



## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Liberty ARC Awarded State Grant**

**AMSTERDAM-** Liberty ARC has been awarded over \$40,000 in grant monies from the New York State Department of Labor's (DOL) Division of Worker Protection for workplace health and safety training. The grant is aimed at addressing serious occupational health and safety hazards, both physical and psychological, preventing and reducing the likelihood of health and safety-related issues as well as enabling staff at all levels to take a proactive approach in protecting and enhancing workplace health and safety.

The agency will offer the following trainings:

#### **Sexual Harassment**

This e-learning course will be offered to staff at all levels of our organization. The training will help all staff identify behaviors and tendencies that are not acceptable in the workplace as well as ensure a safe, harassment-free work environment. With proper training, participants will learn how to avoid a potential situation for themselves or to prevent others from being in such a position.

#### **ALICE (Active Shooter in the Workplace)**

ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) training will be initially completed by Liberty ARC leadership management through an online certification component as well as hands-on practical training. Staff will gain skills necessary to have a logical response to a violent incident. Upon successful completion of the training, staff will be equipped with the skills to protect themselves and others from a potential life-threatening situation.

#### **Reasonable Suspicion**

This training will assist our agency in putting safeguards in place to identify if staff are under the influence of drugs and alcohol as well as allow us to take a proactive approach to decrease injury and improve safety in the workplace. This training is particularly relevant for our workforce due to their direct and sometimes one-on-one responsibility of supporting individuals with important daily tasks.

#### **OSHA 10-House Course**

This certification course, being offered through the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), will give our facilities and maintenance staff a higher level of awareness, preparation, skill level and understanding in workplace health and safety. The OSHA 10-Hour course will promote worker safety, reduce injuries, and decrease hazardous environments.

### Fire System Training

The Fire System training will ensure that our maintenance technicians have full working knowledge of the agency's fire system alarms, along with the ability to troubleshoot and repair them as needed. This hands-on training provides critical assessment, troubleshooting, and repair training to staff. It will also ensure fire safety/alarms at every site will be kept at an optimal level as well as allow us to have trained, in-house technicians that will be able to repair or service fire systems without delay.

### Risk Assessments

In an effort to be proactive and better recognize hazards, an outside consultant will provide on-site evaluations. These risk assessments will help to educate all participating staff on potential threats, help to decrease incidents and accidents as well as help identify and correct hazards.

"Liberty ARC is an agency that continually looks to enhance and strengthen our workforce with both internal and external training opportunities. This DOL workplace health and safety grant solidifies the agency's commitment to a strong, vibrant workforce through these essential and very timely trainings," said Liberty ARC CEO Jennifer Saunders. "All trainings will help to ensure the health and safety of those we support and employ and will ultimately improve our practices and procedures agency-wide, which will be incredibly beneficial to our agency."

### **About Liberty ARC**

Liberty ARC, the Montgomery County Chapter of NYSARC, Inc., was founded in 1957 by parents of children with developmental disabilities who wished to establish special education programs in the local community. For over 60 years, the organization has provided the area with top-quality supports and has grown to include vocational, recreational, residential, day, family support and health-related services to nearly 580 individuals with physical, developmental and other disabilities.

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