

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES ADMINISTRATION  
Olympia, Washington

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TITLE: COMPANION HOMES POLICY 4.12

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Authority: [Title 71A RCW](#) *Developmental Disabilities*  
[Chapter 388-825 WAC](#) *DDA Services Rules*  
[Chapter 388-828 WAC](#) *DDA Assessment*  
[Chapter 388-829C WAC](#) *Companion Homes*

### PURPOSE

This policy establishes the requirements for companion home providers that clarify or are in addition to requirements outlined in rule.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to field staff and contracted companion home providers.

### DEFINITIONS

**Goals** means what the client has identified they want to accomplish with the provider's support.

**Instruction** means an active process of teaching a particular skill or subject.

### POLICY

- A. Companion homes provide residential habilitation services as defined in [WAC 388-845-1500](#) in an adult foster care model to no more than one adult DDA client. The services are offered in a private residence approved by DDA to assure client health, safety, and well-being. Companion homes provide 24-hour available supervision.
- B. Providers are expected to be familiar with and adhere to applicable requirements outlined in their contract, WAC, and applicable DDA policies.
- C. Providers must deliver services in an integrated setting as defined in Chapter 388-845 WAC to facilitate the client's full access to the greater community, including

opportunities to seek employment and work in competitive, integrated settings, engage in community life, control personal resources and receive services in the community in the same manner as people without disabilities. Providers must deliver services in a way that promotes the [DDA Guiding Values](#).

## **PROCEDURES**

### **A. Companion Home Requests**

1. When a client or the client's legal representative requests residential habilitation services from a companion home provider, the case manager must:
  - a. Review the client's DDA assessment and verify that it reflects the client's current support needs;
  - b. Inform their supervisor of the request;
  - c. Discuss the appropriateness of Core waiver services with their supervisor;
  - d. Follow the regional process for submitting a Core waiver request if the client has unmet support needs that can be met by a companion home; and
  - e. Seek information about companion homes from the regional resource manager supervisor or designee.
2. DDA considers the following factors when reviewing a request for residential habilitation services provided by a companion home, identifying potential service providers, and distributing referrals:
  - a. Personal preference of the client being referred;
  - b. Legal representative requests;
  - c. Provider's ability to meet the client's health, safety, and program needs; and
  - d. Whether the home environment meets the client's needs.

**B. Referrals**

1. Before referring a client to companion home providers, the case manager must obtain signed form [DSHS 14-012](#), *Consent*, from the client or the client's legal representative if applicable. The form must have been signed within the last 12 months.
2. The resource manager and the case manager must work collaboratively on client referrals.
3. The case manager must compile the referral packet. The referral packet must include:
  - a. The contact information of the client's legal representative and Necessary Supplemental Accommodation (NSA);
  - b. The client's current Person-Centered Service Plan (PCSP);
  - c. Dates, sources, and copies of the most recent psychological or mental health evaluations, including any behavioral and psychiatric information and treatment plans;
  - d. A summary of incidents that warranted an incident report involving the client within the past 12 months, including behavioral incidents and medical issues;
  - e. The client's criminal history, if applicable;
  - f. Educational and vocational records, including the client's individualized education plan if available;
  - g. Financial information (may be found in ACES), such as:
    - i. Verification of Social Security Administration (SSA), Supplemental Security Income (SSI) status; and
    - ii. Payee information;
  - h. Medical history, immunization records, and medications;

Note: A client's information and records related to sexually transmitted diseases may only be disclosed as permitted under [RCW 70.02.220](#).

- i. Nurse delegation assessments, if applicable. The contracted registered nurse must use [DSHS 10-217](#), *Nurse Delegation: Nursing Assistant Credentials and Training*;
  - j. Contact information of the client's family and all significant people in the client's life; and
  - k. [DSHS 10-234](#), *Individuals with Challenging Support Issues*, if the client is an adult who has a history of challenging support issues.
4. The case manager must send the completed referral packet to the regional referral inbox for processing.
  5. The resource manager must forward the referral packet to potential providers and collect provider responses.
  6. After the client selects a potential provider, the resource manager or designee must work with the identified provider to establish a companion home contract.

#### C. **Rate Setting**

1. DDA reimburses providers for the instruction and support services provided. Providers are paid using a daily rate as determined under [WAC 388-829C-131](#).
2. DSHS publishes companion home daily rates on the [Office of Rates Management's website](#) in a resource called [All DDA Rates](#).

#### D. **Provider Duties and Requirements**

A companion home provider must:

1. Participate in the client's PCSP development, review, and revision;
2. Use teaching techniques that include step-by-step instruction, mentoring, role modeling, and developing visual cues, as appropriate to the client's needs and preferred learning style. Positive behavior support principles based on individual dignity and respect must be emphasized in all services as required by [DDA Policy 5.14](#), *Positive Behavior Support Principles*; and
3. Submit the following written records and reports to the case manager:

- a. Quarterly reports using optional form [DSHS 15-516](#), *Companion Home Quarterly Report*, that describe the information required in [WAC 388-829C-350](#);
- b. Incident reports per [DDA Policy 6.12](#), *Incident Management and Reporting Requirements for Residential Service Providers*; and
- c. Reports on client refusal of services as described in [WAC 388-829C-370](#).

#### E. Required Training

1. Effective January 1, 2016, new companion home providers must meet all training requirements that apply to community residential service businesses under [Chapter 388-829 WAC](#).
2. Companion home providers must submit the training documentation to the resource manager, have the documentation available to contracted evaluators at the time of the evaluation, and to department staff upon request.
3. A companion home provider must complete at least 12 hours of continuing education each calendar year after the calendar year in which they successfully complete 70 hours of Basic Training and 5 hours of Orientation and Safety Training. The continuing education must be on topics relevant to supporting people with developmental disabilities or adult teaching techniques and approved by the resource manager.

#### F. Companion Home Respite

1. Companion home clients are eligible to receive respite care to provide intermittent relief to the provider. Respite services for providers are offered through DDA-contracted respite providers.
2. Annual respite hours are determined by the DDA assessment. [WAC 388-829C-232](#) and [WAC 388-828-6012](#) describe the calculation for annual respite hours. DDA determines a companion home client's annual respite allocation by adding the client's adjusted companion home services support score under [WAC 388-828-6011](#) to their companion home services support score under [WAC 388-828-6010](#).
  - a. A companion home services support score is derived from the unadjusted respite assessment level.

- b. The unadjusted respite assessment level is based on protection supervision level and behavior acuity level as described in [WAC 388-828-5990](#).
- c. [WAC 388-828-6010](#) has a chart that converts the unadjusted respite assessment level into the companion home services support score.

#### G. Companion Home Habilitation Goal

1. The case manager, in collaboration with the client, the client's legal representative, and the provider, must develop at least one habilitation goal that the provider must actively support the client to accomplish. This goal must be documented in the client's PCSP.
2. At least quarterly, or more frequently if requested, the provider must submit a report using optional form [DSHS 15-516](#), *Companion Home Quarterly Report*, that describes:
  - a. Assistance provided to reach the goal;
  - b. How progress is measured; and
  - c. The progress made to achieve the habilitation goal.

#### H. Quality Assurance

1. The DDA case manager must:
  - a. Review all written reports from the provider for compliance with the PCSP goals identified in the client assessment and follow up with the provider as needed;
  - b. Initial and file all written reports submitted by the provider and document in the SERs; and
  - c. If requested, provide all documents requested by the DDA-contracted evaluator.
2. The provider must:
  - a. Participate at least annually in a certification evaluation process. Provide all documents requested by the DDA-contracted evaluator.

- b. Complete all required corrective actions resulting from the evaluation process within the timeframe provided and submit documentation to the resource manager.
3. In addition to other reasons stipulated in the contract, DDA may deny payment or terminate the contract if the corrective actions are not completed within the specified timeline.

### **EXCEPTIONS**

Any exception to this policy must have the prior written approval of the Deputy Assistant Secretary or designee.

### **SUPERSESSSION**

4.12, *Companion Homes*

Issued July 1, 2017

Approved:



Date: May 1, 2022

Deputy Assistant Secretary  
Developmental Disabilities Administration