Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities
30 E. Broad St., Floor 12
Columbus, OH 43215
(877) 464-6733 www.dodd.ohio.gov

Service Provider Interview Guide

This guide lists suggested questions to ask when interviewing a potential service provider.

Revised — May 2012

Introduction

This guide is to help you get the information you want when interviewing a potential provider so you can get the help you need. By asking questions about the things that you consider important, you should be able to find the service provider best suited to meet your needs.

Before conducting an interview, you may want to sit down with this handbook, read the questions, and mark the issues that you are most concerned about.

This guide is divided into sections.

The sections are:

- ***Staff***
- ***Health Care***
- ***Getting Out in the Community***
- ***Benefits***
- ***Money***
- ***Transportation***
- ***Housekeeping***
- ***General***
- ***Dispute Resolution***

You may have other questions you want to ask. So that you don't forget them, you may want to write the questions somewhere in this guide. Remember, this is only a guide. *You* are the decision-maker, and need good information to make informed choices. Using this guide may help you with that choice.

► Staff

- What credentials will the staff need for the job?
  - What background check is done on the candidates?
  - Is a criminal check done (in-state, state-by-state, and federal on each staff)?
  - Do you drug test?
- Do parents/guardians decide staffing?
- If I am sent home while I am at work, or if I become ill at work, will the staff be able to pick me up?
- Will staff have a 24-hour beeper and or cellphone?
- Will staff have back-up help if needed?
- How do you get immediate back-up if staff are a 'no show' or call off at the last minute?
- Will staff have 24-hour access to their supervisor?
- How do you encourage parent/guardian input with staff?
- Will staff sleep during sleep hours to constitute a normal home atmosphere?
- What is your staff retention rate?
- How do you recruit for direct care providers?
- What kind of training is required? How much of it is individualized?
- What is your table of organization?
- How much do you pay your direct care staff?
- What is the average tenure of your staff?
- Do you have access to a nurse?

▸ Health Care

- What medication records will be maintained for continuity from staff members to staff members, and to substitutes?
- Will staff make doctor, dentist, and other appointments and take me to them?
- Will staff inform parents/guardians of unusual concerns, and with what frequency?
- What procedures will be followed to assure medications are given to the right individual?
- Who will assure that prescriptions are filled/refilled as needed?
- If I contract a medical condition that requires special care, how will you find trained medical staff to take care of me properly?
- How would you make sure that staff is trained to care for me? Staff substitutes?
- If I don't have 24-hour staff but need to be reminded to take my meds, who will be responsible?
- Will you be able to provide in-home nursing?
- How are your services monitored?
- To whom do you report Major Unusual Incidents (MUIs) to? How are they investigated?

► Getting Out In The Community

- How often can I participate in outside activities?
- What will you do when one house member does not want to go out or is ill and cannot go out, and the other house members want to or must go out?
- How will you handle situations where each house member must be at different places at the same time?
- Will staff be alert to community activities and suggest participation?
- Will staff help me walk my pet and explore the neighborhood?
- How will you help me to meet people who do not have disabilities?
- Will you help me find a church and recreation in my new neighborhood?

► Benefits

- How do you stay informed of available benefit programs that pertain to me?
- Is the staff trained in the process of applying for benefits?
- Will the staff maintain records of benefit payments made to health care providers?
- Will you help me get a food assistance card as soon as you begin serving me?
- Will you be responsible for my re-determinations?

► Money

- Are you willing to be my payee?
- Will you help me get to the bank to make deposits and withdrawals?
- Will you help me plan for money needs for the coming week?
- Will you help me get my bills paid on time?
- Will you help me report my wages and savings to SSI, if needed? Will you track my SS and SSI payments to assure that they are correct, and will you keep SS and SSI informed of any changes in my status?
- How will you help me with my check book register and keep it up-to-date so I know how much money I have left?
- Will you help me balance my checkbook against the bank statement within 5 days after the statement comes each month?
- Will you help me enter all bank charges and deposits in my check register each month? Will you help me use an ATM and record it in my checkbook?
- How will you protect my money from being stolen from me by a provider support staff person or other provider staff? If money is missing, how do you address it?
- Who will supervise the person who is helping me with money?

Service Provider Interview

- Will you give parents/guardian a copy of all house bills (gas, electric, cable, groceries)?
- Will you help me develop an Individual Budget? How often will a program specialist or supervisor check to see that it is being done right?
- If there is a problem regarding money, where in the line of communication is the parent/guardian?
- Will an accounting be made to the parent/guardian? If so, how often? Will financial records be open to audit or inspection by parents/guardians?
- Will staff make sure that I take enough, but not too much, money to work for lunch or to other places, such as when I go out to dinner or to the movies or shopping?
- Will staff make sure that I get my paycheck and that it gets deposited in my account?
- Will you help me clip coupons weekly?

► Transportation

- Will a car or van be parked 24 hours a day at the house, or will transportation be available on-call to take me into the community when I want to or need to go?
- Are the persons who drive me covered by adequate insurance? May I see a copy of the insurance or certificate of insurance?
- If I become ill at work, explain how I will get help to go home.
- Will I get transportation to and from the grocery store?
- Do you have an accessible van?
- Does your staff drive their own cars?

► Housekeeping

- If I need assistance to clean my home, how will you support me?
- Everyone's idea of a clean home is different; how will you help me decide when it is time to clean my home?
- Can I have a chore list so I know what needs to be done to keep my place clean?
- Will I get help with my laundry and ironing?

▸ General

- What provisions do you make for continuity of service when a substitute is required?
  - Are records kept so that the substitute knows the requirements of the household?
  - How often can I expect a substitute staff member?
  - Do you try to use the same substitute? Are they familiar with my ISP?
- What if my housemates and I have a conflict? How do you deal with it?
- How do you feel about maintaining some connections to family life (vacations, weekends in the country, etc.)?
- Who determines if an individual needs behavior modification? Is this done in coordination with my Service and Support Administrator (SSA), parents, guardians, etc.?
- Will I get help planning menus and grocery lists for the week?
- Will staff know how to cook and clean?
- Will you help me keep a planning calendar of some sort so I am aware of my own schedule?
- Does your staff eat my food and use my phone?
- Will your staff have a key to my home?

▸ Health and Safety

- Please explain your Major Unusual Incident (MUI) reporting process.
- How and when am I informed if something happens in the home?
- What is your process for corrective action when something happens in the home?
- How do you ensure that my child is protected from abuse or neglect?

▸ Dispute Policy

- Explain what will happen if:
  - I don't like staff.
  - If staff is unkind.
  - If I am physically hurt by a staff member.
- Can I get new staff?
- Would staff be removed immediately? Explain the procedure.
- What is the grievance procedure? Will you explain it to me and my parents/guardians?

Problems or Concerns?

Please contact DODD Family Advocate Peggy Martin at peggy.martin@dodd.ohio.gov or (614) 466-8706.

NOTES

Our Mission

The Mission of the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) is continuous improvement of the quality of life for Ohio's citizens with develop-mental disabilities and their families.

Ohio | Department of Developmental Disabilities

The Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities
30 E. Broad St., Floor 12
Columbus, OH 43215
(877) 464-6733
www.dodd.ohio.gov