

Choosing an Adult Service Model that is Best for You

The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) offers two primary adult service models: Traditional and Self-Directed. Within each model there are various options that offer a range of control, flexibility and responsibility to the individual served and their families.



Traditional Model

The most commonly used model in Massachusetts



LOW FLEXIBILITY &
LOW RESPONSIBILITY

The provider agency has full responsibility for the program development, budget, scheduling, support staff, (hiring, training, supervising), and payroll. Examples of Traditional Service Models include: Community Based Day Supports (CBDS), Supported Employment, Day Habilitation (DayHab), shared living, and group homes.

Self-Directed Models

Allows individuals and families to tailor the supports received to meet the specific wants and needs of the individual served.

Agency With Choice (AWC)



MEDIUM FLEXIBILITY &
MEDIUM RESPONSIBILITY

Shared responsibility with a qualified provider agency for finding/hiring support staff and managing the Individual Budget. The individual/family is responsible for planning & managing the day-to-day services.

Participant Directed Program (PDP)



HIGH FLEXIBILITY &
HIGH RESPONSIBILITY

Individual/family has primary responsibility for finding, hiring and supervising support staff. The individual/family manages the Individual Budget and decides how to use their DDS allocation (within DDS guidelines) with assistance from a DDS Support Broker to monitor the budget and manage paperwork. There is also a Fiscal Intermediary who helps maintain accounting and compliance.

Individuals can decide what services they want (or don't want) and select the model and services that can best meet their individual needs and works with their Individual Budget. Individuals have the option to pick one service model or mix traditional with Self Direction. Your Area Office can provide you with additional information about these service model options. In order to access DDS services, you must go through the eligibility determination process and be found eligible. See next page for more information.



About The Department of Developmental Services (DDS)

DDS provides supports for children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities including Autism Spectrum Disorder to enhance opportunities to become fully engaged members of their community. Your Area Office can provide you with additional information about these service model options.

Traditional Model

Traditional Model is the most commonly used model in Massachusetts. Services are provided and managed by a qualified provider agency through a contract with DDS.

The provider agency has full authority and responsibility for hiring, training, supervising, and paying support staff. The provider agency also assumes responsibility for support staff who may call out sick and ensures coverage.

The individuals and their support team develop Individual Support Plans (ISP) and provide input on other day to day decisions. Services delivered to the individual should align with the ISP.

The provider agency has the responsibility for managing all aspects of the budget so that the services outlined in the ISP are provided according to applicable federal and state laws, DDS requirements, and other state and DDS regulations.



Contact Us

For more information, please visit www.mass.gov/dds or email DDS_Self-Directed_Services@mass.gov.

To sign up for the DDS Newsletter please [click here](#).

Self-Directed Models

Agency with Choice (AWC)

Agency with Choice (AWC) is a program model for individuals and families to have an increased level of flexibility through both the choice and design of supports/services they select. AWC allows individuals/families to customize their supports/services to meet their needs while sharing responsibility with a qualified and licensed provider agency, which is also referred to as a co-employment model.

AWC Providers support individuals to experience and build capacity for self-directing & customizing their supports/services without having to be responsible for regulatory, accounting, legal and technical duties associated with being an employer. AWC Providers also assist the individual to maximize their community opportunities and connections.

The AWC Provider manages certain aspects of the budget to ensure compliance with applicable federal and state laws, DDS and other state agency regulations, and other DDS requirements.

The individual/family selects the support staff, sets work hours and tasks to be performed, provides daily supervision and management of employees, and determines when that support staff is no longer needed. The agency and individual/family share in training and evaluating employees.

Participant Directed Program (PDP)

The Participant Directed Program offers the most flexibility to arrange and customize supports based on the individual's needs and preferences. The individual can hire their own support staff and make other decisions about how to use their DDS funded allocation.

The Individual Budget enables a participant to direct and manage the delivery of services they choose to use. This gives the individual/family control of a specific amount of funds and the responsibility and freedom to purchase supports, goods, and services from a variety of sources.

A fiscal intermediary (FI) serves as the agent for individuals/families and is responsible for all payments for supports, services and goods. The FI provides financial monitoring and reporting and ensures compliance with all applicable federal and state laws, DDS and other state agency regulations and requirements.

A Support Broker (typically a DDS Service Coordinator) helps the person define their needs, dreams, create and manage their Individual Budget within the allocated resources, and develop a network of services/supports.



Visit our website for more info on Self Directed models.