

This handout is designed to provide information about developmental disability services available.

1. What words and terms do I need to know?

Activities of daily living (ADLs): Basic personal everyday activities that include bathing, dressing, transferring, toileting, mobility, and eating.

Division of Developmental Disabilities: Also known as DHHS-DD, this is the state division in charge of services for people with developmental disabilities. DHHS-DD decides who gets services, sets the rules about services, and pays for the services. DHHS-DD is a division of Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

DD Service Coordinator: Service Coordination staff that works directly with you to assist you in getting and managing the services and supports for which you qualify.

DD Services: DD (developmental disability) services help participants work and live in the community as independently as possible.

Eligible: Eligible means that DHHS-DD has received and reviewed your application for DD services and determined that you meet qualifications. Once eligible, DHHS-DD will tell you when funding is available so that you may begin services. In most cases, funding is not available until you reach age 21.

Formal supports: Supports outlined in individual's support plan (ISP). Typically supports are funded by DHHS-DD.

Habilitation: Assisting a person to improve and achieve developmental skills when impairments have delayed or blocked the initial learning of the skill. Most developmental disabilities services are habilitative, and therefore include teaching. Habilitation should be measurable.

Indirect staff supervision: Staff are available but not physically present.

Individual Support Plan: Also known as ISP, this is like the Individual Education Plan (IEP) you developed in high school. The ISP document identifies the supports, activities, and resources required for you to achieve and maintain personal goals, health, and safety. Your DD Coordinator helps you develop your ISP.

Ineligible: Ineligible, or not eligible, means that DHHS-DD has received and reviewed your application for DD services and determined that you do not meet qualifications.

Informal supports: Supports that do not have the oversight of DHHS-DD. These may be naturally occurring because they are provided by family or friends.

Legally responsible: A person who has a legal obligation under the provision of state law to care for you. This includes a parent (natural or adoptive) if you are a minor child, a spouse, or a legal guardian.

Participant: A person who is eligible and receives DD services.

Provider: Providers are approved to provide DD services. Providers can be either agency or independent.

- An Independent Provider is a person who provides services and is not associated with an agency. It may be someone you already know. A person who is legally responsible for you cannot be your independent provider. You are responsible for hiring, scheduling, training, and firing independent providers. The state has an approval process to ensure the provider meets requirements.

- An Agency Provider is an agency, organization, association, or other entity that completes a certification process with the Department of Health & Human Services Division of Public Health. An agency is responsible for hiring, firing, scheduling, training, and paying staff that work with you. There are many agency providers across the state.

Service Coordination: Medicaid targeted case management services provided by DHHS-DD. This is available to everyone eligible for DD services and is a monthly service. See “DD Service Coordinator.”

2. How do I know if I am eligible for DD services?

You must meet the Nebraska statutory definition of having a developmental disability, as defined in [Neb. Rev. Stat. § 83-1205](#):

Developmental disability shall mean a severe, chronic disability, including an intellectual disability, other than mental illness, which:

- (1) Is attributable to a mental or physical impairment unless the impairment is solely attributable to a severe emotional disturbance or persistent mental illness;
- (2) Is manifested before the age of twenty-two years;
- (3) Is likely to continue indefinitely;
- (4) Results in substantial functional limitations in one of each of the following areas of adaptive functioning:
 - (a) Conceptual skills, including language, literacy, money, time, number concepts, and self-direction;
 - (b) Social skills, including interpersonal skills, social responsibility, self-esteem, gullibility, wariness, social problem solving, and the ability to follow laws and rules and to avoid being victimized; and
 - (c) Practical skills, including activities of daily living, personal care, occupational skills, healthcare, mobility, and the capacity for independent living; and
- (5) Reflects the individual’s need for a combination and sequence of special, interdisciplinary, or generic services, individualized supports, or other forms of assistance that are of lifelong or extended duration and are individually planned and coordinated.

An individual from birth through the age of nine years inclusive who has a substantial developmental delay or specific congenital or acquired condition may be considered to have a developmental disability without meeting three or more of the major life activities described in subdivision (4) of this section if the individual, without services and support, has a high probability of meeting those criteria later in life.

You must submit an application to DHHS-DD for eligibility to be determined. The application is located at [ACCESSNebraska](#). Just fill out the application completely, print, and sign. To submit the application: mail to DD Eligibility, PO Box 98947, Lincoln NE 68509-8947; scan and email to DHHS.DDEligibility@nebraska.gov; or fax to (402) 742-8384. You can call the DD Central Office at (402) 471-8501 if you have questions or would like to request a paper application be mailed to you.

3. When should I contact DHHS-DD to find out about services?

It is best to submit an application by the time you reach age 16, but it is okay to do it at any time. You can apply for DD services at any age. When you apply for DD services when you are young, DHHS-DD will verify that you are still eligible at age 9 and again at age 18.

The application is located at [ACCESSNebraska](#). Just fill out the application completely, print, and sign. To submit the application: mail to DD Eligibility, PO Box 98947, Lincoln NE 68509-8947; scan and email to DHHS.DDEligibility@nebraska.gov; or fax to (402) 742-8384. You can call the DD Central Office at (402) 471-8501 if you have questions or would like to request a paper application be mailed to you.

4. When should a referral be made for DHHS-DD services?

There is no referral for DD services. You must submit an application. The application is located at [ACCESSNebraska](#). Just fill out the application completely, print, and sign. To submit the application: mail to DD Eligibility, PO Box 98947, Lincoln NE 68509-8947; scan and email to DHHS.DDEligibility@nebraska.gov; or fax to (402) 742-8384. You can call the DD Central Office at (402) 471-8501 if you have questions or would like to request a paper application be mailed to you. Although in most cases services cannot begin until age 21, applying at 16 is encouraged!

5. How do I get services?

First you must submit an application to DHHS-DD for eligibility to be determined. The application is located at [ACCESSNebraska](#). Just fill out the application completely, print, and sign. To submit the application: mail to DD Eligibility, PO Box 98947, Lincoln NE 68509-8947; scan and email to DHHS.DDEligibility@nebraska.gov; or fax to (402) 742-8384. You can call the DD Central Office at (402) 471-8501 if you have questions or would like to request a paper application be mailed to you.

Once you have graduated high school, are 21 years old, and have been determined eligible, you may receive funding for day services. Your DD coordinator will help you identify services to meet your needs.

6. Can my school help me apply for DD services?

Your application for DD services should come from you or your legal guardian. The application should include supporting documentation, some of which will come from your school. Documentation needed from your school includes IEPs, MDT Reports, and psychological evaluations.

7. If DHHS-DD says I am eligible, what services can I get?

Everyone gets a DD coordinator. When funding is available, you may then choose services to meet your needs. The [DD Service Directory](#) has a full list of services.

- Respite provides relief for your usual non-paid caregiver that you live with.
- Assistive Technology (AT) includes devices, controls, appliances, or other items that assist you:
 - Environmental Modification Assessment determines home or vehicle modifications to meet needs.
 - Home Modifications to your private residence help you stay safe and do things yourself.
 - Vehicle Modifications to your primary vehicle meet your needs and keep you safe.
 - Personal Emergency Response System (PERS) provides a device to call for help in an emergency.
- Day Services focus on finding employment and increasing skills needed to join the workforce. Services include prevocational services, supported employment, transitional services, habilitative workshops, and habilitative community inclusion.
- Residential Services occur in your own home, your family home, or a provider-operated location. Services help you learn independent living skills and access your community. Provider-operated locations include:
 - Extended Family Homes (EFH) where you live with a family.
 - Group Homes where you live with 3 or fewer people with disabilities.

- Centers for Developmentally Disabled (CDDs) homes where you live with 4 or more individuals with disabilities. These are licensed by Public Health.

8. What is the role of my DD coordinator while I am still in high school?

Your coordinator may attend your Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings to provide information and assist your team in planning for adult services. This will help your coordinator to get to know your interests and goals. Your coordinator can assist you with finding and applying for other services.

9. If DHHS-DD says I am ineligible, what can I do?

If you are found ineligible for services you are notified in writing. You can ask to speak with the person that reviewed your application. They can provide you with an explanation of why you were not eligible and provide some possible resources. You can reapply with new, existing, or additional information not included in previous application. You can also appeal the decision within 90 days of your notification. The form to appeal a decision can be found online on the [DHHS-DD homepage](#).

10. How can others help me prepare for adult services?

When you are between the ages of 16 and 21, you may be referred to as being in transition. You are transitioning from school-based resources to adult services. This takes joint planning and discussion. Your family can help you apply for DD services as early as possible so that eligibility may be determined. Once eligible, a service coordinator may join your school team in planning for transition to adult services.

During your last three years in the educational system, it is helpful to have a comprehensive cognitive and adaptive behavior evaluation completed. A comprehensive evaluation assists in developing person-centered services and will be used to get on a Medicaid waiver. Being on a waiver allows DHHS to claim federal matching dollars for some community-based DD services.

You should also work with [Nebraska VR](#) during your last few years in the educational system. They offer services to both students and adults who are actively seeking employment. DHHS-DD has a [brochure](#) that outlines the relationship between your school, Nebraska VR, and DD services. You can access [online](#) or request from your DD coordinator.

One difference to consider between educational and adult services is how staff work with you. Paraprofessionals may provide you one-to-one attention while in school. Adult services are not all provided on a one-to-one basis. If you are used to having a one-to-one paraprofessional and are considering a DD service that is not one-to-one, your team may want to talk about how to transition to a lower staffing ratio.

11. What will I have to do if I choose an independent provider?

When you choose to self-direct, you are responsible for participating in developing your individual support plan (ISP) and hiring, training, scheduling, supervising, and dismissing your independent provider.

Your DD coordinator tells you maximum service rates and helps you decide what you want to pay. Family or friends can help you manage services, but you are responsible. You must keep track of provider time and cost so you do not go over your annual budget. You must know when to talk to your coordinator about budget changes.

More information on your responsibilities is outlined in the [Participant Handbook for Self-Direction](#). This handbook is available online or from your DD coordinator.

12. What do other people like about using an independent provider?

Participants have indicated a high level of satisfaction with independent providers. They report increased choice, flexibility, and control over the services received. People like the ability to choose a person they know to be a provider. Some have hired a brother or sister who does not live with them, a friend, or a para-educator who worked in their school. They like that they can make a plan that meets their own individual schedule. They like that they can do fun things in their community with a one-to-one staff.

13. What do people not like about using an independent provider?

Some participants have trouble finding an independent provider. Others don't like being responsible for hiring, firing, and supervising their providers or completing the paperwork.

It is important that you have a good support system to help you be successful in working with independent providers. You can minimize these concerns by finding someone to help you and developing a back-up plan when things do not go as originally planned.

14. Who can I talk to about using an independent provider?

Other participants and families who work with independent providers may be willing to talk to you about their experiences. You can connect with others by talking to your DD coordinator, your local Arc chapter, or Nebraska PTI (Parent Training and Information) at: (800) 284-8520 or <http://pti-nebraska.org>.

Contact Information

Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services, Division of Developmental Disabilities
P.O. Box 98947, Lincoln, NE 68509-8947
(402) 471-8501 or toll-free (877) 667-6266
dhhs.developmentaldisabilities@nebraska.gov