



What is Participant Directed Services (PDS)?

Also known as Person Directed or Consumer Directed Services

There are two ways individuals that have the Consolidated, Person/Family Directed Support (P/FDS) and Community Living Waivers receive services (service delivery choices): Traditional and Participant Directed Services (PDS). PDS allows individuals to self direct their services. This includes having additional control over where, when and how their supports and services are delivered. With PDS the person receiving services, or their surrogate, becomes an employer. This means more choice and control regarding the workers delivering their services and more responsibilities such as creating a schedule for your Support Service Professionals (your workers). All services continue to be person centered. A Supports Broker can support you in these responsibilities.

Can I use the Participant Directed Services (PDS) model of service delivery?

- Do you live in a private residence that you own or residence of a family member or friend or are you planning on transitioning from residential supports to a private home?
- Does your Individual Support Plan (ISP) include authorized services that are eligible for PDS? (ask your Supports Coordinator for this information)
- Are you or your surrogate prepared to be employers (with the assistance of a supports broker if you choose)?

If you answered yes to all these questions you may want to learn more about PDS. Your surrogate is the person that you, as a waiver services participant, designate to act on your behalf as an employer. This is not a paid position and your surrogate cannot be a provider of your services. If you choose PDS you or your surrogate will self direct your services and will become either a Common-Law or Managing employer.

All references to “you” that follow will refer to either the waiver services participant or their surrogate, whichever is appropriate

If I choose to self direct some of my services can I also receive some services through the Traditional (Agency) way?

Individuals may elect to receive some services through the Traditional model and others through the PDS model.

What other choices and responsibilities do I need to consider?

If you use PDS you will need to choose a type of Financial Management Service (FMS) organization to assist you. FMS organizations provide administrative services to support employer functions such as processing timesheets and creating paychecks for your Support Service Professionals (SSP). There are two FMS models.

What are the two Financial Management Service (FMS) models?

Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent (VF/EA FMS) and Agency with Choice (AWC FMS)

With both, SSPs are hired by you and must complete an agreement which includes:

- Following the ISP
- Maintaining documentation
- Participating in meetings
- Meeting qualifications

Also, the SSP can receive training from you (the employer) regarding how to perform their duties.

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What makes the two FMS models different?

AWC FMS (Agency With Choice Financial Management Service)

If you choose the AWC FMS you will become a Managing Employer (ME) of your Support Service Professionals (SSP).

- A Managing Employer is the onsite supervisor or manager of the SSP.
- *Agency With Choice, Part of PathWays*, the AWC FMS will be the employer of record for your SSPs, also known as the Common-Law or legal employer.
- You and the AWC FMS will be joint employers.
- *Agency With Choice, Part of PathWays*, could assist you with job training.
- Visit *Agency With Choice, Part of PathWays* at www.yourawc.org or reach them at 724-225-8145

VF/EA FMS (Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent financial management service)

If you choose VF/EA FMS you will become an employer of your SSP.

- PALCO will be the fiscal management organization and is considered a fiscal agent.
- PALCO is the statewide VF/EA FMS the PA Office of Developmental Programs contracts with.
- You are the Common-Law Employer, also known as the employer of record.
- A Common-Law Employer is the legal employer of the SSP they hire.

What are some things I need to learn about?

If you are going to self direct your services you should consider each option carefully to learn about:

- What the increase in the choice and control of your workers will mean to you.
- Your responsibilities as an employer of your workers, including the difference between being a Managing Employer (ME) and a Common-Law Employer (CLE).
- Which FMS model may be best for you.
- Can a Supports Broker help me?

What is a Supports Broker service?

The Supports Broker service can enhance natural / community supports. The broker can provide support with employer related functions and assist to ensure compliance with program rules for self-directed services. Ask your Supports Coordinator how a Supports Broker may be helpful to you and for a list of agencies and people that provide the service.

Where can I get more information about PDS and Supports Broker services?

- Visit www.MyODP.org or www.myodp.org/course/index.php?categoryid=247
- Reach your Supports Coordinator (SC) to ask about your options and responsibilities. Consider using this Fact Sheet to help guide a conversation with them.

For more information on Participant Directed Services in Pennsylvania visit the PA DHS website and www.MyODP.org (PA DHS Office of Developmental Programs)



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For more information regarding ODS, including additional Fact Sheets visit alleghenycounty.us/dhs/ODS