



**Latvian Umbrella body  
for Disability Organisations  
SUSTENTO**

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## **Information Package for persons with disabilities**

### **looking for advice**

**This Kit is to support you in understanding better how to receive the advice you are looking for. If you have any ideas on how to make things better please call us.**



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### **ABOUT SUSTENTO**

#### **What is Latvian Umbrella Body for Disability Organisations SUSTENTO?**

We are an self Advocacy organisation. This mean we support you in getting your needs met.



We will be glad to support you if:

You are from a non-Latvian speaking background (that means either you or at least one of your parents or grandparents were born in a Country where the main language spoken is not Latvian)

**AND**

**You have a disability or you are a carer or a family member of a person with a disability.**

**AND**



You live in Latvia

**AND**

You have difficulties in getting your needs met.

### **How to find us???**

Take a public bus nr. 3, 6, 47, 51, 52 or trolley bus 11 or 22 to the stop Nīcgales iela.

Take a short walk on Nīcgales str., passing food-shop Elvi and reaching Nīcgales str. Nb. 26. There is hostel Nīcgale in the same building . Take the elevator to the 3rd floor, room nb. 315.

**WHO WE ARE ?**

The **general objective** of SUSTENTO is to take care of the common interests of the member organisations.

**The aim** of our organisation is to promote opportunity of equal participation for all members of the society, to enable protection of rights of people with disabilities in order to provide inclusion of them in to society.

In order to reach its aims SUSTENTO is working in different fields:

## **Structure of the organisation**

The members of SUTENTO are non-governmental organisations of persons with disabilities and/or chronic illness patients. They are all engaged in activities on national and regional level – and some are engaged on local level.

The highest body in SUSTENTO is the annual meeting. It meets once per year.

The annual meeting elects an board of the organisation with seven members (one chairman/woman, one vice chairman/woman one executive director and four board members).

SUSTENTO also has Meeting of Representatives. It is composed of the chairpersons of each member organisation or its authorised representatives, who represent interests of their organisations and have a single voice.

Chairperson of the Meeting of representatives is also chairperson of Board.

Work direction and activities

Promotion of advantages in the policy of government and local municipality, as well as influencing process of adopting positively set legislation for people with disabilities.

- To promote policy, which protect rights of the people with special disabilities;
- To cooperate with different agencies on national and local level;
- To provide systematic monitoring of legislative proposals concerning people with special disabilities;
- To promote participation in the decision making process on all levels to protect interests of participating organisations;

- To participate within its competence in drafting laws and other normative acts and provides opinion on them.

## **Staff**



SUSTENTO employs a number of staff. They have different jobs, but each one of them will direct you to the right person.

## WHAT DO WE MEAN BY:

- Advocacy:** Active support for someone or together with a peer person or a whole organisation team.
- Advocate:** An staff member who will 'stand beside' you and support you so you make your own decisions and get your needs met.
- Consumer:** You or any other person using a service, for example, someone using SUSTENTO services or advice is an consumer.
- Carer:** A person who takes care of someone with a disability. This can be a husband, wife, partner, parent, son, daughter, relative or good friend.
- Disability:** Includes an intellectual, physical, psychiatric or sensory impairment, brain injury, chronic illness or any combination of these.

## HOW WILL SUSTENTO SUPPORT YOU?

You can come to SUSTENTO's office or if that is not possible, our staff member can come to you.

The staff member will ask you questions about the support you need and will listen to your answers. If you need an interpreter we can try to arrange one or you can invite anyone you like to the meeting to help you.

After that you and the advocate will plan together what to do. This plan is called an Individual Advisory Action Plan. This plan is a guiding instrument on how to support You. It also sets out what actions you have agreed to take



yourself.

## WAYS WE CAN SUPPORT YOU

We can support you:

- By giving you information about your rights, what services are available in the local community and where you can get help
- By talking to you about ways you can solve your problem or what choices are available to you
- By working with you to solve your problems

We can work with you by:



Writing a letter for you



Calling on your behalf



Speaking on your behalf



Sitting in a meeting with you

### **YOU HAVE THE RIGHT:**

- To be listened to
- To make your own decisions
- To have your information kept confidential
- To feel safe

### **YOU HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY :**

- To respect the rights of other people
- To give the true information to the staff
- To be active partner in solving the problems

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All the information you give us about yourself and your circumstances is kept confidential. This means we won't tell anyone anything about you that you don't want us to:

## SERVICE STANDARDS

We work according to the Disability Services Standards. These are rules about how we should work.



### **Service Access**

**Everyone who needs a service should be supported to get one according to his/her needs.**

### **Individual Need**

We shall support You to define and list Your individual needs.

### **Decision Making and Choice**

You have the right to choose what you want to do and how you want to do it. You can say what you want to do with your life.

### **Privacy, Dignity and Confidentiality**

You have the right to have your own space and things. Nobody else can touch them unless you say it's OK.

You have the right to be treated like everyone else.

We won't tell anyone anything about you that you don't want us to unless we believe that it will cause harm to others or if it is illegal or criminal activity.

### **Participation and Integration**

You should be able to do things everyone else does.

### **Valued Status**

We will support you to learn and show other people that you can do many things and that you are important.

### **Complaints and Disputes**

You can tell us what's wrong with services You have received and we will try to fix it.

### If You have any suggestion to our work

You can either speak to one of our staff, or write us a letter, or ask someone for you and raise your issues. We will take all your complaints seriously and act upon them together with

