



A Guide for Using DSPD Services

Time to Choose or Change Your Support Coordinator?

It's an important decision...

Take time to explore your options and ask questions!

Ofrecemos servicios en español.

What is a Support Coordinator?

A **Support Coordinator** (SC) is a private contractor with the Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD) who works with an individual with disabilities and his or her family to develop a Person-Centered Support Plan (PCSP). This Plan is based on the individual's needs and goals, and is used to coordinate and monitor services and supports. (Further Responsibilities of a Support Coordinator can be found on page 4)

How does it work and who do you call?

One thing to remember is that **you** may choose a different Support Coordinator at **any time!**

When selecting a Support Coordinator (SC), you have 2 options:

1. Contact DSPD for assistance by calling **1-844-275-3773** or **1-844-ASK-DSPD**.
(Ofrecemos servicios en español.)

OR

2. Find your own SC:
 - a. Talk to other parents for a recommendation.
 - b. If you know who you want for your SC, you can notify him or her directly, then contact DSPD with your decision.

If you are unsure about who to choose, you may set up an interview with one or more SC's! You can interview potential SCs in your own home or at a place you choose, or DSPD can arrange interviews on your behalf allowing you to interview several SC's in sequence.

Remember, you have the right to choose your Support Coordinator. You should not feel pressured by anyone to make a particular choice.

What questions can I ask?

When you are selecting a new Support Coordinator, you may want to ask questions such as these during the interview:

- How long have you been a Support Coordinator?
- How often do you make visits to the individuals on your caseload?
- Do you work independently, or with a company? If with a company, how many other Coordinators are associated with the company?
- What are the hours that you usually work?
- What is your current caseload? (The state cap is 46 clients per Support Coordinator. Keep in mind that travel, level of clients' need, and other factors may affect a Coordinator's ability to effectively serve a high caseload.)
- What is your availability in terms of preferred days/times to be contacted?
- What is the preferred way to communicate with you?
- How long should I expect to wait for a response?
- What is your policy for contact during emergencies?
- Who covers for you when you are unavailable? How do I contact them?
- What is your education and background related to working with individuals with disabilities and why did you choose this field of work?
- Can you tell me about a time when you successfully helped an individual with disabilities improve his or her quality of life and how you were able to do it?
- What is your business experience? Describe your ability to manage paperwork, finances, taxes, and the aspects of being self-employed (if you are).
- Can you describe a time when you successfully advocated for the needs of a person with a disability with DSPD?
- What are some of the rights and protections under the law currently in place for individuals with disabilities?
- Can you give me examples of successful experiences you have had working with DSPD and other agencies and organizations?
- Can you give me examples of your experience working successfully with providers?
- Describe what you do when you make a visit to the individual. What things do you monitor during a visit? How much time do you spend with the individual? Where do you prefer to meet with the individual?
- What do you see as your role in the individual's life?

TIPS to remember when making your selection:

- If you are the individual receiving services, **have someone you trust with you during the interview** to help you observe the SC and give you some feedback after the meeting. If you are making the decision on behalf of an individual with a disability, because the individual is a minor or is unable to make the decision independently, try to include the individual in at least some part of the meeting, so that you can observe how the SC interacts with the individual. Ensure that the SC has a realistic picture of the needs of the individual who is receiving supports.
- The fees for SC services are already included in your budget. When you use support coordination, SC fees will be added to your budget and show as a line item payable to your SC or Company. Using support coordination will not change your present service package.
- Make sure you are interviewing the person who will be providing the supports over the long term, in addition to the company owner.
- You may want to review your budget and services together and gauge the SC's interest and ability to advocate for changes, if needed.
- Be wary of promises such as, "If you choose me, I can get you extra funding or specialized equipment!" Services and supports are based on an assessment of the client's individual needs and changes are made through a formal request process.
- Keep in mind that DSPD cannot provide everything you "want" for your family or family member. Needs are determined and addressed through the planning process.
- You should not feel pressured from anyone, including a potential SC, to make a particular choice. Marketing restrictions are in place to prevent aggressive tactics from a potential SC and you may notify DSPD if you feel uncomfortable.
- You should not feel like your services options are limited to one specific service provider, if there are other options available in your area.
- If you are happy with the support coordination company you have and wish to select a different SC within the same company, you may do so. If you would prefer to select a SC from a new company you have that option as well.
- You may want to review your budget and services together and gauge the SC's interest and ability to advocate for changes, if needed.

For further assistance contact DSPD at 1-844-ASK-DSPD.

When should you talk to your Support Coordinator?

Talk to your Support Coordinator:

- Any time you have a question.
- Any time your needs change.
- If you are uncomfortable discussing an issue with your SC, contact DSPD directly.

What are the responsibilities of a Support Coordinator?

After choosing your Support Coordinator, you should expect the Support Coordinator to:

- **Identify Service Options** - Communicate with the individual/family member to determine and adapt services that will best meet the individual's needs.
- **Develop the Person Centered Support Plan** - Work with the individual /family member to identify interests, preferences and needs in order to develop meaningful supports for increased independence. Identify possible natural supports and needed Medicaid services. Develop an Action Plan, which identifies goals to assist in developing support strategies. Support strategies are outlined steps, which help employees to know exactly what they are expected to do when working with the individual.
- **Allocate Funding** - Develop an annual budget, make changes as necessary throughout the year, and monitor the use of funds.
- **Train on the Use of Self-Administered Services** - Define the responsibilities of managing the individual's program, and help the individual/family member become familiar with the Support Book and required forms.
- **Monitor Provider Services** - Supply information about the companies that contract with DSPD to provide services for the individual. Work as an advocate and mediator with provider companies on behalf of the individual. (A list of some of the DSPD approved contract providers is also available on the DSPD website, www.dspd.utah.gov and at www.uacs.org.)
- **Monitor Service** - Meet with the individual regularly, as required by contract, to understand his or her needs, monitor services for quality and ensure that needs are met.
- **Monitor the Budget** - Review services and ensure that funds are used as documented on the Action Plan.
- **Monitor Record Keeping** - Assist the individual/family member with meeting initial and annual documentation requirements, including the Service Agreement.
- **Annual Meeting** – Hold an annual meeting to review the person centered support plan, which includes supports and services, goals, the person centered profile, budget, and any new developments of the past year.
- **Refer to Resources** - Provide information and referral to other agencies that may meet the individual's additional needs.

The "Time to Choose or Change Your Support Coordinator" handout was created in partnership with the Utah Parent Center.

