



Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Meena Seshamani, M.D., Ph.D., Secretary

Developmental Disabilities Administration

Organization-Wide Positive Behavior Support (PBS) Application

SUMMARY OF OPPORTUNITY

The Maryland Department of Health's Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) is inviting provider organizations to take part in a multi-year initiative to implement Organization-Wide Positive Behavior Support (PBS).

Participating organizations will receive training, technical assistance, and evaluation to promote the use of organization-wide positive behavior support from DDA, in collaboration with the Institute of Community Integration at the University of Minnesota, Sheppard Pratt, and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore.

Through this initiative, organizations will build an organization-wide PBS framework using a multi-tiered approach to decision-making. This approach helps organizations:

- Create more effective and efficient practices.
- Strengthen staff skills and confidence.
- Improve the quality of life for the people they support.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The full application is attached as Appendix A. Organizations interested in participating must submit a fully completed application no later than **11:59 p.m. on October 9, 2026**. Only fully completed applications will be reviewed.

Teams will be notified of their selection by email by **October 26, 2026**.

SELECTION PROCESS

DDA's Positive Behavior Support state leadership team will review all fully completed applications and select up to eight organizations to participate.

Applications will be reviewed based on:

- The organization's commitment to implementing Organization-Wide Positive Behavior Support.
- Support from organizational leadership.
- The organization's need for this initiative.

Organizations selected for the initiative must commit to:

- Have active support and involvement from leadership.
- Ensure their core implementation team attends all required training.
- Participate in implementation meetings and training sessions.
- Complete all required implementation activities and submit project data throughout the initiative.

QUESTIONS

For questions about this application, please contact:

Terrence Proctor, Statewide Coordinator of Behavior Services, Developmental Disabilities Administration, 410-961-2293, terrence.proctor1@maryland.gov

Dr. Meg DePasquale, Division Chief of Behavior Services, Developmental Disabilities Administration, 443-468-0191, meg.depasquale@maryland.gov

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

The application should be submitted by email to Terrence Proctor, Statewide Coordinator of Behavior Services, Developmental Disabilities Administration, terrence.proctor1@maryland.gov by **11:59 p.m. on October 9, 2026**

INTRODUCTION

The Maryland Department of Health's Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) is committed to supporting the behavioral, social, emotional, and mental health well-being of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities using a Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) framework. PBS emphasizes the use of non-restrictive procedures and commitment to reducing physical restraint.

In 2018, the DDA partnered with the Institute of Community Integration (ICI) at the University of Minnesota and Sheppard Pratt to develop a statewide model to support organizations in adopting an organization-wide Positive Behavior Support approach. Since the initial work in 2019, the University of Maryland Eastern Shore has joined the DDA PBS team.

The first PBS cohort was trained in the spring of 2019. In 2026, we are excited to invite the fourth cohort.

Positive Behavior Support

Positive Behavior Support (PBS) is an evidence-based approach to support the behavioral, social, emotional, and mental health well-being of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

PBS focuses on understanding why behaviors happen and making changes to everyday routines, environments, and supports to help prevent challenges before they occur.

PBS also teaches and strengthens important communication, social, and daily living skills. Everyone who supports the person—including direct support professionals, family members, friends, and employers—plays a role in creating a positive, supportive environment.

- Tier 1 - Universal Supports: Foundational prevention strategies used with organizations to create safe, positive environments that promote choice, communication, independence, participation, and success.
- Tier 2 - Targeted Supports: Proactive strategies for organizations to take when additional supports are identified for people with more complex needs. Supports are based on early understanding of what a person's actions or responses may be communicating and identifying changes or strategies that can promote safety, dignity, choice, and success. This may include changes to policies and practices.
- Tier 3 - Individualized Supports: More intensive, person-centered supports for people with more complex needs, including individualized Positive Behavior Support plans developed for people who need more intensive or ongoing behavioral support needs.

Key elements of PBS include:

- Recommendations for PBS plans, based on a functional behavior assessment.
- Organizational practices that create lasting, positive change.
- Evidence-based strategies that are person-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive.
- Strategies are provided at both the organizational and individual levels.
- Training and coaching to support staff use PBS strategies with fidelity.
- Data strategies to develop action plans, monitor progress, and guide improvements.
- Proactive strategies to improve quality of life.
- Collaborations with participants, families, and systems of support that promote lasting change.

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Organizations selected for Cohort 4 will partner with DDA to implement an organization-wide approach to Positive Behavior Support, creating positive, person-centered environments that support people receiving services while strengthening support for the workforce.

Organizations participating in this opportunity will receive training, technical assistance, and evaluation support. Please note that this opportunity requires agencies to commit to at least a **three-year investment** in this work.

Training, technical assistance, evaluation support, and all project activities are offered at **no cost** to participating organizations and will be coordinated by staff at the Mid-Atlantic PBIS Network, in collaboration with the DDA and the University of Minnesota, Institute on Community Integration.

The first year of involvement includes a readiness webinar to help organization leaders prepare for training and identify the right people for the PBS leadership team. The leadership team then attends a four-day training event focused on Tier 1 (universal supports) activities, prevention, and promotion, while building a strong foundation for Tier 2 (targeted supports) and Tier 3 (individualized supports). First-year strategies include promoting choice, recognizing communication as critical to a person's well-being, independence, and autonomy; creating positive environments; and preventing challenging behavior. In years two and three, team training will focus on advanced Tier 2 and 3 systems that will support efficient and effective procedures for identifying additional levels of need and supporting complex plans.

Across all years of support, teams receive virtual coaching from the DDA PBS team (e.g., attending team meetings and providing feedback, meeting with select team members to address specific questions, reviewing documents and/or data) to support progress on action plan goals. In addition, teams receive one site visit from the DDA PBS team to complete a fidelity-of-implementation measure and receive feedback to support ongoing action planning. Finally, each year, organizations have the opportunity for additional training for specific staff through the Individualized PBS webinars, to support organization capacity for individualized PBS plans for people requiring more assistance.

READINESS AND LEVEL OF COMMITMENT

To apply for this opportunity, organizations must commit to the following. See Appendix B for readiness guidelines.

Training, technical assistance, evaluation support, and all project activities are offered at **no cost** to participating organizations. However, organizations that choose to participate are responsible for staff time commitments and agency travel costs.

Leadership support: Organizations must be able to document that their leadership prioritizes efforts toward organization-wide PBS, actively participates in the organization-wide team, and commits to providing the necessary staffing time to engage in all training and technical assistance activities. See Appendix C for information on roles.

Organization-wide team: Organizations must commit to having a team engage in training and technical assistance activities with the DDA PBS team and to an ongoing team-driven process to ensure the sustainability of these efforts over time. Teams are expected to participate in all training and technical assistance activities and to meet regularly between themselves. See Appendix C for information on roles.

PBS Point of Contact (PoCs): Organizations must identify the primary contact for communication between the DDA PBS team and the organization regarding PBS-related

correspondence. Additionally, the PBS PoC is required to participate in all training and technical assistance activities, attend all team meetings, and attend three webinars throughout the year for PBS PoCs within the state of Maryland. See Appendix C for information on roles.

Training and technical assistance activities: Organization leadership must ensure that the necessary staff are involved in all such activities. A summary of time commitments and training event dates can be found in Appendices D and E.

Data-sharing commitment: As part of this project, the DDA will collect data to better support organizations, train future organizations, and evaluate and disseminate the project as a whole to the state of Maryland and academic audiences. Organizations must agree to collect and allow data on implementation fidelity and related evaluation data. These data will be reported to the state in a **de-identified manner** to evaluate the project's progress as a whole, and may be disseminated in a **de-identified manner** to academic and other outlets as needed.

Evaluation tools include:

- De-identified organization self-evaluation of fidelity.
- De-identified onsite fidelity tool (collected during virtual or on-site visits with the DDA PBS team).

Potential data sources (these will be discussed during team training) may include the following:

- De-identified incident reporting.
- De-identified cultural awareness, competence, and strategies.
- De-identified workers' compensation claim rates.
- De-identified staff turnover, vacancy, and retention rates.
- De-identified quality of life data.

APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

A committee composed of the DDA PBS team will review all fully completed applications.

Up to 50 points will be awarded to each individual agency application based on whether the following criteria have been met:

1. Executive leadership has signed off on the completed application: **5 points.**
2. Clear demonstration of organization leadership commitment to positive behavior support and understanding of long-term investment in this effort (at least three years): **15 points.**
3. Organization capability/capacity to fulfill the project structure and intention: **20 points.**
4. Existing data collection and review process within the organization: **5 points.**

5. Participation of families and people who receive services. **5 points.**

APPENDIX A

Application for Technical Assistance and Training: Organization-Wide Implementation of Positive Behavior Support

Part 1

Note: This application has two parts; both must be submitted. For each question, you may use as much space as you wish.

Organization Name:

Contact Person:

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please provide a brief description of your organization in 500 words or fewer. Please list or describe the services you provide. _____

Number of people your organization supports: _____

What specific populations does your organization serve? Please provide details about age, needs, and diagnostic categories.

Why are you applying for this training and technical assistance? Please provide a description of your organization's aims for participating in the DDA PBS Cohort model for organization-wide PBS.

PBS requires leadership buy-in and involvement, along with a long-term commitment to change. Describe the leaders involved in supporting the involvement of your organization in this work. Discuss how these leaders support the long-term commitment to prioritize involvement in PBS training, technical assistance, and implementation, and how they will

be involved with this work.

Does your agency already implement PBS? (Y or N) _____

If yes, how are you implementing PBS:

Please list the other types of support you provide within your organization (e.g., Person-Centered Practices, Trauma-Informed Care, Motivational Interviewing, Dialectical Behavior Therapy).

How do you currently support staff in learning and implementing new strategies while maintaining consistency of implementation over time?

Please describe the types of data you already collect (e.g., incident reports, quality of life, staff satisfaction) and how you review and use these data within your organization.

Please provide numbers for the following information:

Number of Direct Support Professionals: _____

Number of Administrators: _____

Number of Managers: _____

Number of Behavior Support Specialists: _____

Number of other staff (please specify): _____

Did representatives from your organization attend the **September 3, 2026** statewide webinar: ***Organization-Wide Positive Behavior Supports (PBS): What It Is and How To Get Involved!***

☐

Attended webinar

☐

Viewed recording of webinar

☐

Did not attend or view a recording

Part 2

Please provide the names and information of the people you are recommending for the different roles in this training and technical assistance project. Note that a description of these roles and the training available is included in Appendix C.

I. List one to two PBS Points of Contact for your organization (minimum of one PBS Point of Contact)

PBS Point of Contact

Name: _____

Role in

Organization: _____

Email: _____

PBS Point of Contact

Name: _____

Role in

Organization: _____

Email: _____

II. Document the administrators and management-level professionals (up to five) who will participate in the three full-day organization-wide team training and will meet within your organization between training to complete the Positive Behavior Support organization-wide planning process. We encourage teams to include leadership involved with evaluation.

1. Administrator/Management Name: _____

Role in Organization: _____

Email: _____

2. Administrator/Management Name: _____
Role in Organization: _____
Email: _____
3. Administrator/Management Name: _____
Role in Organization: _____
Email: _____
4. Administrator/Management Name: _____
Role in Organization: _____
Email: _____
5. Administrator/Management Name: _____
Role in Organization: _____
Email: _____

III. Other Team Members. List any other people who will participate in the organization-wide planning. We encourage teams to include direct support professionals.

1. Team Members Name: _____
Role in Organization: _____
Email: _____
2. Team Members Name: _____
Role in Organization: _____
Email: _____
3. Team Members Name: _____
Role in Organization: _____
Email: _____

4. Team Members Name: _____

Role in Organization: _____

Email: _____

5. Team Members Name: _____

Role in Organization: _____

Email: _____

6. Team Members Name: _____

Role in Organization: _____

Email: _____

7. Team Members Name: _____

Role in Organization: _____

Email: _____

If you have additional members, please list their names, roles in the organization, and email addresses.

APPENDIX B

DDA Readiness Checklist For Organization-Wide Positive Behavior Support

Organization/County Participating: _____ County/Region: _____

Date: _____

		Items to Review, Complete, and Update
	YES NO	1. Commitment to policy development related to Positive Behavior Support practices with time allocation for staff development and team-based planning.
	YES NO	2. A team is identified with broad representation, and roles are assigned to members (administrator, management, staff members, etc.) and commitment to including a broader group in the meeting process (people supported, family members, community partners, etc.). List team member names and roles on the second page of the Readiness Document.
	YES NO	3. The CEO/Executive/Head Administrator is an active participant on the Team and agrees to attend all training days. The Administrator's signature on this document below indicates agreement. <i>See Appendix D: Summary of Time Commitments.</i>
	YES NO	4. CEO/Executive/Head Administrator commits (or re-commits) to organization-wide implementation as a 3-5 year process that may require ongoing training and/or revisions to the Strategic Plan and PBS Action Plan. Please provide the Administrator's signature(s) on this document below.
	YES NO	5. The team commits to meet at least once a month during the year to analyze and problem-solve organization-wide evaluation information. <i>See Appendix D: Summary of Time Commitments.</i>
	YES NO	6. The team will evaluate ongoing interest and buy-in of implementing PBS with staff, people living/working in a setting, and administration.
	YES NO	7. The organization has allocated/secured funding to support ongoing staff development and cohort training.

	YES NO	8. Individual(s) (1-2) identified as a PBS Point of Contact. This person(s) will serve as a primary contact and communication path between the DDA and the organization for PBS-related correspondence and will engage in training and technical assistance activities. <i>See Appendix D: Summary of Time Commitments.</i> List confirmed PBS Point(s) of Contact (PoCs) in the section below.
	YES NO	9. The organization commits to engaging in internal training and coaching/technical assistance activities to support staff skill development and maintenance as the organization implements PBS. Administrator signature(s) on this document below indicate agreement.
	YES NO	10. The organization will work with the DDA PBS team to identify data that are already collected to use for self-assessment and will work to gather additional information in a manner that works for the organization.

Successful implementation requires strong administrative support, commitment, and involvement. In recognition of the time, effort, and motivation required to effect positive systems change, my signature below signifies my agreement and recommitment to the above fulfilled expectations for continued implementation.

2. List team member names and roles on the second page of the Readiness Document.

PBS Points of Contact	Role in Organization

3.-4. Signature of CEO/Executive/Head Administrator

CEO/Executive/Head Administrator's Signature: _____

Date: _____

8. PBS Points of Contact (at least one PoC)

[illegible]

APPENDIX C

Additional Information on Roles

Positive Behavior Support Organization-Wide Team

Representatives from a range of leadership and implementation roles within the organization meet to coordinate organization-wide Positive Behavior Support efforts, in alignment with other priorities, including, but not limited to, person-centered support, trauma-informed supports, Mandt®, and cultural responsiveness. This team meets regularly (e.g., monthly) to review information and data to guide action planning using a public health model that includes three stages:

1. Universal or primary stage
2. Secondary stage: for early identification of individuals at risk
3. Tertiary stage: strategies to provide individualized interventions and supports.

The organization's needed positive behavior support practices are identified, and a plan for implementing training and technical assistance is established.

Teams use evaluation data to assess effectiveness and to review the fidelity of implementation. Some organizations will implement more than one type of Positive Behavior Support practice to meet the needs of the people receiving support. For many organizations, this is an existing team. For some organizations, a new team or a subcommittee of a larger team is identified for this work.

PBS Point of Contact (PoC)

Each organization-wide team identifies a person who serves as the main point of contact for training and technical assistance. The PBS Point of Contact for each organization attends all team and coach training, as well as webinars with Point of Contact from other organizations, as part of a Community of Practice. The Point of Contact supports their teams by encouraging team members, prompting the need for meetings, and working with external coaches to ensure data is collected for organization-wide decision-making.

PBS Facilitators

During the first year of the project, one to two people in each organization will be identified by the organization as individuals who can develop the expertise needed to train and support PBS within their organization, and build expertise (or build upon expertise) in Positive Behavior Support plans. These individuals should either have existing experience in individual positive support planning or be designated for that role within the organization and will also be able to support Universal/Tier 1 PBS efforts.

APPENDIX D

Summary of Time Commitments

Role	Expectations	Training Time Commitment (Hours) per person
Organization Leadership	• 1 readiness webinar (1 hr.) to prepare for team training • 4 full-day PBS team training events* • Team meetings within the organization between training days and after training is completed	Estimated 33 hours <i>Plus regular team meetings</i>
Team Members	• 3 full-day PBS team training events* • Team meetings within the organization between training days and after training is completed	Estimated 24 hours <i>Plus regular team meetings</i>
PBS Points of Contact	• 1 readiness webinar (1 hr.) to prepare for team training • 4 full-day PBS team training events* • 3 Points of Contact webinars (2 hrs. each) • Team meetings within the organization between training days and after training is completed	Estimated 39 hours <i>Plus regular team meetings</i>
PBS Facilitators	• 4 full-day PBS team training events* • 8 half-day Individualized PBS training events (virtual) • Team meetings within the organization between training days and after training is completed	Estimated 64 hours <i>Plus regular team meetings</i>

Note: Each organization-wide team will meet regularly between the activities listed in this appendix to work on the action plan created during training. Time dedicated to these additional activities varies by organization and is not included in the table above.

**The cost of travel time and expenses to send staff to training is covered by the organization.*

APPENDIX E

2026-2027 Cohort 4 Event Dates

Event	Date	Location	Persons Involved
Team Readiness Webinar	November 2, 2026 (12noon - 1:30 pm)	Webinar	Point of Contact(s) and Administration
Team Training on Universal/Tier 1 Organization-Wide PBS 2026 - 2027 Dates	November 19 December 17 January 21 February 18 March 18 (inclement weather make-up day) 9:00 am - 4:00pm	In-Person Location: MD DDA Southern Maryland Regional Office. Location may be adjusted based on the location of C4 organizations.	Leadership Team
Ongoing Technical Assistance from DDA PBS Partners	TBD by Organization Team	Virtual or in person	TBD by the organization team and DDA PBS partners
On-Site Visit from the DDA PBS team	TBD by Organization	Identified by the Organization	Leadership Team and others as identified by the Team
PBS Point of Contact for the Community of Practice	March, April, May, 2027 Specific dates TBD by November with input from Cohort Teams	Webinar	PBS PoCs from each Cohort Organization
Individualized PBS Training 2026 - 2027 Dates	November 2, December 1, January 5, February 2, March 2, April 6,	Webinar	PBS Facilitator(s) for each Cohort Organization

	May 4, June 1 9:30 am - 12noon		
2nd Annual DDA PBS Gathering	Tentative: Week of May 10, 2026 9:00 am - 4:00pm	In-Person Location TBD	PBS Leadership Team Members