




**Office for People With
Developmental Disabilities**

Self-Direction Information Session

Presented by OPWDD

FEBRUARY 13, 2025

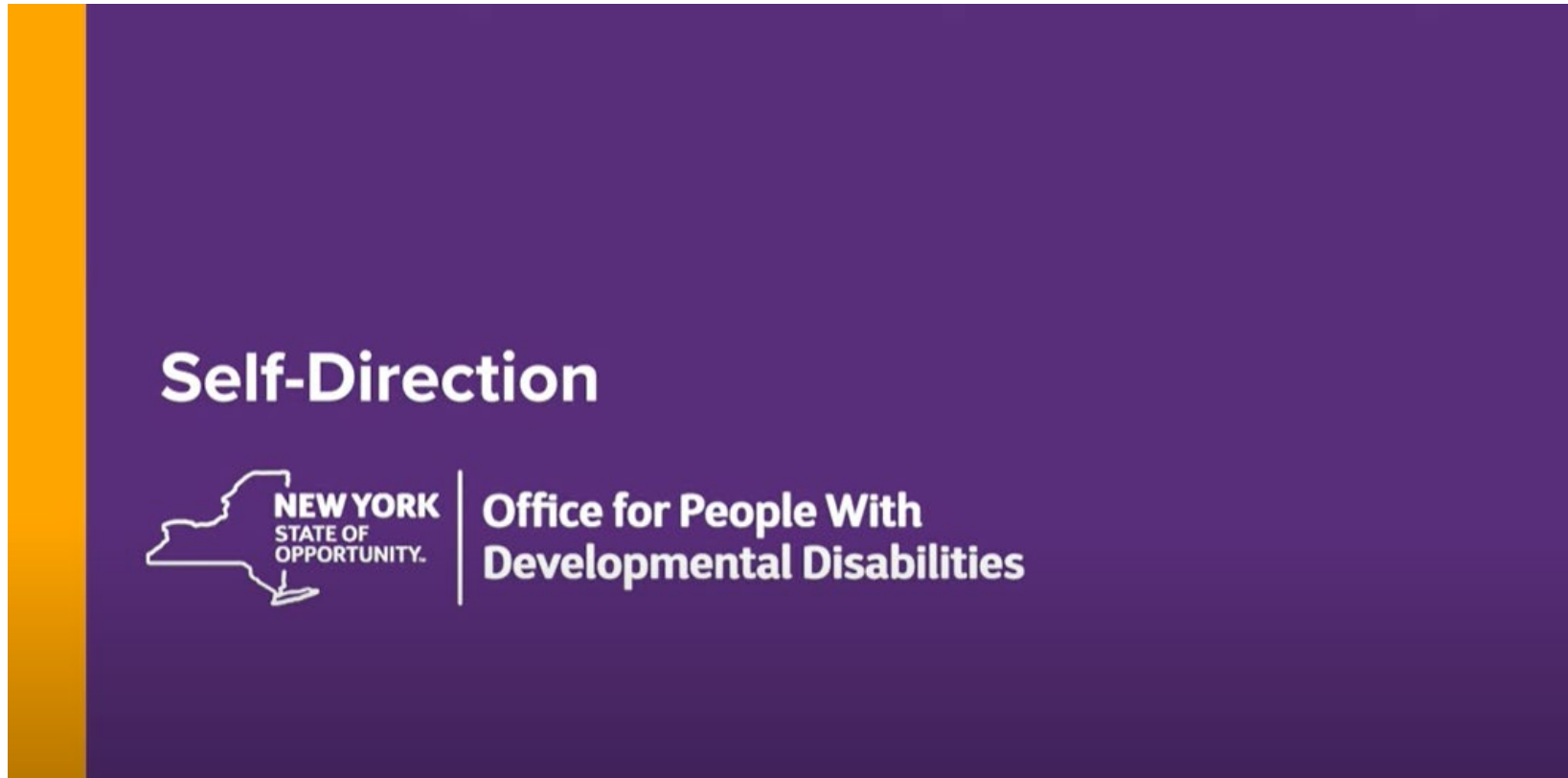
Self-Direction Information Session

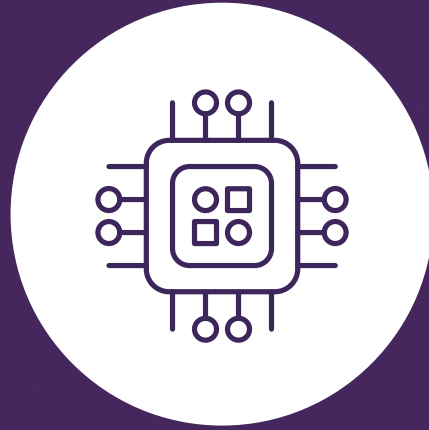
- Everyone is muted upon entry.
- If your audio is not working, click on “Audio & Video” at the top of your screen and find “Switch Audio.” You can also click the “...” icon at the bottom of your screen and select “Audio Connection.”
 - You can connect by computer or choose to use your phone.
- During the session, we will take questions using the “Q&A” window. If you do not see “Q&A” on the right side of your screen, click the “Q&A” icon at the bottom of you screen: 
- If you cannot see the text box to enter questions on the “Q&A,” click the gray arrow to expand.

Thank you for your active participation!

Self-Direction Front Door Video

https://youtu.be/_2cTj0iHF8U?si=0OWsenjfidhyZdOI





Welcome
Introductions
Session Purpose

By the End of this Session, You Will:

- Gain a better understanding of Self-Direction
 - Determine if it is right for you
- Learn how to qualify for Self-Direction
- Identify who can be in your Circle of Support (COS)
- Learn about services included in a Self-Directed budget
 - What's "in" and what's "out"
- Know your next steps

Who We Are:

The Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) offers services and supports to help people with development disabilities:

- Live in the home of their choice,
- Find employment and other meaningful activities in which to participate,
- Build relationships with the community, and
- Experience health and wellness

The ability to customize support and services means OPWDD can meet the strengths, needs and preferences of individuals across the developmental disabilities spectrum

What is Self-Direction?

- Self-Direction (SD) is not a service or a program; it's a model of service delivery which maximizes choice and flexibility
- SD offers the flexibility to choose the combination of supports and services that meet your needs, and support you to live the life you want
- With SD, the individual/designee elects to have a more active role in:
 - Who will provide authorized services
 - What services are secured to achieve desired goals
 - When the authorized services take place
 - Where services are provided
 - How services are customized to meet your needs

Authority and Responsibility

Choosing the increased control and flexibility of Self-Direction means:

- Taking a more active and responsible role in developing and managing your services
- Engaging in a partnership with voluntary providers to recruit, interview, hire, schedule, train and co-manage staff, if choosing to self-hire

Employer Authority

- You make decisions about who works for you. With employer authority, you can:
 - Recruit your staff
 - Set your staff's schedule
 - Evaluate their work performance
 - Provide or recommend training
 - Fire your staff that do not meet your expectations

Budget Authority

- You make choices about the services you need
- You decide what services are paid for and who is paid to provide them
- You and people who support you must manage your OPWDD Self-Direction Budget in a responsible manner

Traditional Supports vs. Self-Direction Support

- Traditional Supports

- Funding come from the government and is provided to agency programs
- Agency programs provide services to individuals
- Agency provides services via pre-determined, bundled programs offering less opportunity for individualized choice

- Self-Direction Supports

- Funding come from the government and is allocated to individuals' budgets
- Individuals have the choice of how their funding used with assistance from their Circle of Support
- Choices include utilizing agencies for support, community and organization resources, and/or self-hired support staff

Person Centered Planning

- Discovering abilities, needs, goals and values of the individual
- Sets the foundation for building a successful plan of supports – that evolves with the person
- Everyone receiving services provided or authorized by OPWDD benefits from Person Centered Planning (PCP)
 - With Self-Direction, the Person Centered Plan directly informs service choice
- Driven by the individual and their Circle of Support (COS)

Circle of Support

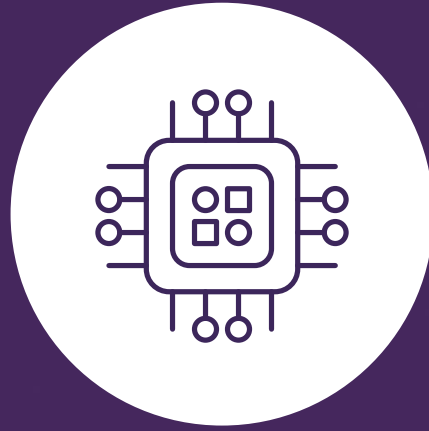
- What does a Circle of Support (COS) do?
 - Using a person-centered approach, the COS includes people who support you in achieving a more individualized lifestyle
 - The COS assists you in making well-informed choices, and helps you navigate the opportunities and risks of these decisions
 - The COS helps you create the action plan to achieve the goals you have for your life
 - COS members contribute to the successful implementation of your Person Centered Plan and Self-Directed Budget
 - The COS, including the person and their Support Broker, must minimally meet in person two times per year
 - These meetings can happen at your Life Plan Meeting

Who is Eligible for Self-Direction?

- The Self-Direction participant **must**:
 - Be a resident of New York State
 - Determined Eligible for OPWDD
 - Have a Care Manager
 - Have active Medicaid in New York State
 - Be enrolled in the Federal Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Waiver
 - Obtain Regional Field Office authorization

Important Considerations:

The Self-Direction participant is able and willing to make informed choices about the type and quality of services, participate in the co-management of staff or have a designated Circle of Support member who is able and willing to assist in making choices.



Exploring Self-Direction: Who can help?

The Care Manager

- Assists you in assessing and securing the supports and services necessary to meet your needs
 - Facilitates the application process
- Helps you develop and maintain your Life Plan
- Helps you identify a Broker
- Helps you identify a Fiscal Intermediary (FI)
- Is a member of your Circle of Support (COS)
- Works in constant collaboration with your Broker and FI

- A trained “expert” in Person Centered Planning and Self-Directed Services
- Brokers are often affiliated with one or more Fiscal Intermediaries
- Assist the participant and their Care Manager with developing their Self Direction Budget
- Can assist with the day-to-day co-management of Self-Directed Services
- Works closely with the Care Manager to ensure consistency between Life Plan, Self-Direction Budget and other service plans
- Brokers write Staff Action Plans for Self-Hired Community Habilitation (CH) and/or Supported Employment (SEMP)

A voluntary agency that acts as the fiscal and business agent for Self-Direction participants

Bills Medicaid and State for all services/goods utilized from the budget

- Reviews and maintains all service documentation
- Processes reimbursements to individual, families and staff
- Responsible for sending out expenditure reports, monthly

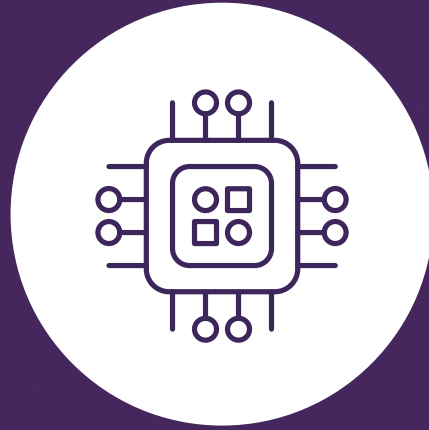
Functions as “Employer of Record” for any Self-Hire staff in the Budget

- Facilitates the new-hire process, background checks and fingerprinting
- Annually provides staff with mandatory OPWDD trainings, including incident reporting
- Collects timesheets from Self-Hired Staff, and pays them in a timely manner

Self-Direction Liaisons

Responsible for coordinating, managing and overseeing the provision of Self-Direction in each Region

- Work in partnership with Central Office and provider agencies
- Provide information and technical support as needed for individuals and families
- Provide training and technical assistance to Broker, Care Managers and Fiscal Intermediaries
- Provide guidance and troubleshooting for matters related to health, safety and risk
- Review and approve Self-Direction Budgets
- Communicates all SD Budget related notifications



Budget Development

Individualized Assessment

The OPWDD approved needs assessment tool is completed and/or updated:

- Provides a holistic picture of skills, challenges and natural/community supports available
- Informs service planning and authorization
- Scores calculate into a participants Personal Resource Account (PRA)

Personal Resource Account (PRA)

Needs assessment scores, and other variables, determine the maximum amount of funding available for supports and services in the Self-Direction Budget:

- Cannot be exceeded
- Reviewed annually, at minimum
- Other variables include: County of residence, age, school status, and the type of Budget you are looking to create

Building Your Budget

The Self-Direction Budget is the tool that helps the participant manage services within their PRA

Creating a Budget starts with Person Centered Planning

- With the assistance of your Broker, Care Manager and Circle of Support, you will put together your Budget
- Your Fiscal Intermediary (FI) will review your Budget before it is submitted to OPWDD for approval
- Regional Office Liaisons (OPWDD/DDRFO) are available to assist throughout the process

Building Your Budget, Continued

- During the budget development process, you will decide how to fund services with your Personal Resource Account (PRA)
- The Budget will reflect the resources available for staff who will assist you
- The Life Plan and Staff Action Plan (SAP) will guide the staff in providing you the needed services
- You will work closely with your Care Manager (CM) to line up your Life Plan, Valued Outcomes and Self-Direction Budget

Budget Types Available

“Both” Budget

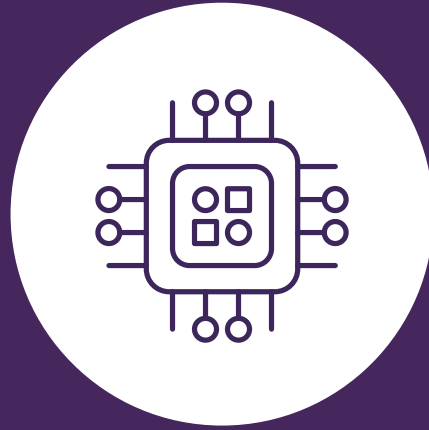
- Supports a blend of home and community services, covering where someone lives & what they do during the day
- Available to people who **do not live** in a Certified Residential Setting (CRO)

Other Than Residential (OTR) Budget

- Supports the person to engage in meaningful activities in his/her community including work, volunteering and other contributing activities
- Service delivery is during daytime hours, typically Monday through Friday
- Available to individuals living in Certified Settings, with family or in their own home/apartment

Residential Only Budget

- Supports the individual to live independently in the home of his/her choice
- Services delivered both in the home and in the community while supporting residentially based goals and outcomes
- Available to people who **do not live** in a Certified Residential Setting



Services in the Self-Direction Budget

Services Inside the Budget

Service/Support	BOTH	OTR	RES ONLY
Support Broker	✓	✓	✓
Individualized Goods and Services (IDGS)	✓	✓	✓
Other Than Personal Services (OTPS)	✓	✓	✓
Family Support Services (FSS)	✓		✓
Family Reimbursed Respite (FRR)	✓		✓
Respite	✓		✓
Housing Subsidy	✓		✓
Live In Caregiver (LIC)	✓		✓
Community Habilitation (CH)	✓	✓	✓
Supported Employment (SEMP)	✓	✓	
Group Day Habilitation (GDH)	✓	✓	
Prevocational Services (Pre-Voc)	✓	✓	
Pathways To Employment (PTE)	✓	✓	

Services Outside the Budget

Not every service you may want or need “counts against” the PRA

PARTIAL LIST OF SUPPORTS/SERVICES NOT IMPACTING THE PRA
Start Up Brokerage
Fiscal Intermediary (FI)
Community Transition Services (CTS)*
ISS Transition Stipend*
Article 16 Clinical Services*
Environmental Modifications (eMods)*
Adaptive Technologies (Atech)*
Intensive Behavioral Services (IBS)*
Long Term Sheltered Employment (LTSE) Contracts*
Certified Residential Habilitation: Supervised, Supported or Family Care*
Care Coordination

* For more information on these services, please contact your Care Coordinator/Care Manager

Staffing Supports Available

Self-Hired

- Individual chooses who they want to deliver services (Community Habilitation, Respite, SEMP, IDGS)
- Individual has **both Employer and Budget Authority** (can choose who delivers services and sets their rate of pay)
- Self-Hired Staff are hired through the FI of individual's choosing

Agency Supported

- Individual chooses an agency to deliver services (Community Habilitation, Respite, SEMP)
- Individual as **Employer Authority only** (can choose *who* delivers services, but cannot set their rate of pay)
- Agency acts as co-employer

Direct Provider Purchased

- Individual chooses an agency to deliver services (Community Habilitation, Respite, SEMP)
- **No Employer or Budget Authority** (no say in who delivers services or how much they are paid)
- Individual can still choose how much of their funding is used on the service

Individual Directed Goods and Services (IDGS)

Services, equipment or supplies not otherwise available through OPWDD's Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Waiver or the Medicaid State Plan

- Are for the purpose of increasing independence, or substituting for human assistance and/or promotes opportunities for community living and inclusion
- Address a need identified in the Self-Direction participants Life Plan
- Are able to be accommodated without compromising the Self-Direction participants health or safety
- Are provided to, or directed toward, the benefit of the Self-Direction participant
- Limited to \$32,000 annually, or the person's PRA, whichever is less

Individual Directed Goods and Services (IDGS) Examples

- Community classes and publicly available training/coaching
- Health club and organizational memberships
- Household related items and services
- Transportation
- Camp
- Aquatic, art, music, play therapy

Other Than Personal Services (OTPS)

A Self-Direction Budget category that allows up to \$3,000 for additional goods and services that are not Medicaid-fundable

- 100% State Funded
- Relate to a need/valued outcome in the Life Plan
- Increase independence and/or the ability to live safely at home
- Other funding and resources must first be explored and exhausted
- Cannot be listed on the OTPS Excluded Items List

OTPS Categories

- Phone Service*
- Internet*
- Software, as related to your disability
- Staff Activities Fees
- Staff Advertising
- Costs related to staff attending trainings or meetings
- Personal Use Transportation
- Clothing (\$250 cap)*
- Board Stipend (food)*
- Utilities*
- Other: Goods/services that increase independence
- Other: Goods/services related to health/safety

* In general, these services are not reimbursable in OTPS for children under 18 years old where parents are responsible for these costs. Exceptions may be granted by the Regional Field Office in cases where justification for a specific need is established.

Family Reimbursed Respite

- Reimbursement service to the family for the expense they incur in being relieved of their primary caregiver responsibilities
- Designed to be used as needed to relieve the primary caretaker of the Self-Direction participant
- Service is capped at \$3,000 annually

Housing Supports

Staffing and companionship services

- Live in Caregiver (LIC)
- Community Habilitation (CH)
- Paid Neighbor

IDGS

- Household related items and services
- Lawn mowing, snow removal, MedaCube, adapted appliances, technology

OTPS

- Software
- Health and Safety
- Internet/phone service
- Technology

Housing Subsidy

Children, School and Self-Direction

Some examples of services available to children are:

- Respite for the family
 - IDGS (i.e.: community classes, camp)
 - Community Habilitation (authorization depends on age and other factors)
 - OTPS (for what is not offered otherwise by Medicaid)
-
- Self directed services cannot be provided during school hours
 - Self directed services cannot duplicate what is provided by the school
 - Direct clinical services are the responsibility of the school and/or State Medicaid Plan
 - Children who are home schooled may have a self-directed budget

Budget Review and Approval

- Your broker will submit the Self-Direction Budget to the Fiscal Intermediary (FI) for review. The FI will then send the budget to the Regional Field Office's Self-Direction Unit.
- The budget is reviewed for final approval and if it meets all of the guidelines, an approval letter and the approved Self-Direction Budget is sent from the DDRFO office to you, your FI, your Broker, and your Care Manager

Initial Budget Launch

- You, your Broker, your Care Manager, and your COS may meet to have a launch meeting where your approved Self-Direction Budget is reviewed alongside your Life Plan
- Services identified in your Self-Direction Budget and in your Life Plan may begin the day the budget is approved (this date is listed on the budget and in the approval letter)
- If you are choosing to self-hire staff (Employer Authority), it is important to have these staff hired once the budget is approved so that you can begin to receive services immediately

What's Next?

- You will receive an email from the OPWDD Self-Direction Unit with proof of attendance for today's session
 - Please save this email as you will be required to provide this proof of attendance to your Care Manager
- Determine if Self-Direction is right for you
- Inform your Care Manager you attended this session and talk about your interest in Self-Direction
 - Your Care Manager can guide you through the next steps and provide you with a list of Brokers
- Contact your local DDRFO Self-Direction Liaisons if you or your Care Manager have any questions

Important Resources

- OPWDD Self-Direction Website
 - <https://opwdd.ny.gov/types-services/self-direction>
- Self-Direction Guidance for Providers
 - https://opwdd.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2022/03/sd_guidance-final_march2022.pdf
- Service Administrative Directive Memoranda (ADM)s
 - <https://opwdd.ny.gov/regulations-guidance>
- OPWDD Front Door Website
 - <https://opwdd.ny.gov/get-started/front-door>
- Regional Field Office Self-Direction Liaisons
 - Refer to following slide for contact information

Regional Field Offices Contact Information

Region 1 SPS.R1.SD@opwdd.ny.gov

Counties served: Alleghany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Chemung, Erie, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Niagara, Ontario, Orleans, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne, Wyoming, Yates

Region 2 SPS.R2.SD@opwdd.ny.gov

Counties served: Broome, Cayuga, Chenango, Clinton, Cortland, Delaware, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego, Otsego, St. Lawrence, Tioga, Tompkins

Region 3 SPS.R3.SD@opwdd.ny.gov

Counties served: Albany, Columbia, Dutchess, Fulton, Green, Montgomery, Orange, Putnam, Rensselaer, Rockland, Saratoga, Schenectady, Schoharie, Sullivan, Ulster, Warren, Washington, Westchester

Region 4 SPS.R4.SD@opwdd.ny.gov

Counties served: Bronx, Kings, New York (Manhattan), Queens, Richmond (Staten Island)

Region 5 SPS.R5.SD@opwdd.ny.gov

Counties served: Nassau, Suffolk



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