

# Service & Support Administration



Commonly-asked questions and straightforward  
answers about the rule for

Service and Support Administration – Ohio Administrative Code 5123:2-1-11

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**Ohio** | Department of  
Developmental Disabilities

John Kasich, Governor

John L. Martin, Director



**Your Service and Support Administrator (SSA) is the main point of coordination and contact for all of the services you need.**

### **What is Service and Support Administration (SSA)?**

Service and support administration *includes many job duties* of a person who works for a County Board of Developmental Disabilities (County Board of DD). In many counties the person who has this job is called a Service and Support Administrator or SSA. In other counties the person has other titles.

### **What is an SSA?**

A service and support administrator (SSA) *is a person* who works for a County Board of DD and is assigned to you\* to act as the primary, or main point of coordination for your services and supports. Your SSA is a trouble-shooter, problem-solver and an advocate for you.

**\*NOTE: In this handbook, the word “you” refers to a person with a disability, and a guardian, if one has been appointed.**

### **Who can receive Service and Support Administration?**

If you are a person with a developmental disability, you are eligible to have an SSA and receive service and support administration when:

- You receive Medicaid Waiver services administered by the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD), or
- You are age 3 or older and request (ask) to have an SSA, or
- You live in an Intermediate Care Facility (nursing home or ICF) *and* ask for help to move from the facility to the community.

When you are eligible to receive services from the CBDD and ask for an SSA, the SSA *must be provided* to you, and you *cannot* be placed on a waiting list.

### **Who do I ask if I want an SSA?**

Call your local County Board of Developmental Disabilities and ask to be connected to the *Intake Department*. This is where they see if you are eligible for County Board services.

### **Can I ask for a different SSA, if I want someone to be my SSA other than the person who is assigned to me?**

Yes, you may ask for a different SSA, but there is no requirement that a different one must be assigned to you.

### **Why would I want an SSA assigned to me?**

*Because ...*

- You want to know what services may be available to you.
- You receive or want to receive several different services or supports and need an Individual Service Plan (ISP) developed or revised with you.
- You live in an ICF and would like to move to a place in the community.
- You want a community job with meaningful pay.
- You want help in getting a provider (or *a new* provider) for some of your services.

*(cont. on p. 3)*

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- You want help to fix a problem you may have with your services, a provider, or with a direct support staff person who works with you.
- If you already are on a waiting list, to say what you are waiting for, and ask how soon it will be available.

**Once you have an SSA, you can expect your SSA to:**

- Call you back promptly.
- Be honest with you about what you can receive from the system.
- Help you find housemates and providers who suit you.
- Connect you with people who can help you get a job or day services that interest you.
- Help you solve problems with providers, or other people in your life.
- Change your ISP when needed.
- Help you decide what is in your ISP.

**What is an Individual Service Plan (ISP)?**

Individual Service Plan (ISP) means the written description of services, supports, and activities to be provided to a person with a disability. You may ask for this description to be in words, pictures, a video, or a combination of any or all of these. Your SSA helps you and the rest of your team decide what supports to put in your ISP for these areas of your life:

- Self determination (choices, opportunities, self advocacy, personal control);
- Health care and daily living skills (personal care and independence);
- Emotional health (self worth, self esteem, satisfaction with life and spirituality);
- Material well being (employment, money, education and housing);
- Personal development (experiencing success, learning to do new things on your own);
- Inter-personal relationships (social contacts, relationships, emotional support);
- Social inclusion (doing things in your community that include people with *no* disability), doing things with friends/ family.

**What is a team?**

Your team is a group of people who can give you support to develop and change your ISP. The group that makes up your team includes your SSA, staff who work with you, providers, professionals, an adult that you want to help you, and your guardian (if you have a guardian) and any other people you choose to help you consider possibilities and make decisions. In thinking about people you want to include, consider people you know and trust, such as family members, friends, and others who have your best interests in mind.

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**Your Service & Support Administrator (SSA) is there to help you. Keep your SSA aware of services you need.**

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**What is a team?**

Your SSA can help you decide who you want on your team, and who you want to invite to meetings about your ISP. Your SSA helps you and your team understand your decision-making rights and responsibilities, and those of guardians and others you allow to help make decisions for you.

**NOTE:** For important information about *decision-making*, please see pages 5 and 6.

**What is a Person-Centered Process (Approach)?**

Your SSA will help you develop (make) or change your ISP after listening to you explain what you need, how you would like things to be in the future, your interest in school or a job, what you think is working and not working well right now for you, and other things that are important to you.

*This is what a person-centered planning process means.*

Your SSA will help you and your team use a person-centered planning process to make, review and revise (change) your ISP. Person-centered planning means that everything centers on *you* and what *you* say, and that *you* get to share what *you* think about things other team members say. It also means that *you* get to speak up about the things that *you* want the team to know, and that you want to have in your ISP. Person-centered isn't just that everything is about you -- it also means that *you* are the main source of information about *you*!

**If I already have an ISP, can I change it if it needs to be changed?**

Yes. Your SSA can help you change your ISP as your needs change, and will help you review (look over and talk about) your ISP at least once every year, or more often if you *ask* for a review. If you ask for a review, your SSA will make sure that any needed revisions to your ISP are made *no more than 30 calendar days after you ask*.



**Can my SSA help me get better at ‘speaking up’ for myself (self advocacy)?**

Yes. Sometimes you may think about things but not feel comfortable ‘speaking up’ or letting someone know what you are thinking. This is also called ‘self advocacy.’ Your ISP can include support to help you get better at self advocacy. This support could include staff and transportation that can help you take part in advocacy groups or training.

**Can my SSA help me have different things in my life in the future?**

Yes. Your SSA and your team, must support the *outcomes* you want. *Outcomes* are things you want to have in your life, learn to do, get, or do in the future. These are things that do not exist right now. *Outcomes* are also things that are important *for* you. Your SSA must make sure that you and your team agree on the things that are important *to* you and the things that are important *for* you -- find a good balance. Your SSA will make sure you and your team identify things that are important to help keep you healthy and safe, note any risks, and include in your ISP how to prevent that risk, or reduce the possibility that you will experience that risk.

**Natural Supports**

Your SSA makes sure that your ISP includes *all* of your services and supports no matter who provides it, who pays for it, or if it is a natural support or a service that is *not* covered by a Medicaid

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**Natural Supports**

waiver. Natural support comes to you from your personal relationships, is not a paid support, and usually is provided by a family member, friend, neighbor, or other people or organizations that also do the same thing for other people who live in your community.

**Budget**

Your SSA will help you balance what you want and need with the resources available, recommend and get a budget approved for your ISP and, if you need it, help you to choose providers who are willing and qualified. The budget is the total of what your team thinks everything in your ISP will cost, usually for one year. Your SSA should be honest with you about what you can receive from the disability system.

**Communication**

Your SSA will make sure that you and your team have the information and training they need to do what it says in your ISP. This includes frequent contact with natural supports, as well as paid providers.

Your SSA makes sure you and your team have a copy of your current ISP, unless you say someone should not have a copy. Your SSA makes sure your paid providers get their copy *at least 15 calendar days before the service is to start*, unless your provider agrees to start the service before the ISP is received because there is an urgent need for the services, and providing them to you cannot wait.



**Review of Your ISP**

Your SSA will check with you about how your ISP is working for you during the months between your yearly ISP meetings. This is called a *continuous review process*. The continuous review process by your SSA may be different for you than it is for another person, because it should be what *you* want and need, and it should be in your ISP. Your SSA may talk with you in person, by phone, email or other means, but *you should tell your SSA how you want to be contacted*. Your SSA will have a face-to-face visit with you at least once during the months between your yearly ISP meetings. The face-to-face meeting is to happen at a time and at a place that is good for you. Your SSA must know you well enough to help you. Your SSA also is responsible for assuring that your services are being delivered as written in your ISP.

**Decision-Making Responsibility**

- *If you are an adult with a disability and you have a guardian*, you still have the right to take part in making decisions that affect you. You can speak up about what you need, want, and prefer, and you have the right to be listened to and have what you say be considered.
- *Unless you have a court-appointed guardian*, you make decisions about the services and supports in your ISP and decide if you want to participate in programs that are available to you. You can ask for help from another person if you want. Asking another person to help you does not mean you can't make decisions.

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### **Decision-Making Responsibility**

- *Unless you have a court-appointed guardian*, you can authorize (write on paper the person's name) another adult to make certain decisions for you (write on paper which decisions). The adult you choose to do this for you *cannot* be someone who is paid to provide services to you. The person you choose may be called a "chosen representative."
- *If you have a guardian*, your guardian makes many decisions for you. Even though a guardian is making a decision, the guardian still should consult with you in the decision-making process.
- *When an adult or guardian makes a decision for you*, that person *must* make the decision that is as much like your needs, desires, and preferences as possible, and is in your best interests.

### **Due Process**

If you do not agree with decisions that are made *about* you or *for* you, you have the right to what is called 'due process.' Click on the link below to see information about how you can 'appeal,' or disagree with, the decision, and learn more about due process.

NOTE: You may request a Medicaid hearing if you believe your Medicaid waiver services were denied, reduced, suspended or terminated in error, or your Medicaid waiver application has not been acted upon in a timely manner.

<http://www.odjfs.state.oh.us/forms/file.asp?id=1680&type=application/pdf>.

### **Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD)**

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Toll-Free in Ohio: (877) 464-6733

[www.dodd.ohio.gov](http://www.dodd.ohio.gov)

