

## Developmental Disabilities Administration

### Frequently Asked Questions

### Supported Living

**Q: What is Supported Living?**

**A:** Supported Living is a service that supports clients to live in their home in the community with supports from a contracted agency. Individuals typically live with two or three housemates, and staff provide teaching or support based on needs. Supports may vary from a few hours per month up to 24 hours/day. Supports are determined by a Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) assessment. Staff support individuals to be as independent as possible:

- Community activities
- Self-advocacy
- Building relationships
- Finances
- Shopping
- Menu planning and cooking
- Medication management
- Medical appointments
- Personal hygiene
- Daily living activities

**Q: Where do I live and whom do I live with when I have Supported Living services?**

**A:** Clients rent a home or apartment and pay for rent, food, and other personal expenses. Most requiring 24-hour support share a home with at least one other person. Up to four people may receive supported-living supports in one home. Individuals have their own room. People requiring less than 24-hour support and can afford to live on their own often do not share their home with others.

**Q: Who provides Supported Living services?**

**A:** DDA contracts with supported living providers certified by Residential Care Services. Providers can be a sole proprietor or an entity that is a non-profit or for-profit business. State Operated Living Alternatives (SOLA) is a state-run supported living program that is certified by Residential Care Services. Refer to the [Supported Living Provider Locator](#) for supported living providers by location.

**Q: What rules do Supported Living services follow?**

**A:** Supported living providers follow rules and guidelines linked below:

- [Chapter 388-101D Washington Administrative Code](#)
- [Chapter 388-101 Washington Administrative Code](#)
- [Developmental Disabilities Administration policies](#)
- [DDA Guiding Values](#)
- Contract requirements

**Q: What is the process for finding a provider?**

**A:**

- DDA obtains consent from client or legal representative and shares client information with potential providers.
- Providers notify DDA whether they can meet a client's needs.
- DDA notifies the client or legal representative of interested providers.
- Client and families or legal representative meet with interested providers, visit homes and meet potential housemates.
- When both parties agree it is a good fit, a transition plan and timeline are developed.

**Q: Do I have a choice of provider?**

**A:**

Yes, you may select from certified and contracted providers to deliver supported living services. Services are voluntary and must be agreed upon by the client or their legal representative, and the supported living provider. A client or their legal representative has the right to request another provider at any time if unsatisfied.

**Q: How do support staff know what to do?**

**A:**

Supported Living providers work with each client (or legal representative) to develop written plans for staff. The plans are based on the person's wants and needs, and include information from the Person Centered Service Plan developed by the DDA Case Managers. Examples include:

- Individual Instruction and Support Plan
- Individual Financial Plan
- Positive Behavior Support Plan
- Emergency Plan
- Cross-systems Crisis Plan

**Q: What training do the staff that support me receive?**

**A:**

Supported living staff receive 75 hours of initial training and 12 additional hours annually thereafter.

**Q: Who can receive Supported Living?**

**A:**

Individuals must be:

- At least 18 year of age
- Eligible and enrolled in DDA services and Medicaid
- On or approved for the CORE Waiver or the Community Protection Waiver
- Assessed by DDA as needing services in a supported living setting

**Q: How is Supported Living requested?**

**A:**

Clients or their legal representative can request services through their case manager or contact DDA's [Service and Information Request Line](#).

**Q: Do clients have to move to receive Supported Living services?**

**A:** If a person is renting a home and requires less than 24-hour services and support, the supported living provider may be able to deliver supports where the individual currently lives. Sometimes people already receiving supported living services are looking for housemates. Supported living services cannot be delivered in a parent's home.

**Q: How are housemates and living arrangements determined?**

**A:** DDA and service providers work with each client and their legal representative to consider households that are looking for an additional housemate or to locate a new home and potential housemates. DDA and service providers may suggest which individuals could work best together based on needs, personality, and other factors. Prior to agreeing to services, clients are encouraged to meet and spend time with potential housemates.

**Q: What determines the amount of support received?**

**A:** A DDA case manager will complete an assessment. Based on needs, the assessment will generate a support level ranging from one to six. The higher the number, the more the supports the person will receive.

**Q: How is medical support provided in Supported Living setting?**

**A:** Clients use community health providers to meet their healthcare needs. Staff can assist clients to schedule and attend medical appointments, follow directions from healthcare providers and take prescribed medications. If needed, staff can be trained by a Registered Nurse to provide nursing tasks and medication administration. This is called nurse delegation.

**Q: How is the provider paid?**

**A:** DDA conducts a rate assessment with the service provider, which generates a daily rate the provider will be paid. The rate is based on the client's assessment and takes into account how many people live in the home and if staff are shared. DDA pays the service provider directly.

**Q: What expenses is the client responsible to pay?**

**A:** Clients who receive supported living pay their portion of rent, utilities, food, typical household furnishings and maintenance costs, some transportation costs (i.e. bus passes), and any other personal expenses. Sharing a home with one or more people helps make living expenses more affordable. Clients are encouraged to apply for all benefits for which they are eligible such as: social security, food assistance, Section 8 housing and utility discounts.

**Q: What else should I know about Supported Living?**

**A:**

- Providers have a choice of whom they serve. They can also choose to end services if they do not feel they can meet a client's needs.

- Providers hire staff to work with clients. Most service providers have a core team of employees for a home; however, staff turnover occurs. The service provider hires and trains their employees; the clients do not always have the option of picking which staff they want to work with.
- Providers typically offer services in specific geographical locations. The person may need to move to receive services from a particular service provider.
- Finding accessible, affordable housing and housemates can take time.
- Individuals who have guardians:
  - Guardianship fees owed by the client can only be paid after the client's basic living expenses for housing, food, and basic needs have been met.
  - Guardians may not receive their typical fees if the client is not able to afford them.
- DDA is not allowed to pay for guardianship fees for clients.