

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
Executive Office of Health and Human Services

**Real Lives**



**DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES**

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## Existing Self-Determination Efforts



Individuals currently have the option to determine how to spend their allocated dollars on services and supports they need including but not limited to assistive technology, modifications, therapies, and professional, residential and employment services and supports..

Individual Supports Plans (ISPs) and Plans of Care (POCs) help to incorporate the philosophy of self-determination:

- A place to call home
- Economic self-sufficiency through supports
- Support for existing or new long term relationships
- Real community memberships



## Beneficiaries of DDS Self-Determination Programs



- The increasing population of those on the autism spectrum
- Young adults turning 22 years old transitioning out of their special education programs
- Individuals with Autism
- Individuals wishing to leave an existing program sometimes to pursue an alternative option
- Individuals with developmental disabilities living with elderly caregiver parents
- Adults with developmental disabilities with complex medical needs.



## Statewide Self-Determination Advisory Board



In the Real Lives Bill DDS shall establish a statewide self-determination advisory board to advise the department on efforts to implement, publicize, evaluate, improve and develop information regarding self-determination.

The advisory board shall consist of 19 individuals appointed by the commissioner

- 1 of whom shall be a member of the department
- 1 of whom shall be a member of an advocacy organization
- 1 of whom shall represent taxpayers
- 1 of whom shall have experience with consumer protection
- 1 of whom shall have experience with self-determination models
- 1 of whom shall have experience with nonprofit/for-profit services for persons with disabilities
- 1 of whom shall have experience with financial management services
- 1 of whom shall be an independent facilitator
- 1 of whom shall be a provider of direct services, supports or goods
- 10 of whom shall be a participant or a family member, legal representative or guardian
- 1 individual appointed by the disabled persons protection commission
- 1 individual appointed by the office of the inspector general
- 1 individual appointed by the office of the state auditor



## Financial Management Service



A service or function provided by an entity to assist a participant in disbursing allocated funds in accordance with the participants individual budget and person-centered plan

The financial management services may include:

- facilitating the employment of service and support workers by aiding the participant with payments
- fiscal accounting
- tax withholding
- compliance with relevant state and federal employment laws
- verification of provider qualifications
- criminal background checks and expenditure reports; provided

Public Partnerships, LTD (PPL) has been contracted by DDS to provide individualized fiscal intermediary services to participants through a program that meets the requirements of Dept. of Labor, DDS and our Federal Waivers.



## Independent Facilitator



- Independent facilitator is a person selected and directed by the participant to assist in the development and execution of their person-centered plan.
- Assists the participant in making informed decisions about the participants choices regarding self-determination including: 1) the short and long term planning goals for self-determination & 2) the transition to self-determination
- The independent facilitator shall meet minimum qualifications established by the department through regulation prior to assisting a participant.
- The independent facilitator shall not provide any services, supports or goods to the participant under the participant's individual support plan
- The independent facilitator shall not be employed by a person providing services, supports or goods to the participant.



## Training



The department and the statewide self-determination advisory board shall develop informational materials and training for department staff regarding self-determination.

Training shall include:

- How to explain the concept and practice of self-determination
- Inform department staff about the mechanics of self-determination
- The development of individual budgets
- The selection, purchase and use of services, supports and goods by participants
- Information about the types of providers and services that may be utilized
- Information about the selection and supervision of vendors
- The respective roles of independent facilitators, financial management services and the department
- The methods of identifying and reporting instances of suspected waste, fraud and abuse
- Educate all department staff, except for department staff classified as janitorial, maintenance or secretarial, on all service options including, but not limited to, self-direction annually.



## Website



DDS shall provide information on the website about all service options including, but not limited to:

- Self-determination and options for residential placements
- The participant has control over the annual budget
- The participant is central to and directs the decision-making process and determines what supports are utilized
- The service system is flexible, so the participant may tailor the participants supports to meet the participants needs





## Searchable Website



DDS will develop a searchable provider website for providers serving multiple participants, who receive \$75,000 or more of self-determination funds per year to include:

- Provider organizational structure, history and performance
- Complete legal name of the provider, vendor or supplier and, where different, the popular or public name of the provider, vendor or supplier
- Legal structure and organizational type
- Accreditation and licensure status
- Web address location of recent formal audits, reports and investigations
- Contact information and website information;
- Services, supports or goods offered at each geographic location by said provider
- The hours and schedules of availability of each service, support or good
- Populations served
- Provisions regarding the supervision, storage and dispensation of prescription medications Any special or non-standard eligibility requirements or restrictions



## Searchable Website (cont.)



- Facilities available and in good operating order at each geographic location
- The precise street address of each geographic location
- The availability of or proximity to public transportation
- The hours of operation
- The accessibility by mobility-impaired individuals
- The medical and non-medical professional staff at each geographic location
- The number of staff in each staff category
- The educational and professional attainments of staff
- The ratio of staff to client for each shift
- The average tenure, in years and months, of staff who work at least 16 hours a week
- The characteristics of individuals receiving services, supports and goods at each geographic location
- The number of clients
- The age range of clients
- The gender distribution of clients.