland.org](http://www.thearcoakland.org).



## Handbook Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of On My Own's member handbook. I understand that it is my responsibility to familiarize myself with the handbook on an annual basis, as it will be reviewed and updated by staff each year. I agree to abide by the policies contained in the handbook.

I further understand that this handbook contains only a summary of membership benefits currently offered by OMO and an overview of some of its policies and procedures. OMO reserves the right to unilaterally add, delete, or modify the policies and procedures set forth in the handbook or in any other OMO document at any time, with or without prior notice, and may vary the application of its policies and procedures in its sole discretion.

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Member Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name