

Fall 2013



Options for Services... Here for You.

# Options for Services is now a permanent program of Innovative LIFE Options!

Options for Services (OFS) started as a pilot project in the spring of 2010 serving individuals funded through In the Company of Friends (ICOF) exclusively. OFS was developed to enhance the menu of options for individuals and their support networks related to the administrative functions of the ICOF model. The intent was to develop a service that could provide individuals and their support networks the

choice of hiring a contractor to complete these functions. After three years in the project phase learning about how to offer this service and a lengthy review, the Innovative LIFE Options board approved the project on an on-going basis. It became evident that OFS has been a useful service over the past three years. To date, twenty five percent of individuals who receive ICOF funding have accessed OFS! Those who

have not are comforted by the knowledge that OFS is there should the need arise. OFS became a mainstream program of Innovative LIFE Options in April of 2013.

**“The support network and employer are not alone... there is a service to fall back on. A safety net.”**

-A Resource Coordinator

## A word from the OFS Coordinator

Hello everyone!

After almost two years in this position I must say that I am enjoying it immensely. I have and continue to learn many new skills. Over the years OFS has gone through quite the evolution from idea, to project, to permanent program! Many people have helped in brainstorming the vision, direction, and how this service could be best offered to individuals who receive ICOF funding. Without them this program would not exist and their contributions are greatly appreciated. I would like to say thank you to the OFS advisory committee and Innovative LIFE Options board members and staff team.



I would also like to formally thank all of the OFS contractors. Without their skilled work the pilot project would not have been such a success. They have represented OFS well with great professionalism, a strong value base, and good work.

What's in store for the future of OFS? We will continue to fine-tune and improve the program to better serve individuals who receive ICOF funding. As well, we are looking into the possibility of expanding the service to people who access self-managed respite dollars. They also manage their own supports, which includes many administrative functions. OFS could be an attractive option to the non-ICOF population. Such exciting possibilities!

In this newsletter there is information about OFS and our database of contractors. We hope you find it informative. We are planning to create a bi-annual newsletter that will have resources, testimonials, and our latest news. Please stay tuned... and thank you for choosing Options for Services!

**“For a self-managed program to have the opportunity to bring someone in to fill the gaps... what could be better than that?”**

- A support network member

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# What can OFS be contracted to do?

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Individuals and their support networks can contract with OFS to complete tasks that are either too time consuming, require a specific skill set or that they simply do not want to do.

By doing this, support networks have more time and energy to enjoy their relationship with the individual instead of completing the functions surrounding his or her life.

OFS is not designed to be an emergency on call system nor will be the contact person to help fill or work last minute shifts. OFS will not make decisions on behalf of individuals and support networks, instead will carry out the act as instructed.

## Some examples of how OFS has been helpful to individuals and their support networks:

- Placing ads, screening applicants, interviewing, coordinating mandatory trainings and checks.
- Reviewing job descriptions and completing orientation checklists with new employees.
- Creating documents such as job descriptions, training plans, or staff schedules.
- Problem solving and goal setting with employees for a general or specific purpose.
- Coordinating and leading staff meetings.
- Completing performance evaluations.
- Assisting with payroll and staff scheduling.
- Coordinating medical appointments, keeping track of and ordering medical supplies.
- Observing and providing feedback on improvements to systems.
- Mentoring and supervising employees.
- Coordinating details of a move, vacation, or wedding.

OFS strives to find contractors who have a value base that is a fit with the ICOF model, who have experience in the disability field, and who are skillful in some or all of the areas Options for Services can be contracted to help with.

## How does OFS Work?

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If you are interested in contracting with OFS or would like more information, please call or email the OFS Coordinator (as shown on page 4 of this newsletter).

1. The Coordinator will meet with you to discuss the tasks, terms, and time frame of the agreement. The Coordinator will then draft an agreement for you to review and provide the final approval.
2. The Coordinator will find a suitable contractor to complete the agreement based on skills and availability. A first meeting with the contractor will be set up by the Coordinator.
3. After the first meeting, the contractor will become your main contact. The Coordinator is still available if a revision to the agreement is needed or if there is an issue with the contractor.
4. The Coordinator will connect throughout the agreement to ensure OFS is meeting your expectations.
5. You will be responsible to review and provide approval for the contractor's timesheet on a monthly basis. OFS pays the contractor directly and then the individual is billed for services rendered.
6. Once the agreement has been completed, the Coordinator will be in touch to gather feedback regarding your satisfaction.

The fee for service is \$20.00/hour and can include the cost of mileage (if incurred with an individual) at \$0.40/kilometer.

# Meet the Options for Services Contractors!



Wanda has been with OFS for almost 3 years. In addition to working in this field for 22 years, Wanda has been a foster parent to someone with a disability for 13 years. Wanda has a wide range of skills including payroll, interviewing, and day to day planning. Wanda is also part of an ICOF support network and is familiar with the variety of supports that can be needed.

Tara has worked within ICOF and LIFE since 2006 being a team leader, resource coordinator, and now contract staff for OFS. Tara has worked within the disability field since 1999 and prior to that worked with children and families. Tara now sits on a support network for someone in ICOF.



A mother of 3 (soon to be 4), Miriam has a passion for helping people. Miriam's experience teaching overseas has enhanced her organizational, creative, motivational and adaptability skills. Having personal experience as a family member to someone with a disability, she understands both the joys and frustrations of finding the right match/employee.

Scott has been working in the field for twenty years, the past 16+ at WASO. In this time Scott has worked in residential, pre-vocational, vocational and employment services, and is currently a program manager. Scott has been with OFS for two years, having completed three contracts focused on hiring, training and mentoring.



Tracy has worked with folks who have disabilities in various capacities since 1998. Aside from working with OFS, she also works with another organization coordinating day and residential services for people and also works as a Sharing Circle of Support Facilitator. Tracy is also currently on the executive for MSEN (Manitoba Supported Employment Network).

Chantal has been in this field of work for nearly 20 years and joined the Options for Services team late last year. Chantal has over a dozen years of experience in interviewing, hiring and training direct support staff.



A graduate from the University of Winnipeg, Conflict Resolution Studies; Jenny has found passion in coaching and mentoring individuals and groups. As a previous Employment Facilitator, Jenny has notable skills in recruiting and screening employees.

Debby worked for Community Living for over 30 years, as a Community Service Worker and a Program Manager. Debby specializes in staff training, mediation, or facilitation of individual planning.



Matthew has worked for New Directions for 8 years and conducts Person Centred Training for the agency as well as help people create Life Plans on their own lives. Matthew is looking forward to meeting a lot of people through Options for Services.

Mike has worked in the field of disability services for 13 years with a large agency in Winnipeg. Mike got involved with OFS to help out and experience a different support model that gives more freedom than the more traditional models.





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## CASUAL CONTRACT POSITIONS AVAILABLE

Do you have a strong belief in promoting inclusion and self-determination?

Do you have strong written, verbal, interpersonal, and organizational skills?

We have a position for you!

Candidates should have at least two years of experience in a management position as well as in Human Resources, including interviewing, supervising, and training staff that support people with an intellectual disability. Experience with payroll submissions and tracking would be an asset.

Please submit your resume to Options for Services, 4-120 Maryland Street, Winnipeg, MB, R3G 1L1 or email [optionsforservices@icof-life.ca](mailto:optionsforservices@icof-life.ca)

## Testimonials by those who have used OFS

*“We used Options for Services a couple of times and were very pleased, particularly the last time when they helped us recruit a quality individual for an important, key position with our daughter’s support team. Going through that process on our own would have been very time consuming and difficult, and we likely would not have found the person we needed.”*

*- A support network member of an individual who receives ICOF funding*

*“When the time came to hire staff, our daughter (and her network) was unsure about how to go about it. This was different from what any of us had experienced before. We went through a process of placing local ads, telephone interviews, and a lot of guess work before we could even decide on a few face to face interviews. There were several no-shows and the ones that did show up for an interview were not considered suitable for hiring. It was a lot of effort with little to show for. In the end it was friends and word of mouth that led suitable staff to us. Then we learned that staff isn’t necessarily permanent and we soon were faced with having to go through it all again. Right around that time however, we were made aware of an LIFE pilot project called Options for Services (OFS). This turned out to be a great help indeed. For a modest cost all the hard work is taken care of and in all three cases now has turned out very well indeed. Highly recommended.”*

*- A father of an individual who receives ICOF funding*