



Remote Supports Guide

Table of Contents

Developing a Comprehensive Remote Support Service Plan for DDS Individuals & Families	3
Glossary of Related Terms	3-5
What are Remote Supports (RS)?	5-6
Settings Where Remote Supports are Offered / Not Offered	6-7
Qualified Provider Billing	7
Role of the On-Call Supports (On-Call Backup Entity and On Demand, In-Person support)	7-8
Qualifications for Virtual Support Partners (VSP) and On-Call Backup Entity	8-9
Process to Coordinate to Remote Supports	9-12
Rates and Costs Associated with Remote Supports	12
Understanding Remote Supports (Examples)	13-14
Closing Remarks	15

Developing a Comprehensive Remote Support Service Plan for DDS Individuals & Families

The Department of Developmental Services' goal is to develop a comprehensive Remote Support option that promotes independence while maintaining health and safety measures for the individuals we support.

The intent of this guide is to describe Remote Support services in a simple and straightforward manner while detailing how the service may be accessed for individuals, DDS staff, DDS Qualified Providers, and families. The guide also provides a simple "road map" for those interested in moving toward implementation and utilization.

Remote Supports can be a valuable tool to support a person's journey toward increased independence in their homes, communities, and work settings.

As a waived service, the Department of Developmental Services has developed Remote Supports as an option that combines the benefits of the latest technological devices with access to natural or paid support to promote, improve and enhance one's independence based on their needs and vision for their future.

Glossary of Related Terms

This glossary is designed to provide clear definitions of key terms related to Remote Supports.

DDS Assistive Technology (AT) and/or Remote Supports (RS) Qualified Provider: A vendor that has been approved by DDS who has met the qualifications for providing Assistive Technology (AT) and/or Remote Supports (RS) services to individuals with intellectual disability. (See [DDS Qualified Provider Page](#))

Virtual Support Partner (VSP): A paid support person such as an agency, qualified provider, etc. OR unpaid support person such as a family member, friend, or other natural support that provides virtual support (e.g., prompting, queuing, etc.) from a remote location utilizing the Remote Support Technology System that has been designed for the individual.

On-Call Backup Entity: The On-Call Back-Up Entity service is the backup entity that receives a notification from the Virtual Support Partner (VSP) or from the remote technology directly. Details of the contact to the On-Call Back-Up Entity is identified in the individual's Response plan. The On-Call Backup Entity may help resolve the concern or contact the On-Demand In-Person Support.

On Demand, In-Person Support: The direct face-to-face supports provided by a person when they are sent to an individual's location, as requested by the individual, virtual support provider, On-Call Back-Up, or in response to an electronic device indicating that support is needed. In-person support may be a natural support, Self-Hired Direct Support Professional (DSP), or through a paid agency. If on-call support is a paid agency/provider, a backup respondent must be identified before services are rendered. On Demand, In-Person support will respond within a maximum of 30 minutes.

Response Plan: The Response Plan outlines when support is needed from the On-Call Back-up, and, if needed, the On-Demand In-Person Support. The plan must be developed and agree upon by the individual and their planning and support team.

Remote Support Technology Supplier: The entity with the responsibility to set up the customized Remote Support Technology system necessary for remote supports based upon each individual's needs. This entity may additionally provide virtual Remote Support, and also serve as the Virtual Support Partner (VSP). See [DDS Qualified Provider Page](#)

Remote Support Technology System: Technology that facilitates and provides the Remote Support service. These systems may use wireless technology and/or phone lines to link an individual's home to a Virtual Support Partner (defined below) off-site. The system may use remote sensor technology to send "real-time" data to the Virtual Support Partner, who is immediately available to assess the situation and provide assistance in accordance with the In Person Response Plan. An example of a Remote Support Technology System includes Ring Alarm Systems, iLink, and other systems provided by Remote Supports Qualified Providers.

What are Remote Supports?

Remote Supports are the delivery of supports by a person at a remote location through the use of technology, by paid staff or natural supports who are engaged with the individual through technology/devices with the capability for live two-way communication. Remote Supports include a service component and a technology component.

Equipment used to meet this requirement must include one or more of the following systems: motion sensing system, radio frequency identification, live video feed, live audio feed, GPS tracking, web-based oversight system, or a device that otherwise meets the requirement for two-way communication.

Individual interaction with the person providing virtual support may be scheduled, on demand, or in response to an alert from a device in the Remote Support Technology System.

Remote Supports may not be combined with another waived service such as Individualized Home Supports, Individualized Day, Supported Employment, Respite, Personal Support, Adult Companion, Individualized Goods and Services, and/or Assistive Technology.

CT DDS Remote Supports Guide

When a team has decided that Remote Supports are a service that will benefit the individual, a Response Plan, including identification of who will respond, must be approved by the team before services can be rendered.

It is essential to make the distinction between Remote Supports, and the use of Assistive Technology (AT) to support an individual. Individuals in all types of settings use technology as a vital component of their daily lives (e.g., cell phones, computers, etc.) While the latter does not qualify to be billed as Remote Supports, it is valued and encouraged to continue to be used across all settings.

Specific to Assistive Technology, Remote Supports as a waiver service, already has an assistive technology component integrated into the service and the rate. Therefore, Assistive Technology cannot be provided and billed at the same time as Remote Supports.

Additional helpful resources when setting up Remote Support Services:

[HRC Policy Attachment](#)

[DDS use of video and audio technology policy](#)

[CMS-RS final rule](#)

[Rates](#)

Settings Where Remote Supports are Offered

This waiver service is an option for those who live in their own homes or family homes as a mechanism to optimize independence while providing support as needed. The service may also be offered at a job, in the community, or in an individual day support location.

This waiver service category cannot be billed at the same time as other individual supports such as Individualized Home Supports (IHS), Personal Supports, Adult Companion, Blended Supports, Supported Employment,

Individualized Day, or Hourly Respite. These services may appear in the individual's plan together, to be used separately at specified times throughout the day or week.

Settings Where Remote Supports Can Not be Offered

When technology is used to augment support in a residential congregate setting, the cost is already included in the rate of that setting. Therefore, it cannot be accessed through a technology-driven waiver service.

To this end, the Remote Support waiver service cannot be billed while another waiver service is being provided, such as in a 24-hour service or licensed setting. Examples where the service cannot be utilized and billed include Community Living Arrangement, Continuous Residential Supports, Group Day, Community Companion Homes, Facility-based Respite, Assisted Living, and Live-in Care Giver, or Senior Supports.

While Remote Supports cannot be billed as a waiver service when these other waiver services are provided, some individuals may choose to use non-billable Remote Supports in conjunction with staffing supports as part of the service.

Qualified Provider Billing

Qualified Providers will submit utilization directly to DDS.

[Billing and web claim submission guidance](#)

[Current DDS Funding Guidelines](#)

[Rates](#)

Role of the On-Call Supports:

An agency Virtual Support Partner must be qualified to provide Remote Supports in order to provide "on-call supports."

The **On-Call Backup Entity** will receive an hourly rate during the hours an individual's Remote Supports services are in place as payment for being available "on-call."

As **On Demand, In-Person Support**, the agency, private hire, natural support, or DSP agrees to go to the individual's location when notified in-person supports are needed. Support must arrive within 30 minutes' time unless the team determines a shorter timeframe is needed, as documented in the individual response plan. With Regional Administration approval, the timeframe may be extended in certain circumstances to meet the individual's need as stated in their individual plan. The On Demand, In-Person Support and On-Call Backup Entity are only contacted for exceptional circumstances. Many situations can be resolved by the Virtual Support Partner (VSP).

Support staff must be knowledgeable of the **Response Plan**, their equipment, and there must be a working relationship between the support person and the individual.

The On-Call Support may be provided by an agency, natural support person, or a self-hired staff. Agencies that provide remote support and technology may also provide the on-call service. These combination agencies are all reimbursed differently according to the DDS Remote supports rate structure. If the **On-Call Backup Entity** is a paid agency/provider **On Demand, In-Person support** must be identified before services are rendered.

Qualifications for Virtual Support Partners and On-Call Backup Entity

For information on becoming a DDS Qualified Provider, please click on the link below for application process and minimum qualifications.

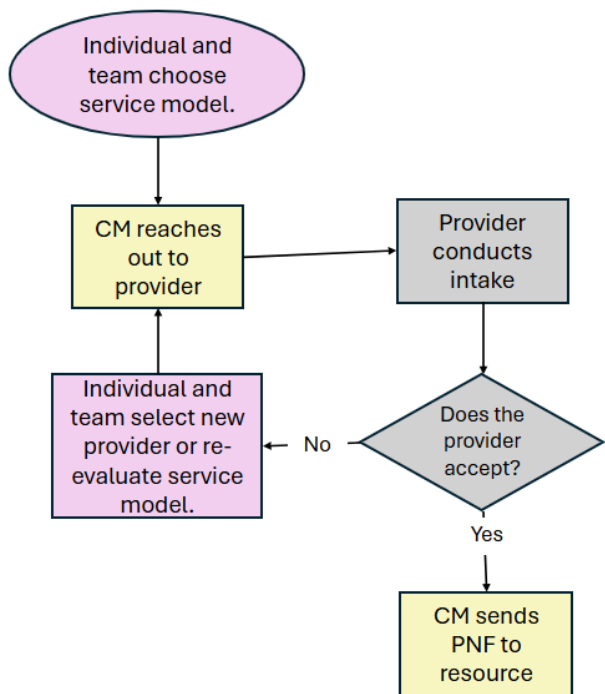
[Steps to Become a New DDS Qualified Provider](#)

Once approved as a Qualified Provider by DDS, contact the DDS AT Division for training and orientation at DDS.AssistiveTechnology@ct.gov.

Process to Coordinate Remote Supports

To set up Remote Support Services:

1. The individual and team should choose a service model and identify the desired on-call backup and emergency in-person response.
2. The case manager (CM) or family should reach out to a qualified provider of Remote Supports and indicate the individual's preferred service model.
3. The provider will conduct an intake consultation to determine if they can support the individual under that service model. There is no cost for an intake consultation, which acts as a Remote Supports Assessment.
4. The provider *cannot* require an individual to obtain an AT Assessment to participate in Remote Supports.
5. If the provider determines they cannot support the individual under the desired service model, the individual/team/case manager (CM) may choose to re-evaluate the service model or approach a different provider with the same service model.
6. If the individual is not reallocating funds from their existing allocation, they should submit a request to PRAT for the desired services.
7. If the provider agrees to support the individual, and the funding source has been identified, the case manager (CM) will send the Placement Notification Form (PNF) to resource to officially start the process of enrolling in Remote Supports services.

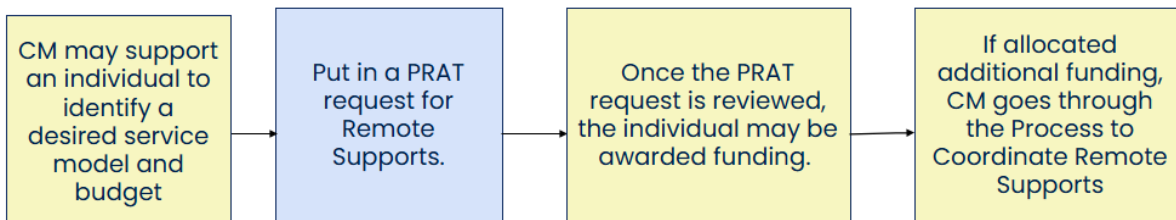


The funding source will need to be identified before the case manager sends the PNF. If the individual is requesting new funding, they will need to submit a PRAT request.

The PRAT request may be submitted at any point in the set up process, but it may be helpful to meet with a provider to clarify expected costs and service model before submitting.

Coordinating Remote Supports Across Service Options

Individuals (Waivered or Not), Seeking New or Additional Funding for RS



Individuals Reallocating Existing Funding to Remote Supports

Case Manager follows the “Process to Coordinate Remote Supports” process.

PNF is sent to Resource Management once the provider has accepted the intake.

There are no additional steps if an individual is working within their existing funding allocation.

Portability

Funding for Remote Supports is designed to be portable between services, including IHS. However, for individuals who are not certain that Remote Supports will meet their needs and who are reallocating funding from IHS, Case Managers should take several steps to preserve their ability to return to their previous support level if desired.

1. Confirm that the individual does not have URR approval for IHS over LON level. If a URR-approved IHS level is reduced, it may require URR review and approval to re-establish. URR approval is not guaranteed. If the individual *does* have URR approval for their current IHS level or rate, they and their team must be notified by the Case Manager of the URR requirements before they decide to re-allocate any funding.
2. When submitting the new PNF, move *only* the amount of funding required for Remote Supports. Leave any funding not needed for RS in the IHS auth until the individual decides that they are certain they no longer need IHS. If funding is removed from IHS and cannot be fully allocated to RS because of the lower RS daily rate, the individual may eventually lose the allocated funding because it is not in an active annual authorization.
3. In the email to the resource manager where the Case Manager submits the PNF, the Case Manager should specify that any funding that does not cleanly transfer because of the difference in hourly costs should be held for the individual through the end of the fiscal year.
4. If the individual decides to return to their previous support level within one year from the initial switch, they may notify resource management that the individual is returning to their previous non-URR supports from RS and that Central Office has approved a return of any total

annualized funding that was decreased because of partial hour transfers, regardless of whether the end of the fiscal year has passed.

5. Beyond one year from the original switch, the individual's Case Manager may need to submit a PRAT request to return to the individual to their LON level for IHS if a partial hour reduction occurred due to incompatibilities between rates.

Rates and Costs Associated with Remote Supports

The hours of support (total amount and time frame) should be explicitly stated in the individual's Remote Supports Response Plan within the Individual Plan (IP).

There are two different rates for Remote Support Services, hourly and daily. The **hourly rates** are utilized when an individual has a predetermined number of hours of service. The **daily rate** is utilized when an individual would benefit from 24/7 availability of Virtual Support Partner (VSP) support.

	Hourly Rate	Daily Rate
Billing	Targeted hours, up to a maximum of 21 hours/week billed for pre-scheduled hours of service.	24/7 availability billed per diem.
Equipment	Equipment can be purchased through a 1x up-front and owned by the individual.	All equipment costs are included in the daily rate.

Please review DDS guidelines below to view specific rates. The rates can be found on the [DDS website](#). Always refer to the most updated version of the DDS Funding Guidelines.

The on demand, in-person support staff will be paid at the IHS rate in 15-minute intervals for all direct supports provided.

Understanding Remote Supports

Hourly Rate

Alex lives in his own home and receives Remote Supports five days a week (for a total of 20 hours) from 6 AM to 8 AM to help ensure he takes his medication, dresses appropriately, safely prepares breakfast, and catches the bus on time. Alex receives Remote Supports again from 6 PM to 8 PM to make sure he safely prepares dinner, takes his medication, and monitors his blood sugar.

If there is a situation requiring in-person support, such as a non-emergency drop in blood sugar levels that Alex’s in-home staff are trained to safely address, the Virtual Support Partner (VSP) will contact the On-Call Backup Entity. One part of Alex’s remote supports technology system is a glucose monitoring device that sends alerts to the VSP if his blood sugar is low.

Alex’s On-Call Backup Entity is usually his Individualized Home Supports (IHS) provider. His provider will send someone in-person if needed Monday-Thursday. Once the On Demand, In-Person Support arrives at Alex’s home, the provider charges the IHS rate. Alex’s sister lives close-by and is available to help and support Alex on Fridays, if needed. Alex’s sister will also act as the On Demand, In-Person Support person if the provider calls her.

	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
Start:	6am	6am	6am	6am	6am	-	-
End:	8am	8am	8am	8am	8am	-	-
Start:	6pm	6pm	6pm	6pm	6pm	-	-
End:	8pm	8pm	8pm	8pm	8pm	-	-
Total daily hours:	4	4	4	4	4	0	0
On-Call Backup	IHS Provider				Alex’s sister	None	

CT DDS Remote Supports Guide

Daily Rate

Mandy is about to move into an apartment across town from her family and is eligible to receive a few IHS hours per week based on her LON level. Mandy and her family are nervous about this big transition. Mandy, her family and her team researched Remote Supports and decided it would be a good way for her to grow in her independence while providing additional security. The Virtual Support Partner (VSP) is scheduled to be available to her every day overnight between 8 PM and 8 AM. Since the VSP is providing 63 weekly service hours (more than 21 hours total weekly), they will bill using the daily rate.

Because Mandy will receive IHS supports, the provider who provides IHS services will automatically serve as her On-Call Backup. However, they will not be paid separately for this as the on-call backup service is included within the IHS Safety Net rate.

Mandy's Remote Supports Schedule:

	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
Start:	12am	12am	12am	12am	12am	12am	12am
End:	8am	8am	8am	8am	8am	8am	8am
Start:	8pm	8pm	8pm	8pm	8pm	8pm	8pm
End:	11:59pm	11:59pm	11:59pm	11:59pm	11:59pm	11:59pm	11:59pm
Total daily hours:	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
On-Call Backup	IHS Provider, paid through IHS safety net.						

Closing Remarks

DDS is continuing to work closely with partner states, service providers, and other stakeholders to shape how remote supports are defined and delivered as a waiver service in Connecticut, and to explore the ways they can enhance the lives of individuals receiving DDS supports. This document will be revised over time to reflect best practices as we move forward together. As an agency, our goal is to provide a comprehensive remote support service that ensures health and safety while fostering the highest level of autonomy and independence for the individuals we support.

Please reach out to the DDS AT Division for questions

DDS.RemoteSupports@ct.gov