

# Self-Directed Services

## A Handbook for People with Developmental Disabilities Who Are Interested in Directing their DDA Services in Maryland



\*All text in red indicates added/revised language since the prior release date

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# INTRODUCTION

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Administrations (DDA) supports participants rights to self-determination and choice to self-directed their services. Self-determination means making your own choices, learning to effectively solve problems, and taking control and responsibility for one's life. Practicing self-determination also means one experiences the consequences of making choices. People with intellectual and developmental disabilities have the same right to self-determination as all people and are entitled to the freedom, authority, and supports to exercise control over the things in life that are important to them, to the degree that they desire. This right to self-determination exists regardless of guardianship status.

Self-direction, sometimes called consumer-direction or participant-direction, gives you the freedom to choose the services and supports you need to live independently, in your own home. The core functions of self-direction are **CHOICE and CONTROL** over how your services are provided, and who is being paid to provide these services.

This is a handbook for people who are interested in directing their DDA funded services using the self-directed service delivery model. It is also a resource for people who are currently self-directing their services. This handbook will help you understand the ways you can receive services.

You will learn more about self-determination, and how that helps you with deciding how you want to receive your services. You will find out about self-direction as a service delivery model option and learn about how to put self-directed services and supports into place.

You will learn more about working with your *team* to develop a vision, a Person-Centered Plan, a budget for achieving the life you want and continuous quality improvement to measure your satisfaction, health, and welfare.

# WHAT IS SELF-DIRECTING SERVICES?

Self-directing is a way of arranging services that empowers you, with support from your *team*, by expanding the degree of choice and control over the services and supports you receive. It gives you decision-making authority and lets you take responsibility as the legal “employer” for managing your services with the help of a *team* you select.

Self-direction means you decide what you want to achieve, how you want to live your life, what supports you want and what will meet your needs.

There are two types of decision-making authorities for self-directing your services. One is called ‘**employer authority,**’ which means you have decision-making authority to recruit, hire, train, and supervise the staff and service providers you want to hire. Also, you can fire staff and providers, as necessary. The other authority is called ‘**budget authority,**’ which means you have decision-making authority over how the Medicaid funds in your budget are spent to purchase authorized services. These may include such things as Assistive Technology, Environmental Modifications, Employment Supports, and Community Development Services.

In order to participate in DDA’s self-direction service delivery model, you must:

1. Be enrolled in a DDA Medicaid program which include the Family Supports, Community Supports, and Community Pathways Waivers.
2. Explore and understand the responsibilities to be the employer of record and have budget and employer authorities associated with self-direction. This process will also allow for you to determine the supports you may need to execute these authorities.
3. Be willing to participate in the planning process to determine your service needs and estimated budget.
4. Be able to participate in the self-direction option without a lapse or decline in the quality of your care or increased risk to your health and welfare. Your *Coordinator of Community Services (CCS)* will

assist you to determine your interest. This is something your *team* will help to review.

5. Understand the rights, risks, and responsibilities of being the employer for your services and managing your own budget according to the Person-Centered Plan you develop with your *team*.
6. Be able to manage your own budget and employees and/or identify one person or more than one person who can assist you make decisions or make decisions on your behalf, based on what is best for you. You can get assistance with this from your Coordinator of Community Services (CCS), called a *Coordinator* throughout this handbook.

**If you are on the DDA waiting list, you may ask, “Can I self-direct my services?”**

People on the DDA waiting list do not have allocated funds, so they are not able to participate in self-directed services. If you have a *Coordinator*, the *Coordinator* can work with you to find other community supports to help you, but this handbook only describes services authorized and funded by DDA.

**Once you have the opportunity to apply to a DDA Waiver program, if you decide that self-direction is the right choice for you the first step is to tell your *Coordinator*.** Your *Coordinator* will help to identify and document your needs and preferences, help to determine your readiness to self-direct, and help identify your allocated budget amount. The budget amount may be changed in the future depending on if and how your needs change. If there is a change in your needs, you and your *team* will discuss this and then submit a request to the DDA. This is done by submitting a revision to your Person-Centered Plan and sharing information about your assessed need(s). The DDA will make a decision about the funding request and send a letter to you with their decision.

**If you are currently receiving services under the traditional service delivery model, you have the option to change to the self-directed model at any time.**



If you have DDA funded services, contact your *Coordinator* to let them know you are interested in self-directing your services. Your *Coordinator* will help you understand more about self-directed services and each step that is required for changing your services to self-directed. Be honest about what you are able to do. Be clear about what you want and be patient as you go through the process.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN SELF-DIRECTED SERVICES**

There are many roles and responsibilities for directing services that are specific to you and your selected support team. It is important to remember that you are always at the center of planning a vision for your personally-defined good life. Your selected team members each has a specific role to support you in developing and maintaining your services. You may delegate specific responsibilities to members of your team or complete yourself. Important team members associated with the self-directed service delivery model include your *Coordinator*; *Fiscal Management Services (FMS)*; your employees, vendors, or contractors; and the other members of your support *team* selected by you, generally family and/or friends. You may also have a Support Broker, which is an optional service provided only to people who self-direct services. Let's look at what each one does to support you in self-directing your services.

### **Your role**

In self-directing your services, you will have many duties and responsibilities.

1. You will work with **your** team and your Coordinator to develop your vision and assist you to figure out how to achieve what you want through a [Person-Centered planning process](#). This includes figuring out the types of services and frequency of services.
2. You will participate in an individualized needs assessment that DDA will use to determine your yearly allocated funding amount.

3. You will develop a self-directed budget for services authorized in your Person-Centered Plan based on your yearly allocated funds.
4. You will use your allocated funds responsibly to achieve what is in your written Person-Centered Plan.
5. You will make decisions on people or agencies that can, coach and mentor you in making hiring and purchasing decisions to put your Person-Centered Plan into action.
6. You will review your budget expenses on a regular basis to be sure your needs can be met for the length of your Person-Centered Plan.
7. You will interview, hire, train, manage, evaluate and, if necessary, dismiss, your employees, vendors, and contractors as the official employer of your services.
8. You will schedule and participate in Person-Centered Plan review meetings as needed to be sure your needs are still being met.
9. You will determine whether you are satisfied (or not) with the staff vendors, and contractors you employ.
10. You will be responsible for communicating with your *Coordinator* and team if you feel you are not receiving the supports you need or if someone is treating you poorly.
11. You must be open to considering new ideas, changes, and learning some new skills. Your Person-Centered Plan may result in trying new things and taking a bit of risk but should not put your health and safety in jeopardy.
12. You must agree to follow all federal, State guidelines, policies, regulations, and laws including the DDA Waiver services and Department of Labor laws.
13. You will advocate your rights, speaking up for yourself, having a voice, and standing up for what you believe.
14. You can choose to hire relatives as staff and create an agreement for your team members to assist and support with the specific work or tasks.

## Your Team Members

You will have the largest role in developing and implementing your self-directed, Person-Centered Plan, but you will also have the opportunity to invite people to be part of your *team*. In order to identify the outcomes most important to you, along with related supports, your *team* should include the people who know you best. You may want to invite family members, friends, advocates, or other people who would like to support you.

***Keep in mind that if you have a legal guardian, they may need to be involved for certain kinds of decisions.***

Some ways team members can participate are:

1. Learning about self-direction by attending DDA trainings specific to self-direction (located on the [DDA's Training webpage](#)), and speaking with your *Coordinator*, DDA Regional [Advocacy Specialist](#), and DDA Regional Self-Direction Lead Staff.
2. Participating, at your invitation, in the development of your vision and/or your Person-Centered Plan.
3. Assisting you to locate and decide on employees, vendors, contractors, community resources, and services.

## Coordinator of Community Services

Your *Coordinator* can help you to navigate the system, whether you are new and have chosen to self-direct, or you have tried the traditional model and you want to make the change to self-directing services. Below are some of the steps that your *Coordinator* will take, and some they can support you.

1. Understand your choices and options regarding your decision-making responsibilities, services, and service providers.
2. Check Medicaid and waiver eligibility for participation in DDA waiver programs.
3. Complete a Health Risk Screening Tool (HRST) to document your health status and potential needs.

4. Complete the Detailed Services Authorization to determine your funding allocation request.
5. Work with you and your chosen *team* members in a Person-Centered Planning process to help you identify what is *important to* and *important for* you and to develop your Person-Centered Plan.
6. Work with you and your *team* to develop the self-directed budget that will support what is in your Person-Centered Plan.
7. Send your Person-Centered Plan and self-directed budget to the DDA for review and approval.
8. Help you and your *team* learn more about *Support Broker* and *FMS supports*.
9. Help you to schedule meetings as requested or when necessary in order to make changes to your Person-Centered Plan and/or budget.
10. Help you to regularly review your budgetary spending, along with other team members, to be sure you have enough funds to carry your services through the end of the year.
11. Visit you at least every three months to see how things are going, assess your satisfaction, and to see if your needs have changed.
12. Help you and your *team* to explore community resources to help you engage and be an active member in your community.
13. Help you to schedule an annual meeting with your *team* to review and update your Person-Centered Plan and budget.

## Support Broker

Choosing a *Support Broker* is a very important option for you to consider. A *Support Broker* can provide coaching and mentoring on your responsibilities of being the employer of your services, however, it is an option, and you are not required to choose or have a Support Broker. **The Support Broker you select should have knowledge about employment rules, good judgement, and an understanding of your Person-Centered Plan.**



Support Broker Services are employer related information and advice for a participant in support of self-direction to make informed decisions related to day-to-day management of staff providing services within the available budget.

1. The Support Broker can provide information, coach and mentor you in the following areas:

- Self-direction including roles and responsibilities and functioning as the common law employer such as staff registration, credentialing, and background checks, as well as payments, are done and on time;
- Other employment related subjects pertinent to the participant and/or family in managing and directing services;
- The process for changing the person-centered plan and individual budget;
- Risks and responsibilities of self-direction;
- DDA's Policy on Reportable Incidents and Investigations (PORII);
- Choice and control over the selection and hiring of qualified individuals as workers;
- Individual and employer rights and responsibilities; and
- The reassessments and review of work schedules

2. Assistance may be provided with:

- Practical skills training (e.g., hiring, managing and terminating workers, problem solving, conflict resolution);
- Development of risk management agreements;
- Recognizing and reporting critical events. This includes reporting any incidents or issues that could impact your health or safety as per DDA requirements including to your Coordinator for follow-up;
- Developing strategies for recruiting, interviewing, and hiring staff. This includes suggestions for advertising;
- Developing staff supervision and evaluation strategies. This includes suggestions for scheduling, training, and handling employee concerns;
- Developing terminating strategies;
- Developing employer related risk assessment, planning, and remediation strategies;
- Developing strategies for managing the budget and budget modifications including reviewing monthly Fiscal Management Services reports to ensure that the individualized budget is being spent in accordance with the approved Person-Centered Plan and budget and conducting audits. This includes strategies to regularly review budget plans so you can see if anything is being over or underspent;

- Developing strategies for managing employees, supports and services; This includes strategies to help you develop the skills you need to increase your independence in managing your self-directed service (such as to review, approve employee timesheets, and send to the FMS agency on time, so your staff get paid);
- Developing strategies for facilitating meetings and trainings with employees;
- Developing service quality assurance strategies. This includes strategies for you to know if your staff are providing services out as you intend;
- Developing strategies for reviewing data, employee timesheets, and communication logs;
- Developing strategies for effective staff back-up and emergency plans whenever it is needed;
- Developing strategies for training all of the participant's employees on the Policy on Reportable Incidents and ensuring that all critical incidents are reported to the Office of Health Care Quality and DDA; and
- Developing strategies for complying with all applicable regulations and policies, as well as standards for self-direction including staffing requirements and limitations as required by the DDA

## **Fiscal Management Services (FMS)**

The *FMS* agency helps you with your responsibility for your employee payroll and related tasks, as well as paying other bills for services that are outlined in your Person-Centered Plan and budget. The *FMS* takes direction from you through your approved Person-Centered Plan and budget.

FMS responsibilities are:

1. Supporting many of your employer-related duties such as withholding and filing federal, State, local and unemployment taxes; purchasing workers' compensation and other employer required insurance coverage; collecting and processing time sheets; calculating and processing employee benefits, such as sick or vacation time; and issuing payroll checks and tax statements.

2. Checking the background of potential staff for criminal history, educational requirements, driving records, or anything else that is required for a particular service need or that you request.
3. Paying other bills for services as outlined in your Person-Centered Plan and budget.
4. Tracking your expenses and providing you and your *Coordinator* with a monthly statement, so spending can be assessed. Your *Support Broker* can also suggest ways to help you to review and understand your monthly statement.

### **Employees, Providers, Vendors, and Contractors**

The Person-Centered Plan that you and your *team* have developed will be the guide in determining what types of support you need your employees (staff), providers, vendors, and contractors to provide and what qualifications they should have. They are responsible for:

1. Providing services based on the schedule you developed;
2. Maintaining current training and certifications such as CPR and First Aid based on service provided;
3. Complete a background check and secure, as required, periodic updates will be conducted by the FMS regarding employee background status.

**As the employer, person self-directing, you also make decisions about benefits you will provide your employees. You will need to use your allocated budget to pay for benefits your offer.**

Employee benefits:

1. Must be: (a) within applicable reasonable and customary standards as established by DDA policy; or (b) required for compliance, as the employer of record, with applicable federal, State, or local laws;
2. Must comply with any and all applicable federal, State, or local employment laws; and
3. All funded benefits and leave time will be included in and be part of your annual budget.

# UNDERSTANDING SELF-ADVOCACY AND KNOWING YOUR RIGHTS

## What is Self-Advocacy?

Self-advocacy means speaking up for yourself, having a voice, and standing up for what you believe. It's knowing about your rights and responsibilities, along with all the things that affect your life. You are practicing self-advocacy when you make choices for yourself, or when you let people know what is important to you.

People who speak up for themselves are called "self-advocates." Once they learn how to advocate for themselves, you can help others to do so as well.

There are self-advocacy groups that offer training and support to help their members develop skills for self-advocacy.

## Service-Related Rights

All people receiving services that are funded by the DDA have certain rights regarding how those services are delivered. These rights are separate from the basic civil rights of every American citizen. They are specific to your DDA services.

You have the right to be treated with respect and as an adult.

- This means you can say "no" if someone tells you to do something that seems wrong. No one should hit, hurt, or scare you. No one should threaten you or treat you in a demeaning way.

You have the right to give "informed consent" for services.

- Someone must explain your services and choices before you are asked to make decisions. This includes decisions about healthcare, your goals, who provides your services, and any service that might limit your rights.
- You must be given the opportunity to ask questions. Your decisions cannot be forced.



You have the right to make choices about your life and your services.

- Based on your eligibility and funding for services, you can make the decisions about who provides those services and which service model works best for you.
- This also applies to your daily activities like what to eat, when to go to sleep, what you wear, how you spend your money, and what you do for fun. There are too many choices to list them all.
- You will have help learning to make good choices and as much control over your life as possible with whatever supports you need.

You have the right to make decisions about what you do during the day, whether working, participating in a program, volunteering, staying home or retiring. Your *team* can help you explore your options and help you to decide what is best for you.

You can decide who sees your personal information.

- People and agencies associated with your services must get your written permission to share personal information like your service record, your health information, and even your success stories.

You have the right to privacy.

- You should be able to have time alone with friends. You should have the option to lock your bedroom and bathroom doors, and to have people knock and wait for your permission to enter.

You have full access to your home and community.

- This means you control what belongs to you, like your money and personal items. You should also be able to set up your home, so you can do things like cook, do laundry, have friends over, and walk around your neighborhood.
- It also means you can use all the same community services that everyone else uses like stores, restaurants, healthcare services, banks, community centers, libraries, and everything else.

Your services must support your independence.

- You should decide what you want from your services. Your services should not be more or less than you need.
- You should receive help in understanding how to exercise your rights responsibly and effectively. Your *Coordinator* and your *team* can help you figure out the best way for you to learn more about exercising your rights.

## **What Can I Do if I Need Help?**

Everyone needs help sometimes. If you feel that your rights are not respected or you feel unsafe, it is very important that you let someone you trust know right away. Who you talk to is entirely up to you; family or legal guardian (*if applicable*), your *Coordinator*, your *Support Broker (if applicable)*, or someone else on your *team*. You can also contact someone from the DDA's team below to assist you. The DDA has many policies in place to protect your rights and your safety. You are being responsible when you stand up for yourself, so don't ever hesitate to ask for help.

If you choose to contact the DDA you may contact the Self-Direction Regional Lead or you may contact the Regional Advocacy Specialist:

### **Central Maryland Regional Office (CMRO)**

(Harford, Baltimore, Howard, and Anne Arundel Counties)

Telephone: (410) 234-8200

Maryland Relay: (800) 735-2258

Toll Free: (877) 874-2494

FAX: (410) 234-8397

Address: DDA - Central Maryland Regional Office,  
1401 Severn Street, Ste. 200  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Advocacy Specialist:** Cheryl Gottlieb

Direct Line: (410) 234-8210

Email: [cheryl.gottlieb@maryland.gov](mailto:cheryl.gottlieb@maryland.gov)

**Self-Direction Lead:** Olasubomi Otuyelu

Direct Line: (410) 234-8235

Email: [olasubomi.otuyelu@maryland.gov](mailto:olasubomi.otuyelu@maryland.gov)

**Eastern Shore Regional Office (ESRO)**

(Cecil, Kent, Queen Anne’s, Talbot, Caroline, Dorchester, Wicomico, Somerset, and Worcester Counties)

Telephone: (410) 572-5920

FAX: (410) 572-5988

Toll Free: (888) 219-0478

TDD: (800) 735-2258

Address: DDA - Eastern Shore Regional Office  
926 Snow Hill Road, Building 100  
Salisbury, MD 21804

**Advocacy Specialist:** Cody Drinkwater

Direct Line: (410) 572-5949

Cell Phone: (410) 409-8205

Email: cody.drinkwater@maryland.gov

**Self-Direction Lead:** Jonna Krabill

Direct Line: (443) 909-6363

Email: jonna.hitch@maryland.gov

**Southern Maryland Regional Office (SMRO)**

(Montgomery, Prince George’s, Charles, Calvert, and St. Mary’s Counties)

Telephone: (301) 362-5100

TDD: (301) 362-5131

Toll Free: (888) 207-2479

FAX: (301) 362-5130

Address: DDA - Southern Maryland Regional Office,  
312 Marshall Ave., 7th Floor  
Laurel MD 20707

**Advocacy Specialist:** Vacant

Direct Line: (410) 362-5141

Email: N/A

**Self-Direction Lead:** Tia Henry

Direct Line: (301)362-5111

Cell Phone: (240) 294-8378

Email: tia.henry2@maryland.gov

## **Western Maryland Regional Office (WMRO)**

(Allegany, Carroll, Frederick, Garrett, and Washington Counties)

Telephone: (301) 791-4670

Maryland Relay: (800) 735-2258

Toll Free: (888) 791-0193

FAX: (301) 791-4019

Address: DDA - Western Maryland Regional Office,  
1360 Marshall Street, Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

### **Advocacy Specialist:** Jessica Stine

Direct Line: (240) 313-4225

Cell Phone: (443) 468-2987

Email: [jessica.stine@maryland.gov](mailto:jessica.stine@maryland.gov)

### **Self-Direction Lead:** Tina Swink

Direct Line: (240) 313-3877

Cell Phone: (443) 473-2950

Email: [tina.swink@maryland.gov](mailto:tina.swink@maryland.gov)

## **PERSON-CENTERED PLANNING**

### **Developing Your Vision and Your Person-Centered Plan**



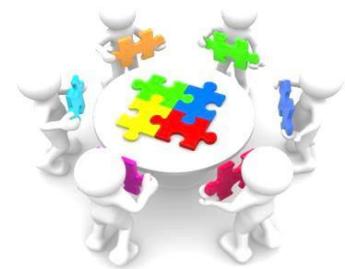
Your vision of your personal “good life” should guide the services you receive and help you make choices about how to receive those services. A process of exploration and discovery done with your *Coordinator* and other selected *team* members can help you to figure out what is most *important to* and *important for* you. This information can help you to create a Person-Centered Plan that is personal and meaningful to you. Your plan is meant to be helpful in guiding your supports.

What is *important to* you is what makes your life meaningful and rich. These are the things that you personally consider necessary for your good life.

What is *important for you* are the things you need to be safe and healthy. This may include medication, personal assistance, or special supports that help you learn to make healthy choices.

Discovering what is *important to* and *important for you* will help you, your *Coordinator*, and other members of your *team* to clearly express what you want (your vision) and what you may need. This will help you to explore, with your *team*, the right supports to help you achieve what the things you identified as most important and support your life's trajectory towards what makes a good life for you.

Your vision and the supports you identify with your *team* are written into a Person-Centered Plan, which guides those helping you and is the foundation for your personal DDA budget. It is important that everyone helping you knows what is in your Person-Centered Plan and budget, so everyone is going in the right direction.



Your Person-Centered Plan can be changed at any time. This is important because one of your responsibilities is to follow your plan. If you want to make a change, let your *Coordinator* know, so a meeting can be arranged to explore the changes you want. If the changes in the budget are amongst the already-approved categories, and the total budget amount is to remain the same, your *Coordinator* is responsible for approving the new budget that includes the changes. If you want to request an additional allocation or to spend money in a new category, your *Coordinator* will work with you and your *team* to complete the necessary paperwork which the *Coordinator* will then send it to the DDA for approval.

To summarize, the steps for person-centered planning are:

1. Exploration and discovery to figure out what you want;
2. Use the information learned through exploration and discovery to work with your selected *team* to decide on the outcomes that are most *important to* and *important for you* and include them in your Person-Centered Plan;

3. Identify *natural and community-based services* that can help you to achieve your outcomes. This includes receiving assistance from someone else like a friend, neighbor, or relative;
4. Identify waiver services that can help you to achieve your outcomes;
5. Develop your budget to accomplish those things in your Person-Centered Plan that can be paid for by the DDA. There will be more about your budget in the next section;
  - a. The waiver is a federal program that helps people who need services get them in their community.
  - b. Your allocation can only be used for services that are approved by the DDA.
  - c. There are many rules to follow in order to comply with DDA and waiver requirements.
6. Your Person-Centered Plan and budget will be sent to the DDA regional office for review and approval.

## Waiver Services

You, your *Coordinator*, and members of your team can help you identify services you will need. You and your team may use the [DDA Guide to Service Authorization and Proving Billing Document](#) to view service descriptions, instructions for authorizing services, billing service conflicts, and unit. Your *Coordinator* should be familiar with the waiver services and provide you with guidance on selecting services that meet your needs.

The DDA offers three Waivers: Family Supports Waiver, Community Supports Waiver, and Community Pathways Waiver. Services and supports are based upon assessed need.

Below is a list of services offered under each Waiver and the authorities for each service:

Services	Community Pathways	Community Supports	Family Supports	Employer Authority	Budget Authority
Assistive Technology and Services	X	X	X		X
Behavioral Support Services	X	X	X		X
Community Development Services	X	X		X	X
Day Habilitation	X	X			X
Environmental Assessment	X	X	X		X
Environmental Modifications	X	X	X		X
Employment Services	X	X		X*	X
Family Caregiver Training and Empowerment	X	X	X		X
Family and Peer Mentoring Supports	X	X	X		X
Live-In Caregiver Supports	X				X
Housing Support Services	X	X	X		X
Individual and Family Directed Goods and Services	X	X	X		X
Nursing Support Services	X	X	X	X	X
Personal Supports	X	X	X	X	X
Participant Education, Training and Advocacy Supports	X	X	X	X	X
Remote Support Services	X				X
Respite Care Services	X	X	X	X	X
Support Broker Services	X	X	X	X	X
Supported Living	X				X

Transition Services	X				X
Vehicle Modifications	X	X	X		X
Transportation	X	X	X		X

Note: Employment Services exercise employer authority for Ongoing Job Supports and Follow Along Supports only.

## Backup Plan

Everyone who self-directs their services must have a backup plan to make sure you are supported safely in the event of an emergency that prevents your regularly scheduled staff from reporting to work.

Your *team* can help you decide who you would contact if there were an emergency or if one of your staff is unable to work. It is important to decide this before there is a problem, so you and the backup support know exactly what to do.

A backup plan should also include where you would go if you had to be out of your home for some reason (like flooding or no electricity for extended time), and how staff are to respond.

Backup staff can be hired through a staffing agency, or by having someone you know identified in advance. In either case, they must be fully trained according to your Person-Centered Plan. Your backup plan can include receiving assistance from someone else like a friend or relative, instead of paid staff. Be sure all the members of your *team* know what your backup plan is, and that everyone has the correct contact information.

# DEVELOPING YOUR PERSONAL BUDGET

A personal budget is a plan you write down to decide how you will spend your own money each month. Budgeting helps you to make sure you will have enough money every month to meet your needs. For example, your budget should take into consideration the amount of money needed to pay for things like rent, gas, electric, water and other utilities.

To develop your budget, you will think about all your income, such as payments from Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI); your wages, if you are employed; payments from a trust; or any other type of income you receive.

Your *Coordinator* can help you research other types of supports like food stamps, housing subsidies, or fuel assistance that you may not be receiving, but could help you with your expenses.

## Steps to Develop Your Personal Budget:

1. Determine your total income.
  - a. What are all the types of income I receive?
  - b. What are the amounts of each type of income?
  - c. Add up the amounts for your total income.
2. Determine your total expense.
  - a. What expenses do I have each month?

Examples include recurring expenses like rent, utilities, insurance premiums, food, entertainment expenses, clothing, credit card bills, etc.

- b. What is the amount for each category of expense?
- c. Add up the amounts for your total expense.

Is your expense as high as your income, or are you able to save a bit each month?

# DEVELOPING YOUR DDA SELF-DIRECTED BUDGET

Your DDA self-directed budget is where you decide how you will use your DDA funding allocation. Your *Coordinator*, working with your *identified team members*, will help you to develop a budget to pay for the supports you have identified in your Person-Centered Plan. Your budget must be clear and meet the requirements of the DDA. The Self-Directed Services budget you develop is just a starting point. It can change over time to allow for changes in your choices or needs. Your budget must be approved by the DDA before you can begin to use the funds. You may request from your *Coordinator*, a copy of the approved DDA budget and Person-Centered Plan you develop. Your budget guides the *FMS* to pay your bills, so it must be accurate and kept up to date.



## Steps to Develop Your DDA Self-Directed Budget:

Once you have a good understanding of your personal budget, you can move on to plan how your allocation of DDA funds might be used to support the services in your Person-Centered Plan. Keep in mind that your Person-Centered Plan may include things you want that are not paid for by DDA funds. Anything you include in your DDA self-directed budget must be explained in your Person-Centered Plan. Keep in mind that your *Coordinator* and other members of your *team* will help with all of this.

Tips for a creating your DDA self-directed service budget may include but is not limited to:

- Make a list of all the services approved in your Person-Centered Plan that you will pay for with DDA funds. Include the cost and how often these services will occur. You may use the DDA [Reasonable and Customary Rates Guidelines](#) to help you identify the rate to pay staff.
- Talk with your *team* about who you plan to hire and what their job descriptions will include. Your *team* can help to find out the rate that people offering these services are typically paid.

- Your *team* can also help to find out if you will be responsible for paying for leave or other employee benefits.
- Figure out who will research costs for those things that are unknown.
- Try to be cost-effective. Do not spend your DDA funds on things that are so expensive that you can't afford the things you really need.

Your *Coordinator* and your *team* can help you with the steps for creating your budget, and with making changes or "modifications."

Some reasons for a modification may be:

- Your needs change because of health, employment, or other life event.
- You are not using a service as often as you planned, so your DDA funds can be used to pay for something else that is in your Person-Centered Plan.
- You and your *team* decide the current Person-Centered Plan and budget are not working for you. You may feel a different service may be more important now.

## **HIRING AND MANAGING EMPLOYEES, PROVIDERS, CONTRACTORS OR VENDORS**

### **How Do You Find Employees, **Providers**, Contractors or Vendors?**

You or your *Coordinator*, *Support Broker*, and other *team members* can support you to explore the different strategies and resources for hiring staff. You may want to ask someone you already know, such as a former staff person, a neighbor or friend, or someone you know from your church or your community.



Your *team* can help you to think about finding the right employee, **provider**, contractor, or vendor for your needs if you need support in doing this. Not every person needs or want support.

You may want to consider:

**Who** – Who you know that may be a good employee for you?

**What** – What are the skills, experience you look for in an employee, contractor, or vendor?

**What** - What kinds of supports will the employee, contractor or vendor be providing and what qualifications they need?

**When** – When are services and supports needed so you can develop the best schedule to meet your needs

**Where** – Where are services needed such as in your home or in your community or both?

**How** - How is the best way for you to be supported and stay within your budget? How will you make sure your employees, **providers**, contractors or vendors are properly trained?

Keep in mind that the DDA may require training in order for a staff to provide some of your supports. Your *Coordinator* should be familiar with all the requirements for training to help you to comply with the DDA requirements about staff training.

## Advertising

You can advertise in newspapers, online, or in community publications to recruit your employees. Your *Support Broker and team* may assist you write the job description for the advertisement. This should list the types of support you need, how many hours each week, and the community in which you need the support to be provided.

You may want to ask for a resume to be sent to you. You will need to decide on the best address for the resume to be sent. DDA is offering dedicated funds in your Person Centered Plan up to \$500.00 to help cover the cost of advertisement and recruitment.

## Interviewing and Hiring

Whether you know the person you want to hire or the person is replying to an advertisement, it is important to always interview any person you consider hiring to ensure you are following the Department of Labor requirement since you are the employee of record. The interview is an opportunity to get to know the person a little bit and to let them know more specifics about the job duties and your expectations.

Your *Coordinator, Support Broker, or other team members* can support you with the interview process and questions to ask each candidate.

Some possible questions to consider:

- Why are you applying for this job?
- What makes you qualified for this position?
- Do you have flexibility in the hours you can work?
- Can you work according to my schedule or do you need to have a specific schedule?
- Are you available to help if I need someone quickly in an emergency?
- What makes you happy in your work?
- What do you not like to do?

You are able to develop other questions based on labor laws for which your *Coordinator or Support Broker* can help.

Once you decide on the person, vendor, or people you want to hire, your *FMS* will help to get all the paperwork completed to do the necessary background checks and payroll authorization as required by local, Stated, and federal laws and your *FMS*.

When your employee, contractor or vendor is ready to begin work, you must make sure all the training necessary takes place and job duties are very clear. You will be responsible for authorizing and approving the hours worked on the form or invoice that is provided by the *FMS*. The *FMS* is available to assist you.

# EVALUATING YOUR PERSON-CENTERED PLAN AND SERVICES

One of your responsibilities is to keep your *Coordinator* informed about how your services and supports are going. It is important that you are satisfied with your services and most important that they are meeting your identified needs within your Person-Centered Plan. Some of the questions you could ask yourself are:

- Am I happy with my services?
- Do I feel safe?
- Am I doing things I want to do?
- Are my staff doing what they were hired to do and helping me make progress toward achieving my goals as identified in my Person-Centered Plan?
- Do I feel comfortable with my staff?
- Are my staff respectful to me and the people around me?
- Do my staff come to work when they are scheduled?
- Do I have the right services and supports?
- Is there something I really do not need, or do I need more than what I receive?

You can work with your *Coordinator*, *Support Broker*, or other members of your team on developing an evaluation to be completed on a regular basis. This is to figure out if each of your staff is supporting you in the ways that support and evaluates progress on your goals on each personal outcome that you and your team identify in your Person-Centered Plan, and if you are satisfied with your services in general.

Keep in mind that you do not have to wait to let your *Coordinator* know if you have a concern about your staff or your services. Let your *Coordinator* or another member of your team know right away.

The *Coordinator* will meet with you at least once every three months to discuss how your services are working and how you feel about your current Person-Centered Plan. It is important that you are getting your needs met, that you feel safe, and you are satisfied with your services. Your *Coordinator* will provide this information to DDA. Remember that if things are not working as you expected, you can always ask for

changes to your Person-Centered Plan and modifications to your budget. You are in charge.

Although you are directing your own services, you are not in this alone. Your *team* members, including your *Coordinator*, *Support Broker*, staff, family, and other people you have chosen are there to help you be successful.

## MODIFYING YOUR SERVICES

Your needs may change while you are self-directing your services. You and your team may decide that you need additional services, or you may decide to use a different provider. You and your team may decide that you need an increase or decrease in services. For example, you may have to undergo surgery and as a result, you and your team may decide that you need to increase your personal supports from 10 hours per week to 20 hours per week for a limited time to maintain your health and safety while you recover.

If this is the case, you must contact your *Coordinator* to learn about the options that are available to you. Be sure you share all of the details. As a Participant enrolled in a waiver program, you may request a change in services. This done by completing a Revised Person-Centered Plan. Your formal request is submitted when the Revised Person-Centered Plan is submitted to the DDA's Regional Office on your behalf. Your Coordinator can help you with this.

Some of the questions you could ask yourself are:

- Am I in danger to myself or do I endanger other people?
- Is my health or safety at risk?
- Have I been abandoned?
- Have my needs changed?
- Am I receiving a service that is no longer benefitting me?
- Do I need supplemental services or one-time only add-on services (i.e., respite, start-up cost)?

Once approved, the DDA will notify you, your *Coordinator* and FMS.

# MEDICAID FRAUD

**Waiver services are available for people who need funding. DDA receives funding from Medicaid to offer Waiver services. It is very important that Waiver services are provided as indicated in your Person-Centered Plan. If at any reason, this is not occurring, you may be at fault for Medicaid fraud. Medicaid fraud is the payment of Medicaid funds for services or people who are not eligible to receive them. This can be done by you or staff, including your employees, contractors, or vendors.**

## **What is Participant Medicaid Fraud?**

There are several ways a person can misuse their Medicaid eligibility. Please review these examples carefully. If you have any questions, your *Coordinator* will be able to assist you.

Examples of Medicaid Participant fraud include:

- Someone else using your Medicaid to receive services;
- Not reporting that you received a large amount of money such as an inheritance or personal injury settlement;
- Not reimbursing Medicaid when another health insurance company pays you directly;
- Not reporting that you have assets such as property or money owed to you;
- Signing blank timesheets or invoices authorizing payment for services.

## **What is Provider Medicaid Fraud?**

Some staff that you hire to perform services for you or help you to perform services are called provider. Your Coordinator and Support Broker are a provider. More examples of a provider include a vendor you hire to assist you with Community Development Services or a therapist you hire to assist you with your behavioral plan. Other Medicaid providers include doctors, hospitals, nursing homes, pharmacies, clinics, counselors, and any other individual company that is paid by the FMS on your behalf.

# ENDING SELF-DIRECTED SERVICES

## Your Choice

You may decide that self-direction is not working out for you, and you want to explore traditional services instead. If this is your decision, you must contact your *Coordinator* to learn about the options that are available to you. Be sure all your questions are answered before making your final decision.

## Termination of Services by DDA

In some circumstances, the DDA may determine that you no longer can self-direct your services and must be changed to the traditional model.

The DDA has the authority to restrict the availability of services under the self-directed service model or to terminate the participant's enrollment in self-directed service model if one of the following circumstances occurs:

1. The participant no longer meets eligibility criteria for the waiver;
2. The participant's PCP and/or self-directed services budget has not been submitted to DDA (for DDA's review and approval) in a timely manner and this failure is attributable to the participant or their designated representative;
3. The health, safety, or welfare of the participant is compromised by continued participation in the Self-Directed Service Model;
4. The rights of the participant are being compromised;
5. Failure of the participant, legal guardian, or the participant's designated representative (as applicable) to comply with any applicable federal, State, or local law, regulation, policy, or procedure; or
6. Failure of the participant, legal guardian, or the participant's designated representative (as applicable) to manage funds.

If the decision is made by the DDA that you cannot continue to self-direct your services, your *Coordinator* will immediately help you find appropriate and needed services through other available programs, with no lapse in the necessary service for which you are eligible. You would be given the opportunity to appeal.

## APPENDIX

### DEFINITIONS

- A. Budget Authority: "Decision-making authority over how the Medicaid funds in a budget are spent." For individuals under the age of 18, Budget Authority is assumed by a parent or other legally responsible individual. For individuals using a "Designated Representative", the Designated Representative assumes responsibility for Budget Authority.
- B. Coordinator of Community Services: An independent professional staff person responsible for assisting in development and review of a person-centered plan to meet a participant's needs, preferences, desires, goals, and outcomes in the most integrated setting.
- C. Designated Representative is someone that is authorized by the Participant to perform essential functions for self-direction. A Designated Representative is required for all people under the age of 18.
- D. DDA Medicaid Waiver program: Each Medicaid Home- & Community-Based Waiver Program submitted by the Maryland Department of Health and approved by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services pursuant to § 1915(c) of the federal Social Security Act, which is oversee and administered by DDA. DDA currently administers three Medicaid Waiver programs: Community Pathways, Community Supports, and Family Supports.

- E. Employer of Record: A **person**, company or organization that is legally responsible for paying employees, including withholding, and making payments for federal, State, and local taxes to the appropriate organization.
- F. Guide to Reasonable and Customary Rate: DDA guidance on people self-directing service on range of service pay rates can be used based on reasonable and customary pay standards.
- G. Participant: An individual who is enrolled in and receives services funded by a DDA Medicaid Waiver program.
- H. Waiver program services: Medicaid services authorized and funded by DDA pursuant to federally approved Medicaid Waiver program application.
- I. Participant's Team: A group of individuals who demonstrate a commitment to the person, have knowledge of the person's preferences, aware of what's important to and can assist the person in making informed decisions according to the person's preference while ensuring that health and safety is not compromised.

## Resources

[Customer Service](#)- Constituent services provide information and assistance to help you navigate the system of supports and services provided by the Developmental Disabilities Administration

[Self-Directed Services Forms and Policies](#)-Applicable to self-direction to include the Reasonable and Customary Rates.

[Join Our Mailing List](#) - Provides you with notifications the DDA provides to the community

[Person Centered Planning](#)-Provides an overview of the Developmental Disabilities Administration vision for person-centered planning

[Reporting Abuse or Concern](#)-If you believe you are being abused or witness or suspect abuse or neglect you are required to report it.