



Developmental Disabilities Administration
Self-Directed Services Training Series
Module 16: Support Broker Code of Conduct

Updated February 18, 2025



Overview

- This training module will provide you with an overview of the Maryland Support Broker Code of Conduct
- This training is a summary with important information on this topic
- More information and requirements are found in the Medicaid waiver program applications, laws, regulations, guidance and policies
- The most updated information regarding Self-Directed Services is published in the Self-Directed Services policy and manual that can be found on the DDA's website at <https://health.maryland.gov/dda/Pages/sdforms.aspx>

The Maryland Support Broker Code of Conduct

- Best practices for all Maryland Support Brokers
- Assures that Support Brokers:
 - Understand their responsibility to follow all laws, regulations, policies, and guidance
 - Understand their responsibility to mitigate any conflicts of interest
- Provides quality assurance to participants

Statements of the Code of Conduct

1. Maryland Support Brokers are **participant-directed**.
2. Maryland Support Brokers are **knowledgeable and respectful** communicators.
3. Maryland Support Brokers have **integrity in billing** practices.
4. Maryland Support Brokers **avoid conflicts of interest**.
5. Maryland Support Brokers **avoid and report Medicaid Fraud**.

Participant-directed (1 of 3)

- Work at the direction of the participants who hire them
- Always make sure the participant's direction is heard first and prioritized
- Never provide services without the participant's direction
- Never make decisions for or on behalf of the participant
 - Never sign employee timesheets or vendor/provider invoices
 - Never interview a participant's candidate for employment without the participant present
 - Never offer a job position to a candidate

Participant-directed (2 of 3)

- Never control or attempt to control a participant, their representatives, or their family:
 - Never exercise financial control over a participant
 - Never recommend a Coordinator of Community Service provider
 - Never recommend a Financial Management and Counseling Services provider

Participant-directed (3 of 3)

- Never access a participant's Financial Management and Counseling Services portal, or any other account belonging to the participant, without the participant or their representative present
- Do not contact any team member or community partner, including the Financial Management and Counseling Services provider, DDA, or government officials, about a participant without including the participant, **unless authorized by the Participant Agreement**

Knowledgeable and Respectful (1 of 2)

- Only provide information regarding self-directed services in conjunction with current Medicaid waivers, regulations, policies, guidance, and training
- Responsible to know the statutes, regulations, and Medicaid waiver programs

Knowledgeable and Respectful (2 of 2)

- Provide complete, timely, and accurate information to participants, potential participants, team members, and the DDA
- Never threaten participants or other team members or use intimidating language

Integrity in Billing (1 of 2)



- Never accept payment directly from a participant or other team member
- Support Broker Vendors: Never bill participants for training or professional development
- Support Broker Employees: Only bill for training or professional development specifically allowed by the participant

Integrity in Billing (2 of 2)

- Address all billing concerns with participants
- Never bill for creating or submitting invoices, or filing or following up on grievances, concerns, or complaints

Avoid Conflicts of Interest

- May not provide any other service in Maryland to participants who receive DDA services, including case management (Coordinator of Community Services).
- Shall never support a participant who has hired an employee or vendor that
 - is a direct family member of the Support Broker **or**
 - lives at the same address as the Support Broker.
- Certified Support Brokers who are related to one another may provide Support Broker Services to the same participant.
- Certified Support Brokers who live at the same address may provide Support Broker Services to the same participant.

Avoid And Report Medicaid Fraud

- Never falsify documentation
- Never forge the signature of a participant or another team member
- Comply with all document requests from the DDA, auditors, or other regulatory bodies during fraud investigations
- Report all suspected fraud, waste, or abuse within one business day

Resources

- [Self-Directed Services Comprehensive Policy](#)
- [Self-Directed Services Manual](#)

Summary

- Maryland Support Brokers
 - are **participant-directed**
 - are **knowledgeable and respectful** communicators
 - have **integrity in billing** practices
 - **avoid conflicts of interest**
 - **avoid and report Medicaid Fraud**
- The Code of Conduct is a list of best practices