



**A
ROADMAP
TO
SUPPORT
SERVICES**

**3RD EDITION
REVISED
AND
EXPANDED**

A COLLABORATIVE PROJECT OF

DISABILITY RIGHTS OREGON

OREGON COUNCIL ON
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF
HUMAN SERVICES -
SENIORS AND PEOPLE WITH
DISABILITIES

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Greetings!

This “Roadmap to Support Services” is designed to help you, an individual wanting services, understand and access Support Services. While we may not have answered every question or covered every possible subject, we hope you will find the information useful. For your convenience, we have provided webpage addresses where you can find more detailed information about many of the topics covered in this guide.

The first printing of this guide was released in June 2005. In this revised third edition we have updated a lot of the information and included a new Frequently Asked Questions section.

Want to acknowledge and thank all those who contributed to the creation of this booklet and its updates, including Barrie Brewer, Arlene Jones, Cynthia Owens, Mike Parr, Susana Ramirez, Paula Moore-Hester, Janet Straw and Jim Wrigley.

All our best,

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Frequently Asked Questions

About

Support Services for Adults

1. What are Support Services for Adults?

Support Services for Adults with developmental disabilities are individually designed supports that assist a person with developmental disabilities to live in their own home or with family or friends and fully participate in community life, including work. These services are different from Comprehensive Services, such as residential services, group homes, and foster homes, which may provide 24 hour support.

2. Am I eligible for Support Services for Adults?

To be eligible for Support Services, you must be an adult Oregonian (age 18 or older) with a confirmed diagnosis of a developmental disability. You must not currently be receiving Comprehensive Services. In addition, you must apply and be eligible with your county Community Developmental Disability (DD) Program. For a list of local DD program offices go to: www.oregon.gov/DHS/dd/county/county_programs.shtml or call your local County DD Program Office, or call 1- 800-282-8096 to find your local program office phone number.

3. What is a Support Brokerage?

A Support Brokerage (or Brokerage) is an organization that helps an adult with developmental disabilities develop an individualized plan for community living and access supports to implement the plan.

4. How do I become a Brokerage customer?

If you are eligible for Support Services for Adults and have signed up with your county's Community Developmental Disability Program, your name will be referred to a Support Brokerage in your county. Within 90 days, you will be enrolled in brokerage services.

5. Will I still have a county Services Coordinator or Case Manager?

The staff at your local Community Developmental Disabilities Program will be available to support you in specific situations, but while you are enrolled in a brokerage all case management services will be provided by your Personal Agent.

6. What services does the Support Brokerage provide?

Through your Personal Agent (PA), the Brokerage will assist you in writing your plan. They will also develop a budget to implement the plan and help you access providers, as needed, to fulfill the plan. Some of your support people may be paid from your budget. Your PA will also help you think about the natural supports you have in your life, such as your relatives, friends, significant others, neighbors, roommates, and people you know in the community. Funds from your budget can only be spent on things you need. They are not meant to support your family or friends.

7. What is a Personal Agent (PA)?

A Personal Agent (PA) is a person employed by your Support Brokerage to: help develop an Individual Support Plan (ISP) for you; obtain available resources necessary to implement your plan; assist you to select people or organizations to provide specific support services; and monitor and evaluate the outcomes of delivered services for you. Your PA may help you advocate in many situations in your life.

8. May I change my Personal Agent (PA)?

Yes, if you find you are not happy with the Personal Agent you're working with, just talk to your Brokerage Director and they will help you get a new Personal Agent.

9. What is an Individual Support Plan (ISP)?

An Individual Support Plan (ISP) is a plan developed specifically for you. It will help you determine what support services you will need to function as independently as possible at home and in the community. Your plan is developed through a process called Person Centered Planning. From the time you enter the brokerage, your PA has 90 days to get your plan in place. Writing an ISP takes a lot of work, so you should not expect that it will be done at the first meeting. Your ISP will be reviewed as frequently as you choose or at least four times a year.

10. What is Person Centered Planning (PCP)?

The term, Person Centered Planning, refers to a number of approaches that assist you and your family to think about what is important in all the different parts of your life. Approaches can range from informal conversations to facilitated meetings using a PATH, MAP, ELP or Personal Futures Planning process. After meeting with you and other people you choose to be involved in the process (such as your family and friends who know you best), your Personal Agent (PA) will use the information gathered to help you develop an ISP that will reflect what you want to do in your life. Your education, employment, home life, social and leisure activities, transportation needs, medical and health issues, communication, finances, and long term goals are some of the many topics covered in an Individual Support Plan.

11. What should I expect from my first meeting with my assigned Personal Agent (PA)/Brokerage?

At your first meeting, your PA will explain the process to you, learn about your dreams and goals, and tell you about the kind of supports that you can purchase with your plan dollars.

12. How is the money handled?

The Brokerage receives money that is used to pay for many of the services and items identified in your plan. The money is not paid directly to you. If you chose to hire someone to support you, you will become that person's employer. The Brokerage will use a fiscal intermediary to make sure that all the costs of being an employer are paid, including federal and state taxes and the wages to your employees. The Brokerage can assist you with other paperwork you are required to fill out as an employer.

13. What can my support service money buy?

How your money can be spent is determined by your support needs and the contents of your plan. Support Service money can be used to pay employees who help you. It can also be used to pay for other services that will increase your independence, integration, and productivity; for example, transportation, job coaching, home modifications, community inclusion, or respite. What your plan will not pay for is basic needs such as food, clothing (unless work related) and shelter. It also will not pay for services that can be accessed through another governmental agency or program (for example, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation or a High School Transition Program) or through private-pay insurance.

14. How are my support services funded? Will my Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) money be affected by receiving money from Adult Support Services?

Your services are funded by a combination of dollars from the State of Oregon general fund and federal Medicaid matching dollars. Since no money comes directly to you, it is not considered income by the Social Security Administration. Therefore, it does not affect your Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefit.

15. May I choose who works for me?

Yes. You may choose whomever you like as long as he/she is a qualified provider, passes state criminal history requirements, and is able to prove his/her ability to help you meet your plan goals. A provider is someone who you hire to provide services you want. Your provider can be an independent provider, domestic employee, or be from a provider agency. Your PA may be able to assist you with the hiring process.

16. Will my Personal Agent (PA) help me work with other agencies such as Vocational Rehabilitation Services or the local school district?

Yes, if you want them to. Your PA will act as your advocate with other agencies you are working with. They will also help you understand what services can be paid for by your plan dollars and what services will be covered by other agencies.

17. If I go into Support Services for Adults, will I still be eligible for other supports if I need them, such as Comprehensive Services?

Yes. Agreeing to enroll in Support Services for Adults will not hurt your chances of accessing Comprehensive Services or any other service you may need in the future.

18. What if I am not happy or have a complaint about my service?

If you are unhappy with your brokerage or provider services, there are both informal and formal ways to resolve your problems. You may file an informal complaint by discussing your problem with the Brokerage Director to resolve the issue. Or you may file a formal complaint. Whether you decide to file an informal or a formal complaint, someone you choose may assist you and act on your behalf.

19. May I choose my own Support Brokerage?

Yes. You can choose the Brokerage as long as there is more than one brokerage in your area and space is available. You will always have the right to change Brokerages too. If you move or choose to leave a Brokerage, you need to tell your Brokerage and they will help you transfer to the Brokerage of your choice if it is available. Not all counties have more than one Brokerage, and some Brokerages may not have room to take additional customers at the time you wish to change. To find a Brokerage close to you:

Inclusion, Inc.	503-232-2289 x112	Multnomah, Clackamas
Mentor Oregon Brokerage: Metro	503-258-2440 x118	Multnomah, Clackamas, Washington
Self Determination Resources,	503-292-7142 x11	Washington
Independence Northwest	503-546-2950 x10	Multnomah, Clackamas, Washington
The Arc Brokerage Services	503-935-5243	Multnomah, Clackamas
Resource Connections of OR.	503-485-2510 x113	Marion, Linn, Yamhill
Integrated Services Network	503-856-7073	Benton, Clatsop, Columbia , Lincoln, Marion, Polk , Tillamook , Yamhill
Full Access	541-284-5070 or 541-749-2158	Crook, Deschutes, Jefferson, Lake, Lane
Eastern Oregon Support Brokerage	541-387-3600	Baker, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Hood River, Malheur, Morrow, Sherman, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Wasco, Wheeler
Mentor Oregon Brokerage: Mid-Valley	541-345-5151 or 503-363-8588	Benton, Marion, Lane, Linn, Polk
Southern Oregon Regional Brokerage	541-672-9140	Coos, Curry, Douglas, Klamath
Creative Supports, Inc.	541-864-1673	Jackson, Josephine

20. More questions?

Contact your county Community Developmental Disability (DD) Program. For a list of local DD program offices go to: www.oregon.gov/DHS/dd/county/county_programs.shtml or call your local County DD Program Office, or call 1-800-282-8096 to find your local program office phone number.

More information can also be found in "A Roadmap To Support Services."

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PHILOSOPHY

Across the nation, a lot of change is happening in the way people think about supports and services for people with disabilities. In Oregon, this change in thinking has brought self-determination, individual budgets and real choice and control into the lives of people with developmental disabilities.

WHAT IS SELF-DETERMINATION?

Self-Determination is not a type of service, but a way of thinking. It is a philosophy that says you should have the power to get supports and services based on your individual needs, values and beliefs.

The basic principles of self-determination are:

- Freedom to plan a life with the supports you need
- Authority to control your support dollars
- Support to be involved in the community
- Responsibility for the use of the public funds
- Responsibility to participate in and become a contributing member of the community

Many efforts have been made to ensure that you have self-determination in creating your supports. These efforts included many people... people who use the system... people who work in the system... people who will continue to change the system... ensuring a future that empowers you to live a full and rewarding life.

INTRODUCTION TO SUPPORT SERVICES

As a person with a developmental disability or cognitive disability, you might have unique needs that qualify you for services and supports. During your school years, your services and supports might be provided through Special Education.

When you become an adult and leave the school system, you may need continued supports or instruction to live in, work in and be a part of your community. Your family and friends may be able to provide some of these supports, but if you need additional help, you may be able to get it through your County Developmental Disabilities Program.

WHAT TYPES OF SERVICES CAN I EXPECT TO RECEIVE?

The County Developmental Disability Programs offer resources like case management, as well as information and referral to services in your area. These services might be community programs available to the general public, or services specifically designed for your particular needs. For example, you might need:

- assistance with daily living skills (cooking, eating, cleaning)
- help and instruction with personal care (bathing, dressing, grooming)
- support to participate in your community
- help getting and keeping a job
- behavioral supports

The county can help you get these or other individually planned supports. The county determines what type of service you qualify for and helps you get those services. There are three types of services for adults in Oregon:

Support Services are provided to you while living at home. You may be living on your own, with your family, or with friends in a setting that is not licensed or certified. You will get these

through a brokerage, where a Personal Agent will help you plan, arrange and purchase your supports.

Comprehensive Services are 24-hour services usually provided in a setting that is licensed or certified by the state. You might know about the most common examples of these services, which are group homes and foster homes. Comprehensive Services are also provided through intensive in-home supports. Access to Comprehensive Services is very limited.

Crisis/Diversion Services may be needed when you have a crisis situation that requires more support than your plan was designed to give you. If you are in need of urgent help, the county will determine if you are eligible to receive additional short-term supports and/or funding and will help write a plan to assist you during your crisis.

WHEN CAN I GET THESE SERVICES?

In the past, if you qualified for services, you would have been placed on a waiting list, which was treated differently in each county. Today, as a way to eliminate waiting lists, counties refer all eligible people to brokerages for Support Services. All eligible adults must receive support services within 90 days.

HOW DO I SIGN UP FOR SUPPORT SERVICES?

You will work directly with your county Case Manager/Service Coordinator to see if you are eligible for services. Once you are found eligible, the county will work with the brokerage to determine when you will start receiving services. You may be referred to a brokerage to plan for your supports right away, or you may have to wait awhile longer.

WHAT IS A BROKERAGE?

A brokerage is an organization created to help people get the services and supports they say they need. Oregon has regional brokerages throughout the state.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I GET REFERRED TO A BROKERAGE?

Once you are referred to a brokerage in your area, a Personal Agent and others of your choice will help you plan for the services you need and build a budget to pay for these services. After the brokerage authorizes the plan, you can begin the process of hiring someone to provide your supports.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

In the following sections you will find information that will help you understand the details of this process. There are many references to websites to add to the information contained in this guide. Ask your local brokerage for assistance in accessing these websites if you do not have internet access.

ELIGIBILITY

In this section you will read about two conditions that make someone eligible to receive Support Services. These conditions are *developmental disability* and *mental retardation*. Many people prefer to say cognitive disability rather than mental retardation. However, this guide will use the current legally defined term of mental retardation. No offense is intended in its use.

HOW DO I BECOME ELIGIBLE FOR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SERVICES?

To find out if you are eligible, you should apply for services at your local County Developmental Disabilities Program. You may be found eligible either as a person with mental retardation or as a person with other developmental disabilities.

- To be found eligible as a person with mental retardation, there must be evidence that you had mental retardation before your 18th birthday.
- To be found eligible as a person with other developmental disabilities, there must be evidence that you had developmental disabilities before the age of 22.

WHAT INFORMATION WILL THE COUNTY CONSIDER IN MAKING A DECISION?

The county will want to look at school records, psychological evaluations, and other records from before the age of 18 or 22 that relate to your disability. If there is not enough information to show whether you had mental retardation or another developmental disability before the required age, they may use current information or assessments.

To be found eligible either as a person with mental retardation or with other developmental disabilities, you must have impaired adaptive behaviors. Adaptive behaviors are everyday living skills such as getting around town, talking, getting dressed or taking a shower, preparing a meal, learning, working, etc. A professional can test your adaptive behaviors.

If you are trying to become eligible as a person with mental retardation, your IQ scores will also be important. The county or state can help you obtain the evaluations you need. Sometimes evaluations are paid for by the Oregon Health Plan.

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS IF I AM NOT FOUND ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES?

If the county decides that you are not eligible for services, they must give you a notice in writing with the reasons for their decision. A notice is usually a letter, so look for mail from your county after you apply. You have the right to appeal to the state and have a hearing if the county says you are not eligible. The letter from the county will tell you how to appeal.

For more information about eligibility requirements, see "Developmental Disabilities Defined" on the state's webpage: http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/spd/pubs/dd/eligibility/dd_defined.pdf.



COUNTY AND STATE ROLES

Seniors and People with Disabilities (SPD) is the state office that works with your County Developmental Disabilities Program (CDDP) to make sure you have the services you need. Here are some of their responsibilities:

The state:

- Sets out the rules for how Support Services and other programs work
- Certifies and licenses brokerages and providers
- Provides training and assistance to brokerages and providers
- Establishes how much money will go into services each year
- Works with Medicaid to help fund your services
- Addresses any violation of your rights in obtaining or receiving services

The county:

The county has many responsibilities within the service system. For support services your County Developmental Disability Program does the following:

- Helps determine your eligibility for services
- Explains your choice of services in the community
- Gives you information about your rights while applying for or receiving services
- Follows state guidelines and rules on determining when you can get services
- Refers you to a brokerage for services
- Determines if you are eligible for crisis funding and helps plan for supports during the crisis
- Helps you transfer services if you move to another county or if you need other services
- Helps in monitoring the overall quality of service delivery

FUNDING

For Support Services, funding is not given directly to you. Instead, each person is entitled to a certain benefit level that can be used to create a service budget and to purchase needed services. The Support Services brokerages then pay for the services delivered on your behalf.

Support Services are funded through the state's Seniors and People with Disabilities office along with federal Medicaid dollars. The amount of funds available per person per year is limited. The various levels of funds available can be found here http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/spd/provtools/dd/rate_manual/brokers_ann_ben_10-08.pdf. Most people have access to the Basic Benefit level.

HOW IS MY BASIC BENEFIT LEVEL DETERMINED?

These are the issues that will be considered in your funding level:

- Whether you qualify for the Medicaid Waiver or not
- If you have daily living support needs
- If you have very intensive support needs and your family or care provider can't meet those needs

Brokerage staff will determine if you are eligible for either General Fund (state money only) or Medicaid Waiver funding (state

and federal dollars). Additional funding through “Base Plus” is available if you have specific support needs.

The brokerage staff will complete the Basic Supplement Criteria Inventory (BCSI) with you to see if you qualify for Base Plus. This assessment helps them look at your long-term health needs, physical needs, need for behavioral supports, and your caregiver’s circumstances. You qualify for additional funding based on the score of the BCSI.

WHAT OTHER FUNDING MIGHT BE AVAILABLE TO ME?

You may have heard of or may be receiving Personal Care Service (PC 20). PC 20 is a state Medicaid program that pays for 20 hours of services per month to help with activities of daily living such as mobility, dressing, grooming, bathing, toileting and personal hygiene.

As of July 1, 2005, people receiving Support Services cannot receive PC 20 as a separate program, but if you have those daily living support needs, you can receive increased funding to purchase supports through your plan. The increased funding is known as the ADL (Activities of Daily Living) Supplement and is based on your needs up to a limit.

SUPPORT SERVICE BROKERAGES

The state has given responsibility to Support Service brokerages to help you so you can live in your own home or in your family home. A Brokerage staff person, called a Personal Agent (PA), will help you exercise self-determination in the design and direction of your life, and will be your case manager. Your PA will help you identify, strengthen, expand and supplement all your supports, whether those are paid or natural supports. The brokerage will assign a Personal Agent to you, but you can request a different PA if you feel your needs would be better met by someone else.

HOW WILL MY PERSONAL AGENT HELP ME?

Your Personal Agent will use a person-centered planning process to help you, and the people close to you, identify your support needs. The PA will help you figure out how to get your goals and needs met and what resources are available to you, including unpaid natural supports. All of this is written into a plan called an Individual Support Plan (ISP). Your Personal Agent makes sure your support needs are addressed in your plan. He or she will write the plan with you, but it will be your plan, and you will decide what it includes. You have the right to change your plan whenever you need to or want to.

Your Personal Agent will also help to make sure your plan is carried out as you expect. He or she will help you coordinate all the resources you need for your plan. These resources may include private funds, community resources and public benefits, such as housing or food stamps.

Your PA will not make decisions about you or for you, but will help you, as needed, make your own decisions. Once you get the funding for your services, you will employ people, organizations or agencies to deliver your services. Your Personal Agent can help you find these people.

WHAT ELSE DOES THE BROKERAGE DO FOR ME?

A brokerage will help you learn to make informed decisions about your plan and services. You will learn how to talk to providers about what is working and not working in your plan, and how to change your plan and services as needed.

The brokerage is expected to monitor service quality. One important way they do that is through an annual Customer Satisfaction Survey. You are asked to respond to a series of questions about how satisfied you are with the services of the brokerage. You are asked if you are getting the types of support you need to do what you want to do.

A brokerage will serve as your fiscal agent, which means it will help you manage your Support Service funding. A fiscal agent helps keep track of funds used, pays those people or agencies you hire to provide services, and handles the tax responsibilities that you may have as an employer.



PLANNING FOR SUPPORT SERVICES

There are many life issues to be considered when thinking about what you want Support Services to do for you. To help you think through these issues, you will participate in two planning processes. The first is the person-centered planning process. The results of this process will be used in the second planning process, developing your Individual Support Plan (ISP).

WHAT IS PERSON CENTERED PLANNING?

When you first enter the brokerage, staff will spend time getting to know you by guiding you through a process called “Person-Centered Planning”. Your hopes and dreams are identified in this process, which will help you develop an ISP that is really useful to you. This planning sets the stage for the kind and amount of supports you will purchase within your benefit level.

Throughout this process, the brokerage staff talks with you and others who know you well. They want to know what your life is like now as well as what has happened in the past. They will need to know what works for you and what doesn't. They also want to know what you and those close to you are thinking about your future. They will want to know your story.

WHAT KINDS OF THINGS WILL MY PERSONAL AGENT WANT TO KNOW FROM ME?

Your PA will want to know all they can about your life, your hopes and your goals. The PA will ask you A LOT of questions like:

- What are your strengths and gifts?
- What works for you and what doesn't work for you? How do you learn best?
- What are things that you need help with? Who helps you now?

- What kind of job do you want? What kind of help do you need getting or keeping a job?
- Who are the important people in your life?
- Where do you like to go and what activities do you do?
- What are your dreams or ideas for your future?
- Where do you want to live?

As he/she is learning about you, the Personal Agent will complete a Customer Support Services Survey, which becomes part of your annual Individual Support Plan. The survey will describe your:

- Home life and household
- Social and leisure life
- Communication style
- Employment and education history
- Financial status
- Transportation modes
- Long-term vision for your future

WHAT IS THE INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT PLAN (ISP)?

The ISP outlines when you need support services, what kind of paid or natural supports you need, and where those supports are to be given. This plan outlines how your budget is spent and how long your supports will last.

There are many people who may be involved in helping you create your ISP, including your family, close friends, Personal Agent, teachers and others that you might choose. You and your team will want to think about:

- What goals to choose
- Who you want to provide your supports
- Where, when and how you want your services delivered
- How you know if you are getting what you expect from your plan

Using information from your Person Centered Plan and Customer Survey, the PA will discuss what you and those closest to you think are the most important steps to take toward your dreams. This portion of the ISP is sometimes called the Action Plan.

The PA can help you decide which goals you want to start with and what activities can help you reach these goals. The goals and activities are written on your ISP. You may have one goal or several goals depending on what you want to do in the next year. Talk with your PA about what resources are available to help fund your goals.

The ISP must meet certain state and federal rules, so you may see information on the plan that is not familiar to you. The PA can explain these details to you. Regardless of these rules, make sure that the goals and dreams you outlined in your Person Centered Plan are in the ISP.

Your ISP is the blueprint for your services in the next year. Plan well and include the goals that are really important to you. Remember that this is a “working” document and it can be changed if you feel that it is not working for you.

PUTTING YOUR PLAN TO WORK

You have developed your plan and now it is time to make things happen! Start by making sure your voice is heard, that your perspective is understood, and that your PA and the service providers you use respect these things. Get the most out of your plan by having the right supports provided in the right times and places, giving you the right results.

Ultimately, you want your services to help you live the way you want, meet your needs and to achieve your goals in life.

Participating in community events and activities and having access to all the services it offers, are the keys to being fully included in your community. You may not choose to be involved

in or be a part of everything in your community, but you should have the same choices and opportunities as everyone else, such as:

- Having your own friends and close personal relationships
- Living in a home of your choice, with whom you choose
- Engaging in meaningful work in an inclusive setting
- Enjoying inclusive recreation and other leisure activities
- Participating in inclusive spiritual activities
- Having maximum control over your life

Work with your PA to hire staff who will help you achieve maximum independence and will help you feel a part of the community where you live.

PROVIDERS

Now that you have your plan and your service budget, you will need to hire someone to actually provide the services you want. This provider can support you in your home, in your community, or at your job.

With your Support Service budget you must hire providers who meet the qualifications and standards set forth by state and federal agencies. Rules govern what rates they can charge you and how they are paid.

Your Personal Agent will help you through the process of identifying, choosing and hiring one or more providers. Your PA will also help you understand how to manage your providers.

WHAT SERVICES CAN I HIRE A PROVIDER TO DO?

You can be quite creative in designing supports to meet your personal needs. Here are some typical supports you might purchase through providers:

- assistance with daily living skills (cooking, eating, cleaning)
- help and instruction with personal care (bathing, dressing, grooming)
- increasing communication skills (expressing yourself, using technology, reading skills)

- budgeting assistance
- transportation
- support to participate in your community
- employment supports
- respite care for your family members that provide you help
- behavioral support

HOW WILL I FIND SOMEONE TO HIRE?

You are in control of your budget and provider selection. Your Personal Agent assists you in making informed and cost effective decisions and choices from among qualified providers. You will interview potential providers and choose the one that best meets your values and needs.

WHAT KINDS OF PROVIDERS CAN I CHOOSE FROM?

There are three types of providers to choose from:

Independent Providers

These are individuals who personally provide your services. They can be either your **employee** or an **independent contractor**. **Employees** are interviewed and hired by you or your representative, like a family member. These employees are paid through a payroll service and have their taxes withheld automatically. **Independent Contractors** are self-employed people who work for multiple customers. They contract directly with you, not with the brokerage. Independent Contractors must meet rules about being self-employed.

Provider Organization

A Provider Organization is an agency primarily in business to serve you and other people with developmental disabilities. It uses employees, volunteers, and/or contractors. Most of these organizations offer services in individual and group settings. They are licensed or certified by the state.

General Business Provider

A General Business is an organization or entity that provides services to the general public, such as a taxi service, bus company, or general contractor. This provider operates under a business license and usually has many competitors in the same line of work.

HOW DO I KNOW WHICH TYPE OF PROVIDER TO CHOOSE?

Your PA and others will help you look at all the options you have for choosing a provider. Keep in mind, if you choose a provider and are not happy with them, you can choose another one. Some factors to consider when making this decision are:

- How much does the provider charge and what you will get for your money
- Who can be the most flexible to meet your needs
- How long will it take you to find someone who is a good match for you
- What kind of employment responsibilities you want to have
- Where you can get backup supports if your provider is ill or out of town
- What kind of paperwork you will have to manage
- What experience the provider has
- References from other customers

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT FROM MY PROVIDER?

Some basic expectations in the working relationship with your provider are:

- Services that are based on a plan and goals
- A detailed job description or service agreement for services
- Payments to the provider are approved by you
- Supports and payments are regularly reviewed by your Personal Agent
- The quality of your services is evaluated by you and your Personal Agent

HOW ARE RATES SET FOR MY SERVICES?

Providers must follow established rules when setting rates charged for labor and services. They must use the correct accounting principles and maintain records about their rates and why they charge that rate.

Since Medicaid helps fund most Support Services, their rules must be followed. Medicaid will not pay for services that other resources will pay for, and you cannot be billed for any part of support services that Medicaid paid for. You can buy additional

services. For more information, please refer to the Oregon Department of Human Services' Rate Setting Manual or to the website: http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/spd/provtools/dd/rate_manual/home.shtml.

ARE THERE DIFFERENT TYPES OF RATES?

Providers do have differences that justify variations in the rate they charge. Rates change because not all types of providers work the same way. This makes it important to consider all your options when deciding on a provider. You can't only look at the rates they charge; you also need to look at things like how you will get along with a provider, how closely your basic values match, and if they are flexible to meet your schedule, etc.

Hourly Rates

Any provider may charge an hourly rate. This means you will pay for the hours you use the service. These rates may vary based on whether you are paying the taxes for your employees, if the provider has overhead expenses (for example, independent contractors must pay for gas, supplies, business taxes) or if there are administrative costs for provider organizations and General Businesses.

You might also find that rates will vary within the same group of providers. For example, one independent contractor might charge a higher hourly rate than another one. Hourly rates may also differ based on the kind of support you are purchasing.

Daily or Flat Rates

This means that no matter how many hours you use the service, the cost will be the same. Again, one support service might actually cost more than another. In some cases, an hourly rate is not a reasonable way to calculate costs for services, so the providers may charge a daily rate.

Check with your PA for more information about these types of rate options. They will help you make decisions that get you the most for the money you have to spend.

WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE TO HELP ME BE AN EMPLOYER?

For detailed information on hiring employees, please review the Domestic Handbook and Domestic Policy Handbook. This can be downloaded at: <http://www.sdri-pdx.org/customers/index.html>.

TRANSITION SERVICES

Transition Services are an important part of Special Education. Transition is a process that helps you define goals that will take you from high school to adulthood. These goals are based on your strengths, preferences and interests. It includes planning through the Individualized Education Program (IEP) and should document all the supports and services you need to make a smooth and productive transition out of school. It might also include a description of supports that you may need after graduation, such as support service through a brokerage.

WHEN DOES TRANSITION BEGIN?

Transition begins at age 16. Your IEP should include a transition plan with goals that address activities and services like community training, employment skills, etc. If you have graduated with a modified diploma or certificate of attendance or have not yet graduated, you can continue to receive transition services until the school year in which you turn 21 is completed. However, once you graduate with a regular diploma, you are no longer eligible to receive transition services.

WHAT THINGS SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN MY TRANSITION PLAN?

The transition plan should address your goals or vision of what you will be doing after graduation based on your preferences and interests in the following areas:

- Employment
- Community participation and mobility
- Recreation and leisure
- Post-secondary training and other learning opportunities
- Independent living

The transition plan should be meaningful to you and help you move toward your adult goals. Take your high school course selection very seriously. Courses you take should match your vision for the future including post-secondary education, training, and employment. The transition plan will identify what the school will do to achieve these goals and will identify other agencies who will also be involved now and in the future.

If you have a Person Centered Plan (PCP), it can help you build the IEP around some of your transition goals. This will also help you and your family think about services you might need through a brokerage. Make sure to consider the accommodations and/or assistive technology (devices that help you with tasks, like computers) that you might need for the courses you are taking or for a potential job.

WHO IS INVOLVED IN TRANSITION PLANNING?

Your IEP team helps you lay out your transition plan. The school district will invite your team to meet and plan. This includes you, your family members, teachers and other professionals (therapist and specialist), your transition teacher, your county DD Services coordinator, Vocational Rehabilitation or Commission for the Blind Counselor, caseworkers, and school guidance counselor. You might wish to invite others who know you well enough to contribute to this process, like friends, special interest coaches or teachers, church or spiritual leaders. Personal Agents will become part of the team once you have entered a brokerage.

When you turn 18 you are legally an adult; however, the school district is still required to notify your parents of your IEP meetings. If you want your parents to continue to have legal authority with your IEP, they will need to be appointed as your guardian or Surrogate Parent.

HOW IS VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (VR) INVOLVED IN MY TRANSITION PLANNING?

The school district should invite a representative from VR or the Commission for the Blind to your IEP at least once in your senior year or before if the team feels it would be helpful. The school district, VR, and the Brokerage will work together with you to envision how resources will be used to get and keep a

job that matches your interests and skills, either before or after graduation. The school, VR and the Brokerage have the responsibility to coordinate the transition planning and provide you with information on how this works.

THE BROKERAGE AND YOUR TRANSITION PLAN

You may be eligible to enter a brokerage before leaving school. If that happens, you will want to make sure all your services are coordinated and work in your best interest. Inviting your PA to your transition planning meetings can be a helpful way to make this happen.

Support Service funding cannot be used to pay for any services that your school district or Vocational Rehabilitation is responsible to provide to you. The brokerage may authorize payment for things that complement the Transition plan but are not the school's responsibility. The Brokerage ISP might include community activities (beyond school goals or hours), supports at home to keep you safe, or support to keep a job identified with the school and VR.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Transition Community Network / Transition Reference Booklet -- <http://www.tcntransition.org>

OHSU Oregon Services for Children with Special Health Needs – Learning Collaborative – Youth Transition to Adulthood www.ohsu.edu/cdrc/oscsn/about/TransitiontoAdulthood.html

Cornell Transition From School to Work PDF - http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/EDI/publications/PPBriefs/PP_4.pdf

Transition – Florida's Protection and Advocacy Center Manual PDF - <http://advocacycenter.org/documents/Transition2003/Transition-AdvocacyCenter.pdf>

National Center on Secondary Education and Transition - www.ncset.org

IDEA '04-05 /transition comparisons - <http://www.wrightslaw.com/idea/art/defs.transition.htm>

EMPLOYMENT

Some people will tell you that you can't work because you have not done so before or because they think you would lose essential Social Security benefits. This is not necessarily true. Brokerages can help you pursue your employment goals.

After they leave school, students with disabilities can go to work for real wages in a community job. Making this successful transition requires decisions, planning, and cooperation between you and your team. You have choices to make. Whether you want to test out new jobs, develop a career, or just earn a paycheck, there are many options available to you for employment in your community.

You may need no assistance in getting and keeping a job, or you might require more help like:

- Learning about the responsibilities of having a job;
- Needing a coworker or coach to teach you about your job and then you can do it yourself;
- Requiring devices to assist you in performing some work duties;
- Having tasks adapted or modified so you can complete them;
- Asking an employer to take duties from one or more employees to create or "carve" a job that meets your particular skills and abilities; or
- Getting some planned regular "extra support" from a coworker or coach to help make sure you can keep doing your job.

Community Employment or Competitive Employment is working for pay at a job where most of your co-workers are persons without disabilities. Types of jobs, work hours, wages, and ways to support you to be successful can be matched to each individual. Vocational Rehabilitation or Oregon Commission For the Blind are agencies responsible for helping all eligible individuals get and learn a job.

Supported Employment is paid community employment where most of your co-workers are persons without disabilities, the job matches your interests and abilities, and you receive long term support to be successful on the job. In supported employment, agencies cooperate with you to help you get, learn and keep a job. If you are a brokerage customer, YOU, your Personal Agent, school staff, and a VR counselor become partners to achieve employment. The Personal Agent will help to see how your support services budget will be used along with other resources to reach your job goals. These supports can be both short term or long term to help you keep a job.

Here are some examples of employment options:

Sheltered Employment is working in a site where most of the workers are other persons with disabilities. Types of jobs, work hours and wages in these settings are often limited.

No matter what kind of employment you choose to pursue or what supports you need to work, your desires, strengths, interests and abilities should drive the process.

HOW DO I GET STARTED?

Talk to your family, teacher and Personal Agent about wanting to work. These are the people who can help you change your person centered plan (IEP, ISP) to achieve this goal. Your Personal Agent (PA) will share information with you and help you make an appointment with agencies that can help you to go to work. Agencies like Vocational Rehabilitation Services or the Commission for the Blind Office are important resources for you and may form an employment team with you. They may help you to complete an Employment Person Centered Plan and participate in community based work assessments or other activities to help identify your work interests and support needs at an employment site.

HOW CAN I FIGURE OUT WHAT KIND OF JOB I WANT?

You can create an Employment Focused Person Centered Plan just about working. This PCP will include those

who know and care about you, your counselor from VR or the Commission for the Blind and your PA. You can also invite community members who can tell you more about jobs.

At the meeting, you, your team and guests will talk about things like:

- Experiences you've had that have given you skills to use at work
- Your strengths, gifts, capacities and abilities
- Specific information on what you need to be successful at work
- Challenges and support strategies
- Resources
- What work settings fit you
- Names of people who can assist with the employment process

As a result of this meeting, you will have an Action Plan that may become part of your formal plan for employment.

HOW DO I FIND A JOB AND WHO WILL HELP ME?

Everyone has help in getting a job. Sometimes it is an easy process and you won't need much help from others, but other times you might need a customized approach to finding one. That is what job development is, and each member of the employment team will help with this.

A job developer focuses on your skills, interests, and abilities in order to seek out the job that is the right fit for you. You may have a particular need or special skill that gives your job developer the opportunity to be very creative in their approach, matching you to the employer and the job they want done. Your family and close friends can be especially helpful in supporting your job search and helping you deal with problems as they arise.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

OHSU Self Directed Support Toolkit

http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/spd/pubs/dd/adults/employ_toolkit.pdf

Success Stories on Self Directed Employment
http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/spd/pubs/dd/adults/employ_storybook6.pdf

Oregon Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services
<http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/vr/index.shtml>
Office location: <http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/vr/officelocation.shtml>

Worksupport.com
<http://www.worksupport.com/>

SSA Worksheet to help gather and organize the information
http://www.ssa.gov/disability/disability_starter_kits.htm

Journal of Disability Policy Studies
Self-Directed Employment for People with Developmental Disabilities: Issues, Characteristics, and Illustrations
Jo-Ann Sowers, Debra McLean, and Cynthia Owens
<http://www.worksupport.com/Main/proed19.asp>

Self-Employment
<http://www.griffinhammis.com>
Find out how to become self-employed and how to get help doing so.

Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA)
<http://www.resna.org>
703-524-6686 (V)
703-524-6639 (TTY)

Job Accommodations Network (JAN)
<http://www.jan.wvu.edu>
1-800-526-7234 (V/TTY)

Department of Labor
<http://www.DisabilityInfo.gov>
Provides information about federally sponsored employment, job accommodations, transportation, state and regional assistance programs, and technology.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES

In addition to the services you receive through Brokerages, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services are designed to help you meet your employment goals by assisting you in preparing for, finding, and keeping a job. Vocational Rehabilitation provides short-term services to people with disabilities. The Oregon Commission for the Blind provides vocational rehabilitation services for persons who are blind or who have visual impairments.

Services can include some or all of the following: the development of an Individualized Plan for Employment, assessments, job development, job coaching, assistive technology, school (college or technical school), work clothes, worksite accommodations, tools and more.

Some individuals need both (1) short term services to get and learn a job and (2) long term support to keep a job. This is called supported employment. The resources that may be used in partnership with VR to help a person with severe disabilities keep a job could include:

- An individual's brokerage or support service budget;
- Social Security Work incentives
- Natural Supports by the business co-workers

HOW DO I KNOW IF I AM ELIGIBLE FOR VR?

In order to be eligible for VR services, the rules say you must:

- Be an "individual with a disability," meaning a person who has a physical or mental impairment that constitutes or results in a substantial barrier to employment and can benefit from VR services to achieve an employment outcome.
- Require VR services to prepare for, secure, retain, or regain employment.

If you receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Social Security for Disabled Adult Child (SSDAC), you are presumed to be eligible for VR services. Bring your determination letter from Social Security Administration office or a copy of your check to your VR Counselor. They will also need some background information about you and your disability to determine if you meet eligibility based on the laws they must follow.

WHAT IS AN INDIVIDUAL PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT (IPE)?

Each person is unique and therefore requires an individualized approach to reach their employment goals. You, your PA (if you are working with a brokerage) and VR counselor will work together to establish your goal and identify the services that are necessary for you to achieve and maintain this goal.

You and your employment team will write both your Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) and your Brokerage plan Individual Support Plan (ISP). These plans should fit together and complement one another. Yes, that means you now have several plans (Person Centered Plan, ISP, Employment PCP and the IPE). The important thing is that these plans fit together; each one helps you focus on a part of your life, creating the supports you need and want without conflicting with each other.

HOW DO I HIRE A JOB DEVELOPER OR PROVIDER AGENCY?

Finding someone who will help you with the job search is a key to success. Your PA or VR Counselor can assist you with names of individuals and with the interview process if needed. See the Provider section of this guide for more information and links to sites that can help you.

CAN I USE THE VR SYSTEM IF I AM ALREADY RECEIVING SERVICES FROM ANOTHER AGENCY?

Yes, if you want to achieve community, competitive or supported employment. VR will not and cannot help someone who wants sheltered employment. Even if you are receiving services from another agency

(state or private), you can receive services from Vocational Rehabilitation. VR may be able to provide or fund services that you do not already receive. If you are receiving services from more than one agency, it is important to let your VR counselor know this so you can talk about how your services will be coordinated. You will want to work with all the agencies to make sure that the services you receive complement each other and that you and your team work together toward the same goals.

WHAT ARE SOME OTHER SERVICES AVAILABLE TO ME?

One-Stop Career Centers programs are available in most areas of Oregon and can provide additional services to you. *One-Stop Career Centers* offer recruiting, screening, training, testing and placement services for job seekers and employers. Other programs they offer include Summer Youth Employment and Individual Training Accounts. For more information see:

<http://www.seworks.org/>

Client Assistance Program (CAP) can help you if you have issues you cannot resolve directly with VR. You can contact their office for more information:

Disability Rights Oregon

620 SW Fifth Avenue, Portland OR 97204

503-243-2081, 1-800-452-1694

<http://www.disabilityrightsoregon.org/resources/3-brochures/>

To Find the Vocational Rehabilitation Office closest to you:

<http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/vr/officelocation.shtml>

Local Resources

A Customer Guide to using VR and DD For Supported Employment is available at: http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/spd/pubs/dd/adults/employment_2004.pdf

Vocational Rehabilitation Division

Administration Office

500 Summer Street, NE

Salem, OR 97301-1018

503-945-5880, 503-945-5894 (TTY), 503-945-8991 (Fax)

<http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/vr/index.shtml>

Oregon Commission for the Blind
535 SE 12th Avenue
Portland, OR 97214
503-731-3221
503-731-3224 (TDD)
503-731-3230 (Fax)
http://www.oregon.gov/Blind/about_us.shtml/
E-Mail Address: ocbmail@state.or.us

National Resources

Vocational Rehabilitation State Offices (from the Job
Accommodation Network)
<http://askjan.org/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?902>

Rehabilitation Services Administration
<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/or/index.html?src=ln>

General Disability Resources
www.disability.gov

Social Security Administration
www.socialsecurity.gov

Social Security Red Book on Work Incentives
<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/redbook/>

Information and Sample PASS Plans
www.passplan.org

Independent Living Centers
<http://www.ilru.org/html/publications/directory/index.html>

Institute For Community Inclusion and Getting the
Most from the VR System
<http://www.communityinclusion.org/index.php>

BENEFITS PLANNING

Benefits Planning helps you understand how your Social Security or other benefits could be affected by earning an income. You may be eligible to take advantage of Work Incentives, which are special rules that let you work, earn money and still keep your public benefits. The goal of Benefits Planning is to help you make informed decisions about working and the possible outcomes of the decisions you make.

WHY DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT BENEFITS PLANNING?

You need to know about the work rules and Work Incentives and think through how they can help you reach your work goals. You want to be confident that going to work will increase your quality of life, and getting accurate information about benefits and working is critical to reaching that goal.

WHEN SHOULD I CONSIDER BENEFITS PLANNING?

The best time to meet with a Benefits Planner is when you are thinking about going to work, you have been offered a job, or you are already working and have the potential to earn more money. Since some of the earning thresholds that affect your benefits change each year, it's also a good idea to touch base with a Benefits Planner annually. It is important to make sure you are making decisions about work based on accurate information and to discuss any changes in work that may impact your benefits.

WHO CAN HELP ME WITH BENEFITS PLANNING?

Disability Rights Oregon provides this service for free. The Benefits Planner will help you navigate through the maze of rules and help you think through each Work Incentive to identify those that could help you. Benefit Planners will work one-on-one with you to:

- Provide information about how wages will affect each type of benefit
- Identify Work Incentives that fit your situation

- Provide tools and assistance in reporting income and requesting Work Incentives
- Help you earn more money

OTHER RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

Local Resources

Disability Rights Oregon

620 SW Fifth Avenue, Portland OR 97204

503-243-2081, 1-800-452-1694

<http://www.disabilityrightsoregon.org/need-help/planning-for-work>

National Resources

Social Security Red Book on Work Incentives

<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/redbook/>

Information and Example PASS Plans

www.passplan.org

Technical Assistance, chat rooms and resource materials

www.griffinhammis.com

Virginia Commonwealth University

www.worksupport.com

Cornell University

www.ilr.cornell.edu/ped



QUALITY ASSURANCE

Quality Assurance is a process of looking at the effectiveness, efficiency and appropriateness of services. This means making sure you have the right service for your needs, that the services do what they are supposed to do, and that the type and cost of service are within the rules.

WHAT IS MY PART IN QUALITY ASSURANCE?

Occasionally you will be given a Customer Satisfaction Survey. It is important that you complete the survey so that brokerages and the state know the quality of the services being provided. You know best if the services you are getting are good and if they meet your needs. If they aren't, you need to tell your Personal Agent. Here are some questions to ask yourself about your Support Services:

- Do I control what services I get?
- Do I choose what provider I use?
- Do I use my funds wisely?
- Do I feel safe?
- Do I have the supports I need to be healthy?
- Do I know how to change my plan if I want?

GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

If you are unhappy with the services from a brokerage or provider organizations you use, you have the right to report your complaint to them. By state regulations they must have written policies regarding informal complaints and formal grievances, which they must provide to you. These policies must give you or someone

acting on your behalf the right to informally discuss and resolve a complaint. If you choose to deal with your complaint informally, you may still choose later to use the formal grievance process.

HOW DOES THE FORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCESS WORK?

If your grievance is in any way associated with abuse, the County Developmental Disability Program will be immediately notified, as well as the director of the brokerage or provider organization. In all other cases, the brokerage or provider organization must take appropriate actions on grievances within five working days, following receipt of the grievance. If the grievance is not resolved at that level, the brokerage or provider organization director must complete a review and provide a written response to you within 15 days.

WHAT IF I AM UNABLE TO RESOLVE MY GRIEVANCE WITH THE BROKERAGE OR PROVIDER ORGANIZATION?

The brokerage or provider organization must give the unresolved grievance to the County Developmental Disabilities Program, or in some cases, directly to the Seniors and People with Disabilities (SPD) administrator for a final decision. If the grievance was given to the County Developmental Disabilities Program and you are unsatisfied with the county's decision, you may appeal to the SPD Administrator, who will make a final decision.

WHAT IF MY GRIEVANCE CONCERNS MEDICAID RIGHTS?

You have the right to a contested case hearing (Fair Hearing) if your grievance is over Medicaid rights. Each time a brokerage takes an action to deny, terminate, suspend, or reduce your access to services covered under Medicaid, the brokerage must notify you, or your legal representative, of the right to a hearing and how to obtain it. The brokerage must mail this notice or personally serve it to you or your legal representative ten days or more before the effective date of the action. This notification requirement does not apply if an action is part of, or fully consistent with, the ISP and you or your legal representative has agreed with the action by signing the plan.

PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Regardless of where you live, you have the right to be protected from abuse and neglect. With the creation of Support Services, many more individuals like you are receiving services in their own homes. Protective Services are designed to help keep you safe.

WHAT IS ABUSE?

Abuse is harm done to you by someone who intended to harm you. In the rules, the main areas covered under abuse are the following:

- Abandonment
- Death of an adult caused by other than accidental or natural means or occurring in unusual circumstances
- Financial Exploitation
- Neglect
- Physical Abuse
- Restraint
- Sexual Abuse
- Verbal Abuse

WHO HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT ME?

The County Developmental Disability Program has the responsibility to provide you with protective services and investigate alleged abuse.

WHO IS A MANDATORY REPORTER?

A mandatory reporter is someone who is required by law to report abuse. These reporters would include any public or private official who helps you in an official capacity, like county and state staff, as well as brokerage or provider staff, to mention a few. Anyone who sees that you have unexplained bruises or injuries should report this to your PA.

We hope this roadmap helps you understand
and access Support Services and
we wish you well on your journey!



Electronic version available at <http://www.ocdd.org>
Check this site for updates and additional information.

