



Community First Choice Support Management Handout

You have the right to play an active role in the services and supports you get. This means you:

- Identify what you need
- Set your goals
- Plan your services

In Community First Choice, you have a voice in deciding:

- Who will provide your personal assistance and habilitation services
- What qualifications and training the provider must have
- How your services will be provided

If you'd like help learning about your choice of providers and deciding who provides your services, CFC offers Support Management training. This training teaches you how to select, manage and dismiss your service providers or attendants. This training benefit does not affect Consumer Directed Services' (CDS) budgets or waiver-cost ceilings.

- If you use services delivered by a provider agency, Support Management will help you work with your provider agency to select a service provider or attendant who is right for you – someone who will help you to reach the goals in your service plan.
- If you use the CDS option, Support Management gives you extra tools for managing your service providers or attendants. To learn more, see the [Consumer Directed Services Employer Manual](#).

Selecting Service Providers or Attendants

To help the provider agency in the interviewing and hiring process, you need to know what you want in a provider or attendant. You need to be honest with yourself about what you need, what you like, and what you don't like. You also need to think about how you communicate.

How Do You Communicate?

1. Do you like talking or listening?
2. Do you like to talk through a problem with someone, or would you rather first think about it by yourself and then talk about it?
3. Do you like to do things on a whim, or do you like to have everything planned and mapped out?

You can get together with your licensed or certified provider agency, or with your financial management services agency (FMSA) if you have selected the CDS option, and talk about your needs. It will help the provider agency get a better idea of what you are looking for in a service provider or attendant. For example,

- Do you want someone who has had experience with a disability similar to yours?
- Do you want someone who has at least a certain number of years of experience?
- Do you want someone with less experience who is trainable?

Tell your provider what kind of service provider or attendant you need.

If you use the Consumer Directed Services option and hire your own service providers or attendants, think about what you need, what you like and what you don't like when interviewing and screening applicants.

Note: Neither you nor the provider agency can turn down a service provider or attendant because of the person's race, age, religion, color, gender, sexual orientation, military duty, national origin, disability, or veteran's status.

Managing Service Providers or Attendants

Managing service providers or attendants helps make sure you're getting the services you need to your satisfaction. By managing, you make sure your service providers or attendants understand your expectations. This can involve many different skills, like orientation, supervising, coaching and evaluating your provider.

Orientation

If you use services delivered by a provider agency, your provider agency will do the orientation for your service provider or attendant. You have the right to be involved in the orientation so you can be sure your needs are going to be met.

Daily Instruction

Following these simple rules will help you and your attendant work well together and maintain a healthy working relationship:

- Explain clearly how you want your day organized.
- Set clear expectations for your service provider or attendant and for yourself.
- Don't ask the service provider or attendant to bend or break rules. You, too, must follow the rules.

- Offer solutions to problems as they come up. Don't put it off.
- Set aside time to discuss issues and offer praise, advice and feedback. Ask for the service provider's or attendant's feedback about you.
- Be available when the service provider/attendant needs to talk to you or ask you questions.

You may want to think about having a family member, former service provider or attendant or friend show your new service provider or attendant how to perform the tasks you need done.

Create a Healthy Work Setting

- Show appreciation.
- Be open and honest when you suggest ways to improve.
- Offer constructive criticism on the spot. Don't wait until you reach a boiling point.
- Show respect.
- Ask your service provider or attendant to respect your privacy and property. Setting boundaries can lead to a healthier relationship over time and prevent your provider or attendant from taking advantage of you.
- Celebrate milestones, such as birthdays and work anniversaries.

Offer Praise

- Compliment correct behavior:
 - Describe the correct or appropriate behavior.
 - Say why it helped or how it made you feel (good or better).
 - Say "thank you." Be sincere.

Offer Constructive Criticism

- Help the service provider or attendant understand how to perform the tasks correctly next time. Get help from the provider agency if you need it.
- Be quick to give feedback.
- Don't hang onto criticism for your provider or attendant. Don't include corrections from another incident or bring up things from the past.
- Maintain a calm tone to your voice. Don't be emotional.
- Make your point, but don't overstate it.
- Talk to your service provide attendant the way you would like to be talked to. Be respectful.

Coaching

Coaching is when you help your service provider or attendant learn what your priorities are, how to solve problems, how to make important decisions and how to communicate effectively. Coaching is valuable because it:

- Reduces turnover

- Eases conflict
- Focuses on problem solving

Important Aspects of Coaching

Keep it Between You Two: Make coaching private, never in front of others (unless you don't have a choice).

Relationship Building: Show an interest in your service providers or attendants. Show you believe in their abilities. Build trust so your providers or attendants feel safe talking to you.

Clearly State Problems: Just talk about the facts. Don't lecture or judge.

Try to See Things as the Service Provider or Attendant Sees Them: Ask open-ended questions. Listen closely. Try to see your service provider's or attendant's side of the story.

Explain How You See Things: Calmly say how you feel about the situation. If you can, tell about a personal experience where you were in a similar situation and how you felt.

Solution Building: Try to pinpoint the cause of the problem. Brainstorm with your attendant or provider and come up with ways to solve the problem. Ask your attendant or provider for ideas and talk about possible results.

Action Steps: Work together to make specific plans for working toward the solution. Set goals to help you get to the solution.

Follow-up: Check in with each other to see how things are going. Don't wait for problems to re-surface.

Evaluation

Each time a supervisor visits, as well as at a specific time each year, your service provider or attendant will be evaluated. Evaluation means deciding whether your service provider or attendant has learned to do the job well based on these three things:

- 1. Does the service provider or attendant remember how to do the tasks correctly?**
 - Do you have to repeat instructions to get the result you're looking for?
 - Does the service provider or attendant ask you questions you've already answered?
- 2. Does the service provider or attendant work hard to get the job done?**
 - Do you have to ask the service provider or attendant to complete tasks?
 - Does the service provider or attendant stay busy while on duty?
 - Is the service provider or attendant completing tasks correctly and on time?

3. Does the service provider or attendant have good judgment?

- Has the service provider or attendant made any decisions that caused problems?
- Can the service provider or attendant be left alone to complete tasks or do you have to watch this person to be sure things are done right?

One of the most important reasons to evaluate performance is to improve it.

Dismissing Service Providers or Attendants

You will need to let your provider agency know if you decide to dismiss a service provider or attendant. Answering the following questions will help you get ready to share your decision with the provider agency.

Thinking Through Your Decision

You know how much time and effort you have spent telling your service or provider attendant how you like things done. Very likely, your provider agency also has spent time and effort, too. So, it's always a good idea to stop and think:

- Is this really a problem that can't be resolved?
- Am I concerned for my safety, health or property?
- Have there been repeated problems despite your attempts to correct them?
- Did you document the problems?
- Did the service provider or attendant know about your concerns?
- Did you tell your provider agency and case manager about the problems as they were happening?
- Is this a new situation, but one that makes you feel unsafe if you don't take immediate action?

Tell Your Provider Agency

Unless it is an emergency, it is best to tell the provider agency you want to change service providers or attendants before you take any action. The provider agency will need time to find a replacement before letting your service provider or attendant go. Work with your provider agency to figure out the best approach to telling your service provider/attendant about your decision.

If you don't want to wait, you may ask the service provider or attendant to leave or not to come back, if you are comfortable doing so. Just be sure you call your provider agency as soon as you can. If you have concerns for how the service provider or attendant will react, be sure and share them with the provider agency. You can ask to have a supervisor from the provider agency be with you when you break the news to your service provider or attendant. Be sure to report any misconduct to the provider agency.

It is important to tell your provider agency your reasons for dismissing a service provider or attendant so that they can find service providers or attendants that work better for you in the future.

Acknowledgement

By checking the “Yes” box below, I acknowledge I received written and verbal Support Management information, as indicated on my service plan.

☐Yes ☐No

Signature

Date