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Developmental Disabilities Administration
Self-Directed Services Training Series
Module 6: Hiring and Managing Employees

Updated October 2025

Overview

- This training module will provide you with an overview of hiring and managing employees under the Self-Directed Services model.
- 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.
- Additional training modules are available that provide additional information on the topics presented in this overview training module.

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Employer Planning Tools

- Participants who self-direct their services may want to create tools to help them plan for hiring and managing their employees.
- Support Brokers can support the participant to create these tools, if requested by the participant.
- Employer planning tools are a best practice, but are not required.

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Self-Directed Services Employer Tools

- Job Positions
- Job Descriptions
- Recruitment Plans
- New Hire and Termination Letters
- Employee Handbook
- Evaluations

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Job Positions

A job position includes:

- Specific title for the employee,
- Total number of hours per week for the job,
- Benefits offered (if applicable), and
- Starting rate of pay for the year.

In certain cases, an employee may hold more than one job position for a participant.

Job Descriptions (1 of 2)

- Medicaid waiver service
- Employee schedule
- Summary of the job
- Listed duties/responsibilities
  - Must be within Medicaid waiver service scope

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Job Descriptions (2 of 2)

- Required skills and abilities
- Education or Experience requirements
- Training requirements
- Physical Requirements

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Recruitment Plans

- Plans used to find employees to fill job positions
- Recruitment plans can include:
  - Employee schedule;
  - List of desired supports, skills, personality characteristics, and shared interests;
  - Written advertisement for the position;
  - List of where the advertisement will be posted;
  - List of screening questions; and
  - List of interview questions.

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New Hire Letters (1 of 2)

- A new hire letter is sent to a newly hired employee.
- The participant is in control of the hiring process.
- New hire letters clearly begin the relationship between the participant and their new employee.

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New Hire Letters (2 of 2)

New hire letters can include:

- Job position and description;
- Start date;
- Rate of pay (per hour);
- Full time or part time status;
- “At will” employment status;
- Required training or certifications; and
- Any other employment expectations.

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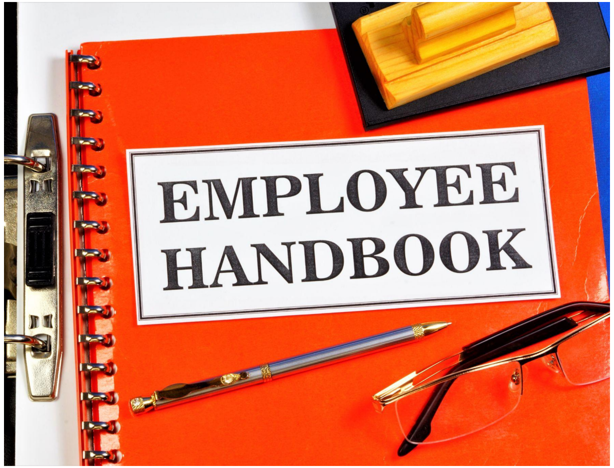
Employee Handbook Overview

Employee handbooks can:

- Help the participant consider how to be a good employer,
- Provide clarity on employer expectations for employees,
- Provide clarity for employee expectations for the employer, and
- Make better employee relationships.



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Employee Handbook Potential Policies (1 of 2)

Employee benefits policies can be included in employee handbooks. Policies regarding benefits can be for:

- Paid Time Off,
- Health Insurance Premium Reimbursement,
- Mileage Reimbursement,
- Training (Hours and Costs), and
- Holiday Pay.

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Employee Handbook Potential Policies (2 of 2)

Additional policies can be considered. For example, policies for:

- Employee Evaluations
- Employee Expectations
- Disciplinary Actions
- Inclement Weather

How to Draft an Employee Handbook

- The participant is in charge of their employee policies, including:
  - What they want to offer employees, and
  - What expectations they have for employees.
- Outlines can be drafted during meetings with the participant and their team.
- The participant should meet with their team to finalize any policies.

Employee Handbooks - Sample Outline

- Introduction / Welcome
- Table of Contents
- Policies
- Employee Acknowledgement

Table of Contents

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When are Employee Handbooks Required?

- If a participant offers benefits to employees, they will need to submit their Employee Handbook with their next Person-Centered Plan.
- Sample and template Employee Handbooks are available on the DDA website for review.
- Beginning on October 6, 2025, all employee benefits should meet the updated Reasonable and Customary standard.

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Performance Evaluations Rubric

- Best practice for performance review to have regular, planned evaluations. It is suggested that evaluations happen:
  - After introductory periods (90 days), and
  - Every year, or twice a year.
- Performance evaluations make sure employees are meeting the requirements of their position.
- Clear requirements for these reviews, called a “performance rubric,” support the participant to make sure evaluations are fair across all employees.

Positive Performance

- Employees perform better when positive performance is rewarded.
    - Raises (within budget and Reasonable and Customary Rates)
    - Increases in benefits
- Best practice: Tell the employee in writing with a clear effective date.
- Raises cannot be set for dates in the past.

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Negative Performance

- Talking about performance can help employees to do a good job.
- Expectations should be clear and in writing.
- Negative consequences must be fair and equitable
- Best practice: share negative feedback with employees in writing.

Decreasing Employee Rates

- Participants may need to decrease employee pay rates.
- The law requires employers to alert employees of wage decreases at least one pay period in advance.
- Best practice: Alert the employee in writing.

Resignations

- Best practice: Employee shares resignation in writing with participant
- Support Brokers can support participants to make sure resignation paperwork is shared promptly with the participant's Financial Management and Counseling Services provider.

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Terminations

- Team members can support the participant if it is necessary to terminate an employee.
- Support Brokers and other team members cannot terminate an employee for the participant.
- Best practice: the participant should alert the employee in-person
- Best practice: the participant should send a termination letter to the employee.
- Termination letters help to make sure the employer is in control of the termination process.

Resources

- Self-Directed Services Comprehensive Policy
- Self-Directed Services Manual
- Sample and Template Tools

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Summary (1 of 2)

- Participants in the Self-Directed Services Delivery Model may want to create tools to help plan for hiring and managing employees.
- Anyone in the team can support the participant to create these planning tools, including the Support Broker.

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Summary (2 of 2)

These tools all help to make sure the participant is directing and managing all of their employees:

- Employee Handbooks,
- Job Descriptions,
- Job Positions,
- Recruitment Plans,
- New Hire Letters and Termination Letters, and
- Evaluations.

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