

Aġenzija Sappport Services

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About Aġenzija Sappport

Aġenzija Sappport is the national agency that provides a wide array of services to persons with disability and their families.

The services given are developed in a personalised manner, according to the circumstances of each case.

The support given by the agency is based on the understanding that both the person with disability and society stand to gain through the advancement of persons with disability as contributing members of society.

What services are offered by the Agency?

Aġenzija Sappport offers a full service to disabled persons and their families. The services are aimed towards persons with a physical and/or intellectual

disability from birth up to 60 years of age. Some services are also aimed to support their family members. Aġenzija Sappport offers these services in Malta and Gozo free of charge.

Services include:

- Community services
- Residential services
- Day services
- Schemes - Empowerment scheme and grants on the purchase of specialised equipment
- Schemes - Exemption from payment of vehicle road licence and exemption from vehicle registration tax
- Sign language interpretation service
- Assessment for Independent Living in relation to mobility, including adaptive driving – Sonia Tanti Independent Living Centre
- Assessment and interventions in relation to assistive technology - ACTU
- Sharing lives





The Gozo Agenzija Sapport's office is located at the Learning Hub in Għajnsielem.

Services in Gozo

All services offered by Agenzija Sapport are offered to both Maltese and Gozitan individuals alike. Agenzija Sapport's base and official office in Gozo is located at the Learning Hub in Għajnsielem, which also houses the agency's Day Centre.

Day Services

The Day Centres run by Agenzija Sapport carry out different types of programmes to assist persons with disability to continue developing their potential and to live as independently as possible, whilst enhancing their abilities.

The programmes created vary from social and educational activities, to cultural activities and independent living. The activities are based on the individual's abilities and wishes and are created by a number of professionals, including occupational therapists.

The objectives of the service are reached by:

- providing core skilled programmes such as basic

skills, including numeracy and literacy skills, towards independent living, supported by other skills that enhance quality of life;

- developing programmes which enable service users to engage in as many activities as possible within the community, both in occupational nature and leisure activities;
- carrying out programmes of physical and psychological well-being as well as activities that enhance the service users' educational, social communication, cultural and leisure abilities.

The agency's Individual Support Plans (ISP), that offer a personalised programme to each individual according to his/her needs and abilities, develop the activities and programmes each service user participates in.

The day services team also has/had a number of collaborations with other entities / organisations to continue to enhance the service users' abilities.

Part of the Day Centre's activities includes a programme whereby service users, guided by dedicated Support Workers, create unique



Numeracy and literacy skills are provided as part of the Day Centre's activities.

handcrafted items as part of therapeutic sessions, giving them the opportunity to show their artistic abilities whilst enhancing their skills.

Community Services

The Community Services offer personal assistance and interventions through Agency Support Workers to help people with disabilities and their families at home, at the workplace and in the community to lead an independent life. The interventions provide support services such as self-care, respite for families/guardians and accompanying individuals to medical appointments.

Independent Community Living Monitoring Service

Aġenzija Support also offers a number of schemes that give subsidies to families for them to be able to engage a personal assistant of their choice. The aim of this service is to provide persons with disability with an opportunity to lead a more independent life, through one of three schemes: Direct Payment, Independent Community Living and Personal

Assistance Fund. One may access any of these schemes after the necessary assessments are carried out and the amount of hours and/or subsidy to be allocated are determined.

Residential Services

Aġenzija Support offers residential services in both Malta and Gozo. This offers a home environment



Service users are provided with developing programmes of physical and psychological well-being.

for persons with disabilities who for some reason cannot continue living with their family.

The residents are assisted by Support Workers, who provide the service users with the opportunity to integrate with other residents and the community at large.

Residents will gain skills in community living through individualised support plans. This is a Person-Centred Support Plan to determine the need and advisability of modification in the manner the service user is supported. The residents are supported in activities of daily living, skills-teaching, and community inclusion. Relationships are valued and therefore clients are encouraged to maintain or build effective relationships with family members, friends and significant others.

Social Contact Opportunities – Sharing Lives

Sharing Lives is a service launched in April 2017, whereby volunteers organise social activities and befriend persons with disability. Continuous training

and support is provided to volunteers thus ensuring that the service provided is of high standard.

Persons with a disability attend these social events and form friendships with other persons with a disability and with the volunteers and together, they share experiences according to their likes. Events include: hikes, BBQs, cultural events, sports activities, music sessions, concerts, youth groups meetings, etc.

This service was extended to Gozo in late 2019, and since then, regular events have been organised for service users in Gozo.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions imposed, certain activities have been adapted to online activities or in small groups, always following the advice and measures by the Health Authorities. Social one-to-one contact is also facilitated through this Service.

Individual interested in volunteering may help in two main ways:

- One can participate and help organise unique



Various events, such as hikes and BBQs, are organised on a regular basis.

activities for the people with the disability in a group context.

- One can act as a social contact where the volunteers are matched with a person with disability who he/she can befriend.

Events may be one-off activities or a programme of events. Volunteers need to be of 16 years of age or older, and those that accumulate more than 30 hours of service at the end of their experience will be presented with a certificate from the Agency.

Individuals may contact the Sharing Lives team on sharinglives.support@gov.mt for more information.

Empowerment Scheme

Aġenzija Sapport operates the Empowerment Scheme, which aims to provide financial assistance to persons with disability to be able to buy equipment in order to lead a more independent life. The Scheme is run by an independent Board which includes a number

of professionals, who advise and provide information to persons with disability on how they can purchase equipment according to their individual needs. The Board checks the eligibility of the applicant and assesses each application individually.

The Empowerment Scheme also offers subsidies on transport service for people with disabilities to be able to go to work, attend post-secondary educational institutions and sports activities. This subsidy is given to persons with disability who cannot make use of public transport.

Another scheme, the Grant on Specialised Equipment, offers subsidies on equipment from a definite list. Those applying for this scheme are required to have a Special Identity Card issued on their name. Gozitans may refer to the Sapport office in Għajnsielem for further assistance to apply for these schemes. For details on eligibility criteria and on what documents one needs to submit to apply, kindly visit the Agency's website www.sapport.gov.mt or call on Sapport Helpline 153 (extension 5).



Creation of handcrafted items, is part of the Day Centre's activities.



Sonia Tanti Independent Living Centre (STILC)

STILC provides information, guidance and assessment by professionals to persons with disability and their families to lead an independent life within the community through the use of mobility equipment, assistive devices and/or training.

The services offered include:

- wheelchair and seating assessments
- driving assessments
- car adaptations
- driving simulation

Persons with disability are also able to receive driving lessons using a modified car, through the Adaptive Driving Motoring School. One may refer directly for this service or be referred by a medical professional, Occupational Therapist or Physiotherapist. This service is based in Malta, however, Gozitans may also benefit from the services offered.

Access to Communication & Technology Unit (ACTU)

The mission of the service is to support the individual's communication, independence, quality of life and participation in society. This service is given by Speech & Language Therapists and Occupational Therapists.

ACTU offers two services:

- Augmentative & Alternative Communication (AAC)
- Electronic Assistive Technology (EAT)

The AAC service is designed to support individuals who present with complex communication needs. The main goal of this service is to assess and make recommendations for AAC systems and devices and access to them, and to support the implementation.

The Electronic Assistive Technology (EAT) service provides assessment to present persons with physical and intellectual disability with alternative access to the computer as well assessments for environmental control.

Contact with the Agency for a Service

When a person requests a service from Aġenzija Sapport, the Agency's professionals from the Assessment and Intervention team assesses the situation to be able to refer and guide the person with disability and his/her family to the appropriate services according to their needs. This team includes Social Workers, Physiotherapists, Speech & Language Pathologists and Occupational Therapists.

The initial contact with Aġenzija Sapport can be made through the Agency's Helpline. This is a Freephone aimed for persons with disability and their family members to initiate contact with Aġenzija Sapport when they require any service from the Agency.

One may also call the helpline to enquire about the service they may already have requested, to put forward any issues that they may be experiencing with the service being provided, or to provide suggestions regarding any of the Agency's services.

The helpline can be accessed by calling on Freephone 153. One is then directed to press 5 to get connected to the helpline team within Aġenzija Sapport. Trained personnel will take the callers' details in order to be able to process the request for service, the caller's needs are registered and forwarded directly to the Agency department or team providing the requested service.

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