

# Interested in Becoming a Certified Supported Living Provider?



Supported living services offer instruction and support to individuals who live in their own homes. Services are offered in integrated settings and support personal power, choice, and engagement in community activities.

This document will help determine if providing services to some of Washington's most vulnerable people is right for you.



Washington State  
Department of Social  
& Health Services

*Transforming lives*

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## Begin by reviewing the following Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) policies:

- [The policies below are located here.](#)
- 4.02, 5.01, 5.08, 5.14, 5.15, 5.16, 6.02, 6.04, 6.07, 6.09, 6.11, 6.12, 6.14, 6.19.



- To provide community protection services, also review policies: 15.03, 15.04, and 15.05.
- To become a certified supported living provider, you will need to be familiar with Washington Administrative Codes (WAC)s regarding supported living, [388-101](#) and [388-101D](#).
- Supported living staff are required to follow [chapter 388-829 WAC](#). This includes the minimum requirements for training such as CPR, First Aid, mandatory reporting,

and training related to each person's individual needs. Providers can deliver this training or purchase it from another supported living provider. If providing delegated nursing services, those delegated staff also need to complete "Nurse Delegation for Nursing Assistants" and be a Nursing Assistant Registered (NAR), Nursing Assistant Certified (NAC), or Home Care Aide-Certified (HCA-C).

## More information can be found in these DDA publications:

- [Supported Living Fact Sheet](#)
- [Developmental Disabilities Administration Guiding Values](#)
- [Supported Living Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Selecting a Residential Service Provider](#)

## If after reviewing the policies and WACs you want to pursue a supported living contract, follow the steps below:

- Apply for a business license
- [Complete an application](#)
- Mail the complete application packet to Management Services Division, Business Analysis and Application Unit (BAAU) at DSHS.

For US Postal Mail:

ALTSA BAAU, PO Box 45600, Olympia, WA 98504-5600

For Federal Express:

ALTSA BAAU, 4450 10th Ave SE (Blake West), Lacey, WA 98503



## Frequently asked questions about becoming a supported living provider:

### What is supported living?

Supported living is a service that supports clients to live in their home in the community with assistance from a contracted agency. Individuals typically

live with two or three housemates, and staff provide support based on needs. Supports may vary from a few hours per month up to 24-hours a day. Supports are determined by a Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) Assessment. Staff support individuals to live as independently as possible in areas such as:

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

## How are the client's support needs determined and how will my staff know how to provide support?

The DDA case resource manager will complete the support intensity scale (SIS) within the DDA Assessment, which generates a residential support level ranging from 1-6. The residential support level will be described in the comments of the Person-Centered Service Plan. Supported living providers work with each client (or their representative), to develop written plans for staff that are person-centered and identify areas of habilitation (teaching), support and goals. Examples of specific plans for staff to follow include:

- Individual Instruction and Support Plans (IISP)
- Individual Financial Plans (IFP's)
- Positive Behavior Support Plans (PBPS)
- Emergency plans, and cross-systems crisis plans

These provider-based plans reflect the Person-Centered Service Plan developed by the DDA case manager.



## Who do I support?

Individuals:

- At least 18 year of age
- Enrolled in DDA services and Medicaid
- On or approved for the Home and Community-Based Service Core Waiver
- Assessed by DDA as needing residential habilitation services in a supported living setting

## How do I meet clients who need my support?

- DDA obtains consent from the client or their legal representative and shares client information with potential providers
- Providers notify DDA whether or not they can meet a client's needs
- DDA notifies the client or their legal representative of interested providers
- Client and families or their legal representative meet with interested providers, visit homes and meet potential housemates
- Transition plan and timeline are developed when both parties agree

## Where do the people I support live?

People choosing supported living services are supported in their own homes. Providers may need to assist a client with locating acceptable housing. Many providers work to develop relationships with local property owners or rental agencies. Even if you assist the client to locate housing, the client will sign the lease. In some cases the client's legal representative may also have to sign the lease.

## Who provides medical support?

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.



## How do I assist with medications?

As a provider, you will be responsible for safeguarding the client's health and safety. If the client is able to take his or her medications independently, staff will be expected to monitor and document the dosage. If the client is not independent, the support staff would need to be a Nursing Assistant-

Registered (NAR), Nursing Assistant Certified (NAC), or Home Care Aide - Certified (HCA-C). This is outlined in detail in DDA Policy 6.19 Residential Medication Management.

## What does financial stability look like for a support living provider?

Like any new business, you will plan for operating costs and emergencies. Financial stability for supported living providers varies depending on the number of clients being supported. Initially there may be some lag time after providing the service, submitting for reimbursement and receiving payment. Providers will need to make payroll for staff which may require a line of credit from your financial institution (loan).



## How much money will I need to start a supported living program?

The amount depends on the number of people supported. Consider how you will finance the agency for the first few months or year until you are more established.

## How will I be paid?

After providing services, you will submit a claim through ProviderOne, based on your daily rate listed on Exhibit C. Payment should be issued within two weeks.

## What other expenses might I have?

Other expenses depend on the number of people supported and the number of staff employed:

- You may need to rent a small office space and buy equipment such as a computer and cell phone.
- Liability insurance
- An accountant for the required cost report
- If you plan to provide your own training you will need space and equipment for a training lab.



## Who provides supported living services and how are they qualified?

Providers are certified by Residential Care Services, a division of AL TSA and contracted with DDA to provide community residential services. Providers follow a contract, the WACs, policies and residential guidelines regarding the provision of services.



### Do clients have a choice of provider?

Yes. Clients interested in receiving residential services will select from providers who are certified and contracted to deliver supported living services and have capacity to meet

client needs. Services are voluntary and must be agreed to by the individual, their legal representative, and the supported living agency. The individual has the right to request another provider if they are not satisfied with the one they chose.

## How many people reside in a home with supported living services?

The maximum number of individuals in one home is four. Service providers work with individuals and families to determine good housemates. Most persons requiring 24-hour support share a home with at least one other person. Persons who require less support and can afford to live on their own, often do not share their home with others.

## How will the daily rate for each client be determined?

Based on the client's residential service level generated by the DDA assessment, you and the resource manager will work together to determine the sharing of supports with other household members. This will determine the daily rate for staff supports and services. You will receive an attachment to your contract that includes the daily rate you may claim for each client you support. This is called an Exhibit C.



## Will I assist with financial matters?

Possibly. The provider and client will develop an Individual Financial Plan identifying what role the client, guardian, family and service provider in assisting with finances. It is individually tailored and based on the individual's need for support. The supported living service provider may be selected by the client to act as the Representative Payee for the client's social security benefits and may assist the client to write checks to pay for their rent, utilities, food and other personal items.

## What happens if I cannot safely provide services to a client I have agreed to support?

Providers have an option to serve clients based on their ability to support the unique needs of the client. They can also choose to end services if they do not feel they can meet the client's support needs.



## Questions?

For more questions, contact Valerie Kindschy, Community Residential Services Program Manager at 360-407-1550.

## Regional Representatives

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