

*Understanding the Connecticut
DDS Home and Community
Based Services Waivers:*

An Introduction to Your Hiring Choices



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Governor Dannel P. Malloy
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Dedication

We would like to dedicate this manual to the individuals who have committed themselves to making self-directed supports and services possible for all people with intellectual disabilities in Connecticut. Through creative examples, the early pioneers of self-determination showed us how people with intellectual disabilities could make their lives better by assuming greater control and responsibility for their individual budgets and by self-directing their support services. We appreciate their efforts.

We are pleased to offer ***Understanding the Connecticut DDS Home and Community Based Services Waivers: An Introduction to Your Hiring Choices*** to the people served by the CT Department of Developmental Services. We hope that this guide will help many more individuals with intellectual disabilities to experience the pride, accomplishment, and growth that can occur through the provision of self-directed services.

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Dear Consumers & Family Members

On behalf of DDS, it is my pleasure to share with you the update to the manual for consumers and families: ***Understanding the Connecticut DDS Home and Community Based Services Waivers: An Introduction to Your Hiring Choices.***

Everyday we live our lives and are part of a community. But what does that really mean to us and to the people we serve? Everyone defines it differently. In general I think –

- ***We all want to be loved and have meaningful relationships***
- ***We want to live in our own home with people we care about and who care about us***
- ***We want to be treated fairly in all aspects of our lives***
- ***We want to work in jobs where we are respected***
- ***We want to make enough money to pay our bills and have a little left over to have some fun***
- ***We want to make choices that are right for who we are and who we want to be***
- ***We want to feel in control of our lives and know we are part of the greater community of life***
- ***We want to be part of our own communities and have a sense of belonging***
- ***We want to leave this earth knowing we have made a difference by being***
- ***We want to live life!***

This manual is a starting point to assist you to begin taking control and living your own life by hiring and managing your own staff. This guide will assist you to explore self directed supports and give you “An Introduction to Your Hiring Choices”.

Together we can make life happen.

Terrence W. Macy, Ph.D.

COMMISSIONER

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

Introduction

This guidebook is the second of a series of waiver guides to be developed by the Department of Developmental Services (DDS). The first guidebook titled, ***Understanding the Connecticut DDS Home and Community Based Services Waivers: A***

Guidebook for Consumers and Their Families explains the department's new Medicaid Waiver System.

The first guide provides an overview of the supports and services that are available from the department and identifies the processes that are used to assist individuals to get needed supports and services. We urge you to read ***Understanding the Connecticut DDS Home and Community Based Services Waivers: A Guidebook for Consumers and Their Families*** before reading this second guide.

This second guide, ***Understanding the Connecticut DDS Home and Community Based Services Waivers: An Introduction to Your Hiring Choices*** explains the **choices you have for hiring** individuals or agencies to provide waiver services for you. It also provides a brief summary of the choices, actions, and activities that take place when you decide to hire and manage your own employees. ***The purpose of this second guide is to help you to make informed decisions about your waiver services and to assist those of you who choose to self-direct your services to become confident and effective employers.***



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SECTION 1

Your Hiring Choices

This section of the guide describes the choices you have for hiring employees and for the management of your waiver services:

Self-Direction:
Direct Hire and
Management of Employees

Agency With Choice

Traditional Provider Agencies

A Combination of Approaches

Your Hiring Choices

Once you've become eligible for waiver services, have been allocated funds for an individual budget through the Level of Need (LON) tool, and have identified the services that will best meet your needs, you and your family can **choose who you want to hire to provide services to you and how you want to be involved in the management of your services.**

If you're still unsure about what supports and services are best for you, we encourage you to read our first waiver guide titled, "Understanding the Connecticut DDS Home and Community Based Services Waivers: A Guidebook for Consumers and Their Families," or you can request assistance from your case manager to help you make informed decisions about your waiver services. You will need to decide what type of services are right for you, before you can consider who you will hire to provide services and how these services will be managed.



You can choose from among a number of different hiring and management options, including:

- **SELF DIRECTION:** If you select this option, you become the employer of the people you choose to hire to provide supports for you. As the employer, you are responsible for the training, supervision, and management of the people you hire. This option **gives you the most control and responsibility over your supports.** You are able to choose your own employees and have direct control over who works with you, their schedules, and their routines. In this model, you also decide how much to pay your employees and what benefits, (e.g. health insurance) they receive. If you choose this option, you can also use a portion of your budget as defined by DDS, to purchase non-waiver supports.

- **AGENCY WITH CHOICE:** An Agency With Choice is an agency that agrees to hire the individual you choose to provide services for you. This individual becomes an employee of the agency and the agency agrees to help you train and manage your staff. The agency may also agree to negotiate the rate to be paid for the service or the wage to be paid to the person you want to hire. When you choose to use an Agency With Choice you agree to work as a partner with the agency in setting the employee's schedule and routines and in training and supervising the individual. However, the agency ultimately retains the final say in decisions about the employee, since the agency retains the responsibility of being the individual's employer.

- **PROVIDER:** A provider is a traditional agency that is the employer of the individuals that will provide services for you. DDS will use the funds that are allocated to you in your individual budget to pay the provider agency at the established rates for service. The provider agency is responsible for hiring, training and managing the employees that support you. Provider agencies typically have set hours when they can provide services to you and are not required to give you a choice of which employee will work with you.

Or, you can use a combination of the above approaches to meet your individual needs. For example, you may choose to use some of your allocated funds to purchase employment waiver services you need from a traditional provider agency, and use other funds in your budget to hire your own staff, or have an Agency With Choice provide other waiver services to you.

It is important that you think carefully about these hiring options. Each option provides you with a different amount of control, authority and self-determination.

more choices



"It's not always easy managing staff, but I love being the boss!"

JOYCE RIVERS, Consumer

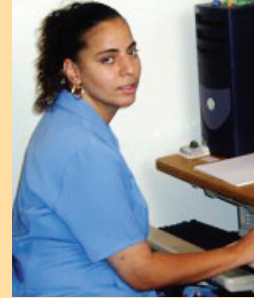
Your Hiring Choices, CONTINUED

It is important that you think carefully about these hiring options. Each option provides you with a different amount of control, authority and self-determination. It is especially important to carefully select who will help you find and keep a real job for real pay.

You are the expert and know what hiring option will work best for you. Feel free to ask questions, request additional information, take the time to talk to others who have chosen different hiring options than those you are familiar with, and do whatever you need to do to get the help you need to make an informed choice about this important decision!

Keep in mind that you can also change the way you arrange your services and who delivers them at any time. There is no need to feel concerned that your decision might be the right one for now, but you may change your mind some time in the future.

more choices



"I like to have the freedom of choice to pick my own support staff. It makes me feel important and feel in control of my life. I have always been told I couldn't do things because I have disabilities, that I was too slow. Now that I have a good job and hire my own support I feel I am respected by others and my family."

JOSSIE TORRES, Consumer



*Remember . . .
your funds are portable!*

*You can always
change your mind!*



SECTION 2

Supports for Self-Direction

This section of the guide describes the supports that are available to you when you choose Self-Direction: Direct Hire and Management of Employees.

DDS Support Brokers

Independent Support Broker

Individual Goods & Services Supervisor

Fiscal Intermediary Services

Supports for Self-Direction

So, you've **looked at all of your hiring choices** and have made a decision to hire and manage your own employees, or to use an Agency With Choice. ***Congratulations on choosing to self-direct your supports and services!***

You've identified the services that will best meet your needs, and thought about all the different ways that you can manage these services. You've learned about how traditional provider agencies manage the services they provide and considered the Agency With Choice model. You've also thought about using a combination of different approaches. After thinking it over, you may have decided that you want greater freedom and flexibility in the way your services are provided and feel ready to take on more responsibility in your life. You may have decided that hiring and managing your own staff is the right step for you!

Hiring and managing your own employees is a big step. Listed below are some supports to help you in your new role.

DDS SUPPORT BROKERS: You can choose to have a DDS support broker or purchase an independent broker service to help manage the services and supports you receive. You can also purchase the services of individual goods and services supervisor. A DDS support broker is a case manager who has a smaller size caseload, so that he

or she has the time to provide you with both case management services and additional assistance needed to hire and manage your supports.

INDEPENDENT SUPPORT BROKERS: An independent broker is a person that you hire directly, or a service you hire from a qualified vendor to help you to recruit and supervise employees. This service is available under the DDS HCBS Waivers. You may use this service for a short period of time to assist you in setting up your new supports, or it can be an ongoing service that you purchase to help coordinate your supports and assist you in your new role of hiring and managing your own employees. If you purchase ISB services, you will keep your DDS case manager. Your DDS case manager will provide case management services including assistance to develop and implement your individual plan. However, your case manager generally will not be able to dedicate the time to assist you to hire and manage your employees.

INDIVIDUAL GOODS AND SERVICES

SUPERVISOR: Some people may need additional supports to manage their staff. You can hire an Individual Goods and Services supervisor to assist with the day-to-day coordination of supports and with day-to-day supervision of your direct hire employees.

Examples of acceptable activities to be implemented by the Individual Goods and Services supervisor may include the following:

- Assistance with **day-to-day supervision** of staff to meet the outcomes outlined in the Individual Plan
- Training and assistance with **daily oversight** of staff including the completion of timesheets and documentation of services provided
- Training and assistance with implementing an emergency back-up plan
- Training and assistance with accessing community services and **day-to-day coordination** of approved services

Not everyone may need to hire a person to be a supervisor. If there is a need and you have the funds available in your Individual Budget you may want to consider hiring an Individual Goods and Services supervisor.

Supports for Self-Direction, CONTINUED

FISCAL INTERMEDIARIES: When you hire your own employees you are required to use a Fiscal Intermediary (FI). This service helps both you and DDS to manage individual budgets and helps you to manage all of the financial responsibilities of being an employer. You can choose which FI you want to help you pay employees, manage taxes and complete additional employer responsibilities. Your case manager can provide you with information about the available FI's.

The DDS broker and FI services are provided by DDS at no cost to you, but you will need to use funds from your individual budget if you decide to purchase services from an independent broker or Individual Goods and Services supervisor.



The Fiscal Intermediary helps you to manage all of the financial responsibilities of being an employer.



SECTION 3

Paying for Your Supports and Services

This section of the guide provides information about the tools DDS uses to help you plan for your future and manage the funds that are allocated to you.

Individual Plan

Individual Budget

Paying for Your Support and Services

Your **Individual Plan** and your **Individual Budget** are the tools we use to help make sure you get the services you need and use the money allocated to you in the best way possible. **Your case manager, DDS broker or your independent broker can help make sure that your Individual Plan and Individual Budget are developed and implemented in a timely and correct manner.**

INDIVIDUAL PLAN (IP): Each person served by DDS has a individual plan that describes his or her supports and services. The comprehensiveness of your individual plan will depend on your assessed level of need, your resource allocation and on the comprehensiveness of the supports and services you receive. Your case manager will contact you and your family member before your planning meeting to help you to prepare for the plan, to go over important areas you want to address, and to ensure all the needed information is available. Your case manager will also ensure that all of the sections of your IP are documented correctly.

Employment should be considered the first option for all working-aged individuals served by the department and should be included in every IP.



Every IP includes the following sections:

- the Information Profile
- the Personal Profile
- the Future Vision
- Current and New Assessments
- the Action Plan
- a Summary of the Supports and Services provided,
- Provider Qualifications & Training
- and a section on how your plan will be evaluated and monitored.

DDS Policy requires that if you have a Level of Need of 1, 2, 3 or are a recent grad, you will need to include an employment goal that helps move you towards a competitive job.

Your IP will also need to include IP attachments that describe the qualifications and training your employees must have to support you, and you will be asked to document your emergency back-up plan, a plan that outlines what you will do if your employees don't arrive to work as planned.

INDIVIDUAL BUDGET: Once your IP is completed, your case manager, DDS broker and/or independent broker will assist you to complete an individual budget. He or she will help make sure that your budget includes a line item for each waiver service listed in your IP, as well a line item to pay for employee wages and taxes, to cover worker's compensation costs if needed, and to pay for any additional expenses such as recruitment costs, training costs, or insurance. Your case manager will also help you to make sure that your budget adheres to DDS's waiver cost standards. You can request a copy of the cost standards if you are interested in learning more.

There may be some items in your budget that will need prior approval before they can be authorized in your budget.

The cost standards explain which items require prior approval. Your case manager or broker will submit prior approval requests through DDS's prior approval process. Your budget cannot be authorized until the prior approval process has been

completed and you have received notice that your request has been approved. Items/expenses that adhere to the cost standards do not need prior approval.

Your individual budget is the document that provides your Fiscal Intermediary with a guide as to what payments can be made and to whom, so it is important that the information in your budget is always up-to-date. You can make changes in your budget quarterly. You should always contact your case manager or DDS broker if you want

to make changes in your budget, because there are policies and procedures that must be followed to approve the changes that you would like to make. Your case manager will also make sure that your IP is updated to reflect whatever changes have been made in your budget.

If requested, every month your FI will

send you a financial report. This report provides you with specific information about how much you have spent to date, your account balance and your annual budget.



Paying for Your Support and Services, CONTINUED

The FI will also send your case manager or broker a copy of this monthly report. You will not get a monthly budget report from your FI unless you ask for it! If you have questions about these reports, you should contact your FI or case manager. It's important that you work closely with your FI to help ensure that the people who provide services to you get paid in a timely way and that you stay within your budget allocation.

You may be responsible for paying your staff or pay bills if you spend more than what has been authorized in your budget. Contact your case manager if your needs change. Know your budget and check it often!



Remember . . .

your case manager, DDS broker or Independent Support Broker and your FI are available to answer any budget questions that you may have.



SECTION 4

Becoming An Employer

This section of the guide provides information that will help you to better understand DDS's expectations for people who choose Self-Direction.

Self Directed Support Agreement

Sponsoring Person

Employer State and
Federal Registration

Becoming An Employer

When you choose to hire your own employees you become the **employer of record** for employee tax purposes. ***Your FI will help you to manage all of the paperwork that comes with being an employer.***

SELF-DIRECTED SUPPORT

AGREEMENT: When you choose to hire and manage your own employees you will be asked to sign a Self Directed Support Agreement. This agreement lists what you agree to do in your role as employer and explains what you will need to do to properly manage your individual budget. It is important that you review this document carefully so that you fully understand your employer role and responsibilities. You can contact your case manager, broker or your regional Self Determination Director, if you need help understanding any of the information contained in the Self Directed Support Agreement.

SPONSORING PERSON: You may decide that you want to choose someone else to sign your Self Directed Support Agreement and other related paperwork. This person is referred to by the department as a ***"sponsoring person."*** This could be a guardian if you have one, a family member, a friend, or anyone else that you assign. It is important to note that Medicaid rules state that a person



who is paid with Medicaid funds to provide waiver services to you (an employee you hire or someone you contract with) cannot be a sponsoring person. The sponsoring person signing your Self Directed Support Agreement becomes the employer of record and agrees to uphold all of the conditions listed in the Self Directed Support Agreement. **If you or a sponsoring person do not sign the Self Directed Support Agreement, then you cannot self-direct your services and hire employees.**

DDS maintains the right to terminate a Self Directed Support Agreement when you or your sponsoring person does not adhere to the terms of the Self Directed Support Agreement, or when we feel you or your sponsoring person are not making decisions that reflect your best interests. Terminations are used rarely, but are an important safeguard that helps to ensure that you receive services that keep you safe and healthy and that meet your needs. Your case manager or DDS broker would work with you on trying to resolve those kind of issues before we took such an action.



Your FI will help you to manage all of the paperwork that comes with being an employer . . .

Becoming An Employer, CONTINUED

EMPLOYER STATE AND FEDERAL REGISTRATION: Your FI will assist whomever signed the self-directed support agreement to complete all of the paperwork needed to become an official employer with the state and federal government. The signed paperwork allows the state and federal government

to keep track of whether labor laws are being followed and that you are paying your employee's taxes correctly. You don't need to worry about this though, because the department is paying your FI to make sure that you are completing all of your employer paperwork correctly and on time!





SECTION 5

Recruiting Employees

This section of the guide provides you with information that will help you to find employees to work for you.

Basic Employment Law

Hiring Restrictions

Job Descriptions

Recruitment Strategies

Interview Techniques

Recruiting Employees

You can hire people that you know, or you can recruit new employees. ***Your DDS case manager, DDS broker, Independent Support Broker or your Individual Goods and Services Supervisor will assist you to find qualified employees to provide the services you need.***

BASIC EMPLOYMENT LAW: It's a good idea to learn some basic information about employment law and to make sure you fully understand DDS's hiring restrictions before you start creating advertisements, interviewing potential employees, or offering someone a job. Your FI can provide you with useful information about basic employment laws. This information will include guidelines about what you can and cannot say in interviews, important rules you need to follow when paying employees, and other important information such as how to avoid discrimination.



HIRING RESTRICTIONS

It's also important to know who you cannot hire. The following individuals cannot be paid to provide waiver services to you and should not be considered for employment by you:

- **You cannot be paid to provide waiver services to yourself** or to direct and manage your waiver services.
- **Persons** with a substantiated history of abuse, neglect, or exploitation who are included **on the DDS Registry may not be hired** to provide any waiver services. Your FI will check the DDS Registry for all names that you submit.
- **You cannot pay your spouse or civil union partner** to provide waiver services to you.
- **You cannot pay your parent or legal guardian** (appointed by the state court) to provide waiver services to you.
- **You can only hire family members after obtaining prior approval.**
- **You cannot pay your sponsoring person** to provide waiver services to you.
- **You cannot use DDS funds to pay a person who has been convicted of a felony.**

Although this list may seem to restrict a lot of people, remember that you are still able to hire lots of people that you could never hire before the self-direction option was offered by DDS!

JOB DESCRIPTIONS: Before you begin recruitment activities, it is a good idea to develop a job description that describes what you want your employee to do. A job description will provide useful information when you create advertisements and will be helpful to refer to when you develop a list of questions to ask during your interviews. A good job description will help you clearly state your expectations to potential job candidates. Clear expectations and good communication will help you to find and keep employees that are right for you! Your DDS broker or Independent Support Broker or Individual Goods & Services Supervisor can provide you with job description examples and can help you create your own job descriptions.

RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES: There are lots of different recruitment strategies you can use to find employees. The best way to find employees is often by “*word of mouth*.” Ask your family, friends, and co-workers if they know someone who is available and who might be interested in working with you.

You can also create a flyer that describes who you are looking for and post it in local areas such as your church, library, etc. You can also call your local day care or college to see if they have a place you can post your information. You can place ads in newspapers. If you don't know which paper to use, you can call your library for advice. DDS also has a recruitment service available to help you find employees.

Rewarding Work is an on-line web-based computer system that lists employees who are seeking work as personal assistants or for other types of community-based, in-home work, in Connecticut. Your DDS broker or independent broker can help you access this Internet tool.

It is especially important to develop a good job description for the employees you hire who will be helping you to find, get and keep a real job with real pay. You want to make sure you have people who will really know how to help you get a job that is meaningful for you. You may also want to consider using a temporary help agency or “life coach” to help you find, get and keep a job.

Recruiting Employees, CONTINUED

INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES: Interviewing potential employees is both an art and a science. The art is “going with your gut.” The science is asking questions carefully tailored to determine the ability of the person to meet your needs. Your DDS broker, Independent Support Broker and Individual Goods and Services Supervisor can provide you with useful tips to think about when you do phone screenings and face-to-face interviews. She or he can also provide you with some advice about how to answer questions that may come up in the interviews, such as requests to be paid “under the table,” or requests to be paid “as an independent contractor.” We recommend that you review the questions in the “It’s Your Choice” guide to help make sure you ask the right interviewer questions.

We recommend that you have each potential job candidate that you think you might hire complete a DDS application form. You will save time if you have potential hires complete the application during the interview process. This form is important because it asks job candidates to give you permission to complete background and reference checks. You are required to complete background checks on any individual you choose to hire. More information about background checks is included in the next section of this guide.

Don’t forget that your DDS broker, Independent Support Broker and Individual Goods and Services Supervisor can assist you with recruitment and interviewing activities. However, you will want to take a lead role in finding and interviewing employees so that job candidates know right from the start that **you are the boss!**



This may be a good time to take a break and make sure you understand everything that you’ve read so far. You should feel free to ask questions. **It’s also a good idea to pause and take a break after you’ve finished your recruitment activities, so that you can stop and reflect before you offer someone a job.** During this pause, you can ask yourself, “Is this the person I REALLY want to hire?”



SECTION 6

Hiring Employees

This section of the guide provides information that will help to make sure that your employees are paid in a timely and accurate way.

Employee Qualification
& Background Checks

Employee Agreements and
Other Employee Paperwork

Timesheets & Paychecks

Reimbursements
and Other Payments

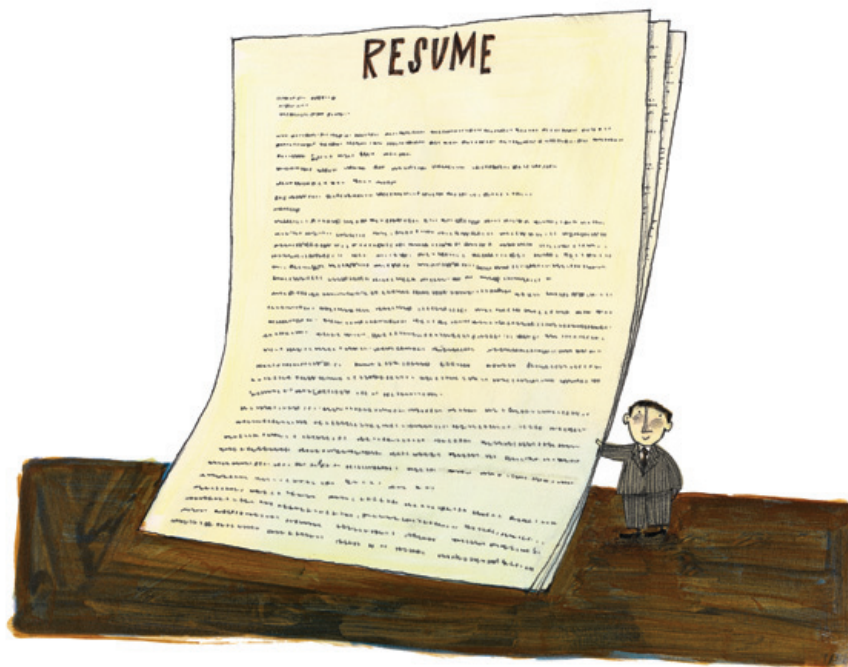
Hiring Employees

Congratulations! You've found an employee you want to hire! You've done a great job recruiting and interviewing potential employees and have found a job candidate you think will meet your needs. ***You're ready to offer an applicant a job!***

EMPLOYEE QUALIFICATION AND BACKGROUND CHECKS:

Before you offer a position to a potential employee, you will want to make sure that the person is qualified to provide waiver services to you. DDS has established standard requirements to make sure that any employee providing services to you is able to provide you with safe, quality services. You will need to make sure that the person you want to hire meets the waiver qualifications for the service that she or he will deliver.

You will also want to make sure that you have information about the applicant's background. You can do this by completing required background checks and by checking the references your applicants gives you. Required background checks include a DDS Registry check, a criminal background check, and a motor vehicle check if the employee will be providing you with transportation. Your FI will assist you to check an applicant's qualifications and to complete necessary background checks.



EMPLOYEE AGREEMENTS AND OTHER EMPLOYEE PAPERWORK:

The good news is that you have found someone to hire and this person has agreed to provide services to you. However, there is just a little more paperwork to be completed before your employee can start to work for you, or receive a paycheck.

Your FI will not be able to begin processing payroll for your employee until they receive a copy of the DDS application, completed background check information and other employee payroll forms such as a W-4, and W-9, forms.

Each employee will also need to sign a HCBS waiver agreement form. You or your sponsoring person will also need to complete and sign an employee agreement form and a provider qualification and training verification form with each employee you hire. The employee agreement form describes the pay, hours and work that will be performed by the employee.

REQUIRED TRAINING: All employees are also required to sign a Pre-Employment Training Packet prior to starting work and will need to complete additional required online training within 90 days of their start date. The online training is through The College of Direct Supports. The information to access this is in the packet provided by the FI.

The provider qualification and training verification form shows that the employee meets the necessary qualifications and has received all of the training that is listed in your Individual Plan.

TIME SHEETS AND PAYCHECKS:

Being a good boss means making sure your employees are paid on time and making sure that they receive reimbursement for things such as mileage or program expenses that they have been told that you will pay for out of your budget. It is your job to make sure that completed timesheets and receipts get to the FI when they are supposed to, so that the FI can send paychecks and reimbursement checks to your employees according to schedule.

The FI will give the person you want to hire all the forms that need to be signed and can explain to your employees what all of this information means.

Being a good boss means making sure your employees are paid on time. Remember . . . you can use your FI to help you with your paperwork.

Hiring Employees, CONTINUED

Your FI will provide you with timesheets for each employee you hire. You are responsible for mailing or faxing timesheets to your FI for each employee that has worked for you in a designated time period. On occasion, it may be necessary for your FI to return a timesheet to you because of an error. This may result in an employee's paycheck being delayed. Neither DDS nor the FI are responsible for delays in payment caused by errors, late submissions, incomplete or illegible forms, or neglect by the employee to inform the FI of changes in address, etc. However, your case manager, DDS broker, Independent Support Broker and Individual Goods and Services Supervisor will assist you to resolve employee issues or concerns.

There are labor laws that must be followed if staff work overtime. You should contact your FI if you have any questions about overtime hours. You can adjust staff hours from week to week, as long as you stay within your budget. If you need to increase staff hours and this change will result in a change in your budget you will need to contact your case manager or broker so that the proper documentation can be completed. Also, remember that some changes in your individual budget must be submitted and approved by DDS before the change can be made, so make sure you speak to your case manager or broker right away.



Remember . . .

to check with your case manager or DDS broker if you aren't sure if an expense can be included in your budget, or if it can be reimbursed. It's also important to closely review your monthly budget reports you receive from your FI, to help make sure you are staying within your budget.

REIMBURSEMENTS AND OTHER PAYMENTS:

You can use your individual budget funds to reimburse your employees expenses such as parking, mileage, etc. **only when it is an approved line item expense** in your individual budget. Your FI will explain the process you need to follow in order to get allowed items reimbursed. It is your responsibility as the employer to make sure that you are clear with your employees about which expenses will be reimbursed, and what is not covered. Agencies that provide services to you must submit a payment invoice to your FI. Agencies cannot be paid unless this cost has been authorized in your Individual budget.



Your FI will pay invoices they receive and will provide paychecks to your employees based upon what has been authorized in your Individual Budget. You will need to check with your FI about payment schedules. Your FI has some limitations of what they can pay.

Your FI cannot make the following payments:

- Payments that have not been authorized in your Individual Plan.
- Payments that exceed waiver cost standards or established rates.
- Employee hours not included in timesheets.
- The total number of hours for all employees combined cannot exceed the authorized number of hours identified in your Individual Plan.
- Reimbursement for items that do not have an acceptable receipt.
- Payments cannot be made to employees who have not completed required training.
- The sponsoring person is responsible for paying all unauthorized expenses.
- Payment for expenses that are not allowed.

Hiring Employees, CONTINUED



Remember to check with your case manager, DDS broker, if you aren't sure if an expense can be included in your budget.



All of the required forms and paperwork are available from your case manager or DDS broker. They can also be downloaded and printed from the DDS website by going to:

www.ct.gov/dds



SECTION 7

Managing Employees

This section of the guide provides information that will help make sure your employees provide effective supports to you.

Feedback to Employees

Performance Evaluations

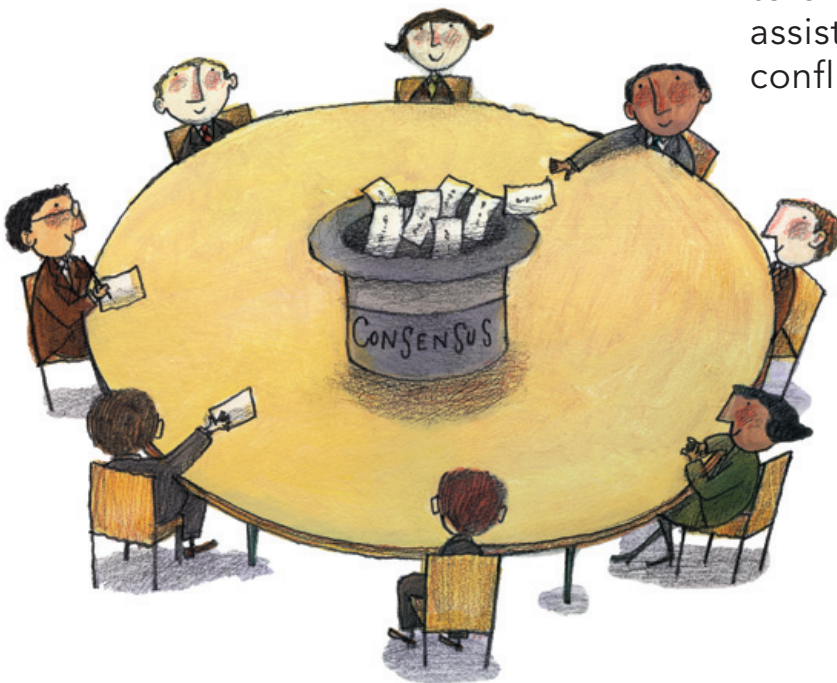
Ongoing Training

Managing Employees

We know that you want to be a good boss. ***So we've developed some training and technical assistance supports to help you to train and supervise your employees.***

FEEDBACK TO EMPLOYEES: A good boss provides frequent and timely feedback to employees to let them know whether or not you are satisfied with the services that they are providing. In any good relationship, communication is key to keeping it good. The best advice that we can give to you as the employer of the people you hire is to communicate clearly and openly with them. If you see something that you do not like or are uncomfortable with, let your feelings be known, in a clear, direct, and respectful manner.

Many people who hire their own staff often become very close to the individuals they hire. This can make the relationship very rewarding, but also complicated. Supervising someone who you depend on can be hard, because it can be confusing to be "the boss" for people you care about and who care about you. The key to being an effective supervisor is taking the time to deal with issues as they come up rather than allowing them to grow into big problems. Your DDS broker, Independent Support Broker and Individual Goods and Service Supervisor can provide you with useful tips on giving feedback to employees and can provide assistance to help you resolve conflicts.



PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS:

Performance evaluations are a more structured way of providing feedback to your staff. Performance evaluations are a good way to keep the balance between “friends” and having an employer/employee relationship. It’s a good idea to do a performance evaluation three months after a new employee starts the job and then twice a year after that. This can be a formal process, or can be done in a more informal manner. You can ask your DDS broker, Independent Support Broker or Individual Goods and Service Supervisor to help you do this. If you purchase services from a traditional provider you can check to see if they will let you participate in the staff evaluation process. You should have a partnership role in the evaluation of staff, if your staff has been hired through an Agency With Choice.

It’s a good idea to get help from your DDS broker, Independent Support Broker or Individual Goods and Services Supervisor if you decide you have to give an employee a warning, or if you decide you must terminate an individual’s employment with you. Your DDS broker, Independent Support Broker or Individual Goods and Services Supervisor can provide you with good advice about what to do to help make sure these types of conversations occur in as comfortable a manner as possible. Also, don’t forget to give your employees positive feedback. You may want to consider giving an employee a raise, if you are pleased with the service he or she provides. If you want to do this, work closely with your case manager or broker to make sure you have enough money in your budget to cover these costs.

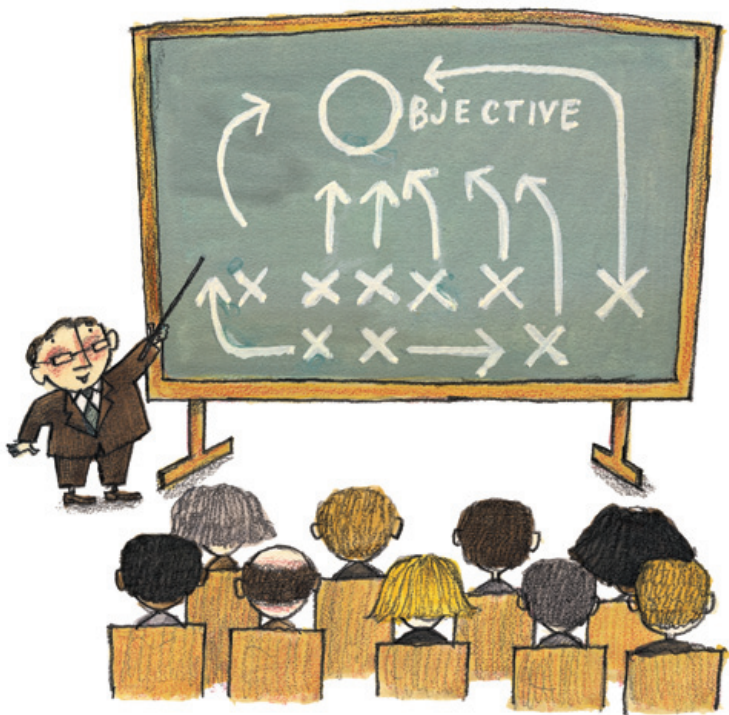
*In any good relationship,
communication is key . . .*

Managing Employees, CONTINUED

ONGOING TRAINING: A good boss provides the training needed to help make sure that employees are growing in their job and are satisfied with the work that they do. Materials are available that you can use to help supervise and train your employees and will periodically offer learning opportunities that both you and your

employees can attend. You can contact your regional Self Determination Director to ask about training materials and learning opportunities. The Self Determination Directors are also available to help provide guidance and technical assistance to help you better self-direct your supports and service.

DDS provides you and your employees with access to our CDS Online Learning System. In addition to those courses, there are other modules available that you or your employees can take free of charge. Ask your FI for access to this online service courses.



You can contact your regional Self Determination Director to ask about training materials and learning opportunities. The Self Determination Directors are also available to help provide guidance and technical assistance to help you better self-direct your supports and service.



SECTION 8

Maintaining Quality

This section of the guide provides you with things you can do to help maintain the quality of the supports and services provided to you.

A Strong Circle of Support

Your Individual Plan

Case Management

Quality Service Review

Consumer &
Family Participation

Maintaining Quality

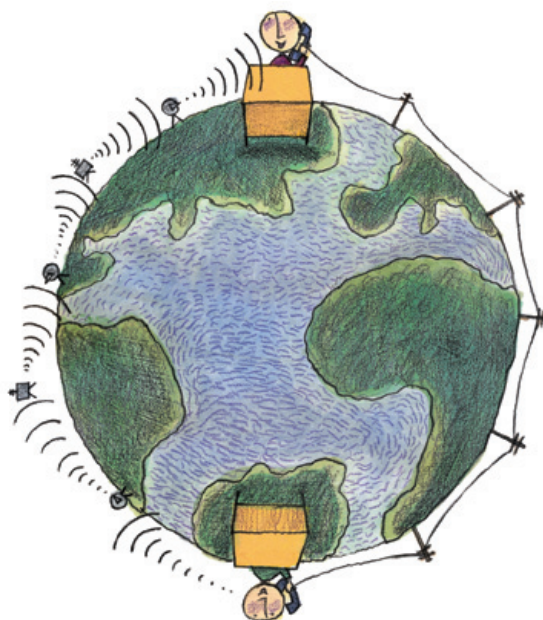
It is important to regularly think about the quality of the services you are receiving and if you are satisfied with them. **You are the expert in what you need and what you expect from your services!**

A STRONG CIRCLE OF SUPPORT:

We believe that you have the greatest chance of living a safe, healthy, and happy life when you are surrounded by a strong circle of support made up of individuals on your Planning and Support Team (PST) who care deeply about you. A circle of support is a network of people who help improve the quality of your life by providing you with positive and productive relationships and a variety of different kinds of support. Circle of support members can be family members, friends, neighbors, people from your work or community, etc.

One of the reasons that we are happy to offer the self-direction option is so that you have more opportunities to hire people who know you well and who can be strong contributors to your circle of support. The self-direction option also provides you with a flexible budget and other supports that you can use to help support circle

development activities. We encourage you to use these resources to help you find new circle members and to help you strengthen existing circle relationships. For example, you can ask your DDS broker, Independent Support Broker or Individual Goods and Services Supervisor to help you to implement team building activities to help keep your circle of support members committed to helping you succeed in attaining your vision of success.



We encourage you to use these resources to help you find new circle members and to help you strengthen existing team relationships . . .

INDIVIDUAL PLANNING: We also believe that an effective individual planning process should result in helping you improve the quality of your life. It is your responsibility to be an active participant in your planning process. Your participation in the Individual Planning process is key to making the individual planning process work. A good quality IP will identify all of the supports you need to communicate with your planning team members what you want and need and how you want your life to get better. This is important so that over time you can improve your ability to be an effective planning team member. Improvement in team member effectiveness will increase the likelihood that your planning meetings help lead to the results that you want to achieve at home and at work.



CASE MANAGEMENT: Case management services are another important line of defense in helping to improve the quality of your life. Your case manager or broker is responsible for working with you to monitor your waiver services and to make sure you are healthy and safe. Case management services are provided to anyone who receives waiver services. Your case manager or broker is required to contact you on a regular basis. The frequency of contact will be based upon the type of setting you live in (group home, individual home supports, community companion home, etc.) and on the types of waiver services you receive. You should feel free to contact your case manager or broker whenever you need help to maintain or improve the quality of the services provided to you.

to anyone who receives waiver services. Your case manager or broker is required to contact you on a regular basis. The frequency of contact will be based upon the type of setting you live in (group home, individual home supports, community companion home, etc.) and on the types of waiver

services you receive. You should feel free to contact your case manager or broker whenever you need help to maintain or improve the quality of the services provided to you.

Maintaining Quality, CONTINUED

QUALITY SERVICE REVIEW (QSR):

Whether you are using a Qualified provider, an Agency With Choice, or are hiring your own supports, the department regularly reviews all providers in a formal process called Quality Service Review. Your case manager and members of the quality review team will be involved in the review of the services and supports you receive.

They will be gathering information in several ways which may include:

- interviewing you and your family
- interviewing your employees
- observing your employees while they provide your supports
- reviewing your individual plan, budget and other paperwork
- looking at documentation of the work your employees have done (time sheets, daily logs, etc.)
- conducting a safety review.

The Quality Review Team may develop recommendations as part of the service review. You may be asked to develop a quality improvement plan based upon these recommendations. Implementation of these recommendations should help you to enhance the quality of your life. Your case manager or broker can provide you with more detailed information about the QSR process.

CONSUMER PARTICIPATION: We have also developed many new ways for consumers like you to get involved with DDS. There are opportunities for you to participate in interviews, get your voice heard in various committees, assist with training provided by the agency and participate in quality activities. You should contact your regional Self Determination Director if you are interested in learning more about how you can be involved and influence what is happening at DDS.





SECTION 9

Other Safeguards and Your Rights

This section describes other safeguards that DDS has put in place to protect your rights and to help keep you safe, healthy, and satisfied with the supports and services you receive.

DDS Policies, Procedures
and Administrative Processes

Your Rights and Responsibilities

Summary

Other Safeguards and Your Rights

We want you to be **safe, healthy and satisfied** with the supports and services you receive. ***We've developed a system of safeguards to help you be safe at home and at work.***

DDS POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESSES:

DDS has developed some important policies and procedures that will help safeguard your services. One important process that you should know about is the Incident Reporting For People Who Live in Their Own or Family Homes. This process requires that your employees report information to your case manager about the following incidents if they happen when an employee is with you:

- severe injury
- unexpected hospitalization
- if you are lost or missing and the police have been notified
- if a fire started and needed to be put out by the fire department
- if you are arrested
- if you are a victim of theft or physical assault
- if you are involved in a vehicle accident and have a moderate or severe injury,
- or if you need to be restrained
- all deaths and suspected abuse and neglect incidents must also be reported.

DDS will use information about critical incidents to make sure that whatever happened has been taken care of and to see if there are things DDS could do to prevent new incidents in the future.

If you are a person who needs help managing your behavior so that you do not hurt yourself or others, DDS also coordinates two committees that can help ensure that you have effective quality supports. The Program Review Committee, or PRC, is responsible to review any behavior program that may restrict your rights, including a review of any medication that may restrict your rights or be harmful to you if it is not used in the right way. A Human Rights Committee, or HRC, is also made up of individual, family, provider and community members who make sure that DDS, providers, or employees do not restrict any of your rights as a citizen unless absolutely necessary to keep you or others safe. You can ask your case manager or broker to provide you with copies of the PRC and HRC policies and procedures that explain how these committees operate.

Other Safeguards and Your Rights

YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

As someone who is receiving HCBS Waiver Services, you have some Basic Rights and Responsibilities.

You have the right to:

- Be safe
- Be treated with respect
- Have your service options explained to you in a way you understand
- Express your personal desires
- Privacy
- Be free from physical and mental abuse
- Speak up and complain if you don't like something without fear of negative consequences
- Be informed if there are changes that affect you
- Appeal a decision about your service options

You are responsible for:

- Being actively involved in developing your Individual Plan
- Letting your case manager know if your situation changes (e.g. you moved, or you are no longer eligible for Medicaid, your supports needs change)
- Respecting others, as you want to be respected

If you do not agree with service decisions made by DDS, there are a number of ways you can have a decision reviewed.

If you do not agree, you can:

Regional Office – Call your Regional Office and ask to have a Supervisor or Division Director review your concerns

Programmatic Administrative Review – Request a Programmatic Administrative Review (PAR) by the Regional Director

Fair Hearing Request – Complete and return a Fair Hearing Request through DSS if one is sent to you when a decision is made about waiver services you wanted

Independent DDS Ombudsperson – Contact the Independent Ombudsmen at: (860) 418-6047 (Hartford) or (866) 737-0331 (Toll Free)

Your case manager or broker can help you arrange these options if needed. We want decisions to be fair and equitable so talk to someone at DDS if you don't agree with something about your supports.

SUMMARY

The department is committed to helping people with intellectual disabilities live and work in their communities and to have full and satisfying lives. We understand how important it is for you to be able to choose where you work and how you want to live your life. We hope this guide provides you with useful information about our new systems that allow you more choice and control and helps you to understand the resources that are available to assist you in your new role as employer.

While hiring and managing your own staff may seem confusing or overwhelming at first, you can count on lots of people to assist you along the way. Your case manager or DDS broker will help you to create a vision of your future and help you to participate in your IP meetings and will help keep track of your waiver, IP, and individual budget documentation. Your DDS broker, or Independent Support Broker will help you recruit, hire and manage your employees. You can also choose to hire an Individual Goods and Services Supervisor to assist you to manage your employees and their day to day activities. Your FI will provide the assistance you need to pay employees and manage your budget, and your regional Self Determination Director and others will be available to provide you with training and technical assistance, as needed.

Self-direction will provide you with many opportunities to create the lifestyle you want to achieve. We hope you enjoy your self-direction experience and achieve great satisfaction from all that you accomplish. And, if you need more information, always remember to contact your DDS case manager or broker.



APPENDICES

A Helpful Checklist

Frequently Asked Questions

Frequently Used Acronyms

Useful Resources

A Helpful Checklist



Self Direction Check List

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. How do I want my services managed? | <input type="checkbox"/> Traditional Provider
<input type="checkbox"/> Agency With Choice
<input type="checkbox"/> Hire & Manage My Own Employees
<input type="checkbox"/> A Combination of Above |
| 2. How do I want to receive support for hiring and managing employees? | <input type="checkbox"/> DDS Broker
<input type="checkbox"/> Independent Support Broker
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Goods & Services Supervisor |
| 3. What Fiscal Intermediary do I want to help me manage my employer of record responsibilities? | <input type="checkbox"/> Allied Community Resources, Inc.
<input type="checkbox"/> Remesa Sunset Shores, Inc. |
| 4. What supports and services need to be listed in my Individual Plan and what do I need to include in my individual budget to support my Individual Plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Supports
<input type="checkbox"/> Waiver Services
<input type="checkbox"/> Service Providers
<input type="checkbox"/> Qualifications & Training
<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Back-Up
<input type="checkbox"/> Employee Wages
<input type="checkbox"/> Worker's Compensation
<input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment and Training Costs
<input type="checkbox"/> Insurance
<input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| 5. Who will sign my Self Directed Support Agreement? | <input type="checkbox"/> My Signature or,
<input type="checkbox"/> Sponsoring Person Signature
<input type="checkbox"/> Support Needed to Implement Agreement |
| 6. What strategies do I want to use to recruit employees? | <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Supports and Connections
<input type="checkbox"/> Advertisements
<input type="checkbox"/> Job Descriptions
<input type="checkbox"/> Interview Questions
<input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment Websites |

Self Direction Check List Continued

7. What do I need to do before I can hire someone?

- Waiver Service Qualifications
- Required Training
- Background Checks

8. What additional training do I want to provide?

- Information about me
- Other training

9. How will I provide feedback to my employees?

- Informal feedback
- Formal written feedback

10. What will I do to improve the quality of services I receive?

- Advocate for myself
- Get more training

Frequently Asked Questions

Q *This all sounds good. What are my first steps to self directing?*

A Contact your Regional Self Determination Director and they will help put you on the right path.

Q *Can I keep my broker as my case manager, if I hire an Independent Support Broker?*

A No, the Independent Support Broker is only intended to be used if you do not use a DDS broker. The DDS broker is expected to do the same kinds of activities as the Independent Support Broker, so that would be duplicating the service. And, DDS needs to make sure that people who want a DDS broker will be able to get one who has the time to provide those extra supports, so has to be careful that the DDS broker doesn't get too many people to support at one time.

Q *Can I get more money in my budget so I can hire an Independent Support Broker, or an Individual Goods and Services Supervisor?*

A Initially you will need to build these services into your individual budget from the allocation you were provided. If, at some later point in time, you need more support from the Independent Support Broker or an Individual Goods and Services Supervisor, than you originally had planned for, and this increased need will help protect your health and welfare, ask your case manager to submit a request for more services through the Regional Planning and Resource Allocation Team.

Q *Can I change my mind and use a traditional agency if I decide self-direction isn't for me?*

A Yes, you can change your mind and move to a traditional agency, you decide this is in your best interest.

Questions That Your Employees May Ask You



Q *Since the funds that are used to pay direct hire employees come from the state, does that mean my employees are also a state employee?*

A No, you are the employer-of-record. This means you are the employer.

Q *Since my checks come from the FI, does that mean my employees also work for them?*

A No, your employees do not work for the FI. By Federal and State regulations, you are the legal employer of record, so they are your employees.

Frequently Used Acronyms

DDS	Department of Developmental Services
FI	Fiscal Intermediary
HCBS	Home and Community Based Services
HRC	Human Rights Committee
IP	Individual Plan
IS	Individual Support
ASDS	Agreement for Self-Directed Supports
LON	Level of Need
PAR	Programmatic Administrative Review
PRAT	Planning and Review Allocation Team
PRC	Program Review Committee
PST	Planning and Support Team
QSR	Quality Service Review
IDGS	Individual Goods and Services Supervisor
CCH	Community Companion Homes
IHS	Individual Home Supports

Fact Sheets, Internet Sites & Other Useful Resources

<i>Category</i>	<i>Resource</i>
SELF DETERMINATION AND INDIVIDUAL	<p>Self Determination Fact Sheet http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=2050&q=382256</p> <p>Person Centered Planning Fact Sheet http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=2050&q=382266</p> <p>It's My Choice . . . by William T. Allen, Ph.D. (2002) www.allenshea.com</p> <p>A Decision-Making Guide Developed for the Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities www.mncdd.org</p>
HIRING AND MANAGING YOUR OWN SUPPORTS:	<p>DDS Registry Fact Sheet http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=2050&q=383906</p> <p>Hiring and Managing Your Own Supports Fact Sheet http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=2050&q=382316</p> <p>Using a Fiscal Intermediary Fact Sheet http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=2050&q=382278</p> <p>Criminal History and Background Check Fact Sheet http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=2050&q=383742</p> <p>Workers Compensation and Liability Insurance Fact Sheet http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=2050&q=383718</p>

Category

Resource

**HIRING AND MANAGING
YOUR OWN SUPPORTS:
CONTINUED**

Employee Recruitment Websites

<http://www.rewardingwork.org>

**“Help at Home: A Guide to Finding
and Keeping Your Caregiver”**

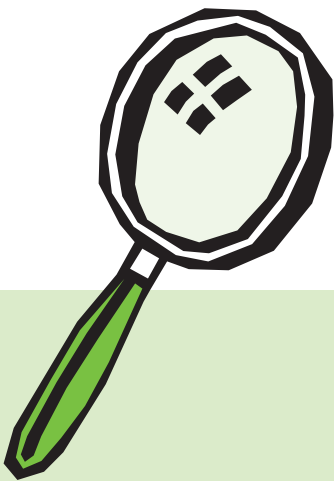
Published by Homeshare, Burlington, VT

<http://www.homesharevermont.org>

**Website devoted to the needs and interests
of direct support workers**

<http://rtc.umn.edu/dsp-9k>

<http://www.collegeofdirectsupport.com>





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