

Self-Determination

**How Does it Work &
Is It Right For Me?**

With Self-Determination...

- You get a personal ***Budget*** to spend on the services you need for a year.
- You make a plan and decide how to spend your money.
- You hire the workers that will help you.
- A ***Fiscal Management Service*** keeps your money safe and pays your workers.
- You can get help from a ***Facilitator*** to make your plan and stay within your budget.

A Little History

In 1998 five “Pilot Projects” began to test how well Self-Determination works. After three years they all reported that:

- Everyone was happy and satisfied.
- People only bought things they needed and didn't waste money.
- No one had serious problems or had to go to a Fair Hearing.
- Everyone in the state should be able to get Self-Determination.

The Five Principles of Self-Determination

Freedom

Authority

Support

Responsibility

Confirmation

FREEDOM

- To plan your own life and future
- To choose who helps you
- To control the services you use
- To hire your own workers and change when needed

AUTHORITY

- To decide how you spend the money given to you
- To be the employer
- To set your own standards for services
- To make your own decisions

SUPPORT

- To be successful in the life you choose
- To be a member of your community
- To make decisions and plan your own life
- To find people you know and trust who will help you

RESPONSIBILITY

- For setting goals for your life and trying your best to reach them.
- For using your talents and skills to be as successful and independent as you can be.
- For giving back to others and to your community.
- For being smart with your money.

CONFIRMATION

- To be a leader and to let others know how Self-Determination can work better for people in the future

Another way to look at the principles...

Freedom

Support

Authority

RESPONSIBILITY

Confirmation

Responsibility is big. Get it? Like Spidey says...

RESPONSIBILITY WITH GREAT POWER COMES GREAT



Who can be in Self-Determination?

You must:

- Have a developmental disability and get services from a regional center.
- Live at home or in the community.
- Agree to go to a class on how Self-Determination works.
- Agree to live within a set budget for a year.
- Agree to work with a “Fiscal Management Service.”

**What Makes Self-Determination
Different From What I Get Now?**

The Facilitator

- Helps you with your Person-Centered Plan and your budget.
- Helps you find and hire the people you want to work for you.
- Helps you decide how much to pay your workers.
- Makes sure your workers do their jobs.
- Helps you find people in your community that are willing to help you for free.

**** You don't have to use a facilitator. If you do, you pay him/her with your budget money.***

Fiscal Management Service

- The Fiscal Management Service is the “bank.”
- They keep your money safe and take care of all the legal things like taxes and insurance.
- They make sure your workers know what they’re doing and don’t have criminal records.
- They send the paychecks to your workers.
- Every month they will tell you and the regional center how much you spent and how much you have left.

****They DON’T tell you how to spend your money!***

Local Advisory Committees

- Each regional center will have a Local Advisory Committee.
- The committee's job is to help make sure Self-Determination is working and to think of ways to make it work better.
- More than half of the committee's members must be people with developmental disabilities and family members
- The SCDD Los Angeles Office chooses half of the members and the regional center chooses the other half.

****If you're interested in being on the Local Advisory Committee for your regional center let us know.***

How Does it Work?

- First, you ask for Self-Determination and agree to live within the limits of your budget.
- With the help of people you trust, you do a “Person-Centered Plan” and set goals.
- You decide how much you will need to spend on each of your goals and who you will hire.
- Your Person-Centered Plan and your budget are given to your FMS.
- After background checks are finished, your services can start and the FMS pays the people you hired.

New Roles & Responsibilities: Your Service Coordinator vs. You

Service Coordinator

- Has about 100 people to help.
- Can't tell you "yes" or "no" without asking supervisor first.
- Must make sure services you get cost as little as possible.
- Must offer you free or "generic" services first even if they aren't what you want.
- Must follow all of the above or get fired.

You

- Have one person to help: YOU
- Don't have to get permission first.
- Must make sure there's enough money in budget.
- Don't have to use free or "generic" services if you don't want to.
- You can't get fired because YOU ARE IN CHARGE!

New Roles & Responsibilities: Your Budget

The Regional Center

- Money comes in one lump sum for the year to be spent on thousands of people in their area.

You & Your FMS

- You get your money in one lump sum for the year to spend on one person: YOU.

New Roles & Responsibilities: Service Providers

Now

- Have to be “vendored” and do what the regional center tells them.
- The regional center decides how much they get paid.

Self-Determination

- Your workers can be anyone you choose and they do what you need them to do.
- You decide how much they get paid.

Some Things to Think About

Have you lost services you liked and needed because of budget cuts?

A lot of services were taken away a few years ago because of problems with the state budget. The law was changed giving the regional centers the right to stop paying for things like camp, swimming classes, horseback riding, and fitness clubs so they could save money.

With Self-Determination...

You can get the services that were taken away.
You can buy things like a membership to a fitness club, or swimming classes, or horseback riding if you still need them and you have enough money in your budget.

Do you want a good-paying job, or want to start a small business?

If you want help getting a good job or starting a small business the regional center will tell you to go to the Department of Rehabilitation first. It can take a long time for them to tell you yes or no. They could even say you're "too disabled" to help. If they can't help you the regional center will probably offer you a day program that doesn't pay anything.

With Self-Determination...

You don't have to go to the Department of Rehabilitation first or settle for a day program. You can use your money to go to college, or take a vocational class, or buy the things you will need to start a small business.

Would you be happier with a service you get now if they could do things the way you want?

Most of the people who help you are paid by the regional center. That means they have to do what they're told or they could get in trouble. The regional center is their "customer," not you.

With Self-Determination...

YOU are the “customer” because it’s YOUR money. You can keep a service you’re getting now and ask them to do things the way you want. For example, you could go three days a week instead of five, or you could ask them to help you at night or on weekends.

Common Questions

- ***What happens if I move to a different regional center?***

You can stay in SD and keep your budget if you move.

- ***What if I want to leave the Self-Determination Program?***

Self-Determination is voluntary. If you choose to leave the regional center must make sure you get the services you had before.

- ***If I leave Self-Determination by choice can I return?***

If you leave by choice you have to wait 12 months to return.

Common Questions, cont'd

- ***Do I have the same rights under Self-Determination?***

Yes. You have same rights under Self-Determination that you have now.

- ***What if the regional center says I can't be in Self-Determination and I don't agree?***

You can ask for a Fair Hearing. You have the right to appeal any decision you don't agree with.

- ***What if the regional center says my budget is too big and wants to give me less?***

You can ask for a Fair Hearing. You have the right to appeal if you don't think there's enough money in your budget.

When will Self-Determination Start?

- Before Self-Determination can start the state has to get special funding from the federal government called a “Medicaid Waiver.” That should start up sometime next year.
- After that, the regional centers will start telling people about Self-Determination and how to get it.
- For the first three years only 2,500 people across the state can get it. This is called a “Phase-In Period.”
- When the Phase-In Period is over it will be available to anyone who wants it.

What Can I Do Now?

- Let your service coordinator know you're interested in Self-Determination. If he or she doesn't know what it is, tell them to go to:
<http://www.dds.ca.gov/SDP/Index.cfm>
- Put a Self-Determination goal in your IPP: "I am interested in having Self-Determination when it is available."
- Learn as much as you can about Self-Determination.
- Sign up for official updates on the Department of Developmental Services website.
- Let us know if you are interested in serving on your regional center's Local Advisory Committee.

How to Sign-Up for Official Updates

Email: sdp@dds.ca.gov

Give them your name and the name of your regional center.

Questions?

Resources

- Disability Rights California Self-Determination Publication:
<http://www.disabilityrightsca.org/pubs/F07701.pdf>
- Senate Bill 468: http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/13-14/bill/sen/sb_0451-0500/sb_468_bill_20131009_chaptered.pdf
- State Council on Developmental Disabilities, Los Angeles Office:
<http://www.scdd.ca.gov/losangeles.htm>
- The Department of Developmental Services Self-Determination page:
<http://www.dds.ca.gov/SDP/Index.cfm>