

# The Self Empowered Life Funding (SELF) Waiver



Individuals can self-direct where and how services are provided.

A handbook about the newest waiver administered by the  
**Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities**  
**(DODD)**  
**Effective July 2012**

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John Kasich, Governor

John Martin, Director

# The SELF Waiver



As noted in  
the original  
waiver  
submission  
language ...

"The waiver  
will offer  
participant-  
direction of  
services and  
supports,  
and will  
embrace an  
individualized  
planning and  
budgeting  
approach."

20



## The Self Empowered Life Funding (SELF) waiver is unique because...

The SELF waiver is Ohio's first participant-directed waiver. Participant direction means individuals with developmental disabilities have authority to make decisions about their waiver services, and accept responsibility for taking a direct role in managing services.

### Who Is Eligible?

The SELF waiver is for people with developmental disabilities who are:

- Children (under 22 and not eligible for adult day support, integrated employment, supported employment-enclave, or vocational habilitation).
- Adults (age 22 or over, or under 22 and eligible for adult day support, integrated employment, supported employment-enclave, or vocational habilitation).
- Medicaid-eligible
- In need of an Intermediate Care Facility (ICF) Level of Care
- Willing and able to perform the duties associated with participant direction through exercising budget authority or employer authority for at least one waiver service. (Determined as part of a pre-screening tool.)
- Able to have their health and welfare needs met through the SELF waiver and other formal and informal supports
- In need of at least one SELF waiver service

**Note:** Medicaid State Plan Services must be accessed before any Medicaid waiver. A list of benefits that can be received through the Medicaid State Plan can be found at <http://jfs.ohio.gov/ohp/consumers/benefits.stm>.

### What Services are Covered?

SELF waiver services include:

- Support Brokerage
- Community Inclusion (Personal Assistance, Transportation)
- Integrated Employment
- Functional Behavioral Assessment
- Clinical/Therapeutic Intervention
- Participant-Directed Goods and Services
- Participant/Family Stability Assistance
- Remote Monitoring
- Remote Monitoring Equipment
- Residential Respite
- Community Respite
- Adult Day Supports
- Vocational Habilitation
- Supported Employment – Enclave
- Non-Medical Transportation

# The SELF Waiver -- Service Definitions

## What Are the Cost Caps ('Service Annual Limits') for Services?

SELF waiver limits include:

- Adults: Up to **\$40,000/year**
- Children: Up to **\$25,000/year**



SELF service limits include:

- Support Brokerage: **\$8,000**
- Functional Behavioral Assessment: **\$1,500**
- Remote Monitoring Equipment: **\$5,000**

Any combination of the following services **may not exceed \$25,000 annually:**

- Community Inclusion
- Residential Respite
- Community Respite
- Remote Monitoring

Other SELF waiver services have no annual service limitations other than the annual cost caps. However, Adult Day Waiver Services are subject to the Acuity Assessment Instrument cost limitations.

## Service Definitions

A **Support Broker** is considered an agent of the individual, and assists with responsibilities regarding participant direction. A Support Broker's duties include assisting the individual with negotiating rates for independent providers (where applicable), helping the individual to select providers, and assisting with communication/coordination between the individual, their Service and Support Administrator, and the Financial Management Services entity.

A Support Broker is chosen by the individual and may be paid or unpaid. All persons who wish to serve as a Support Broker, whether paid or unpaid, must successfully complete the Support Broker training established by DODD. In addition, a Support Broker must have at least an Associate Degree or two years of experience providing one-to-one support to someone with developmental disabilities.

Legal guardians, as well as family members who reside with the individual, may serve as Support Brokers -- but only on an unpaid basis. The following *cannot be* a Support Broker: County Boards; County Board employees; SELF waiver providers (and their employees); Contractors/related entities of SELF waiver providers. Whether paid or unpaid, before becoming a Support Broker, one must apply to become a Support Broker, using the DODD online 'Provider Certification Wizard.'

**Community Inclusion** provides supports that promote individuals' participation in their communities. The service includes opportunities and experiences that focus on socialization and/or therapeutic recreational activities, as well as personal growth in the home and/or community. Community Inclusion also can include peer support activities and organization of self-advocacy events.

In naming the SELF waiver, there was an opportunity for self-advocates to express themselves, have fun, air concerns, and be a part of something that had never been done before in Ohio's developmental disabilities community! And that was to take the bureaucracy out of naming a waiver.

-DODD Pipeline Newsletter,  
September 29, 2010





# The SELF Waiver -- More Service Definitions

## Service Definitions (cont. from p. 3)

The scope of the Community Inclusion service includes:

- Personal Assistance - in the home and/or the community with life activities.
- Transportation - including, but not limited to, transportation in a modified vehicle; transportation provided by operators of commercial vehicles, and mileage reimbursement for an amount up to the federal reimbursable rate.

" This SELF waiver is definitely the first Home and Community-Based Services waiver that doesn't sound like it was named by a bureaucrat. And that's because it was named by self advocates! ... We know you are excited about the options that will be made available to you with the way this proposed waiver is structured. Are you ready to make history?"

- OSDA officers and members discussing and naming the SELF waiver, early in its development.

**Integrated Employment** provides supports needed by a participant to acquire and maintain a job in the general workforce at or above the state minimum wage. The service also can provide supports needed by a person to acquire and maintain an internship or apprenticeship of limited duration. The service has two distinct components:

- Initial Supports to gain employment, and,
- Retention Supports to stay employed

Integrated Employment also may include supports for an individual to achieve self-employment through the operation of a business, but will not provide funding for 'start-up' or 'business operation' expenses.

**Functional Behavioral Assessment** helps to determine why an individual engages in challenging behavior, and how the individual's behavior relates to the environment. Functional Behavioral Assessments can provide information to identify:

- When the individual is most likely to demonstrate the behavior;
- Situations in which the behavior is least likely to occur

**Clinical/Therapeutic Intervention** includes services that assist unpaid caregivers and/or paid support staff in carrying out individual treatment/support plans; and are necessary to improve the individual's independence and inclusion in the community. The service includes:

- Consultation activities that are provided by professionals in psychology, counseling, and behavior management;
- Development of a home treatment/support plan, training and technical assistance to carry out the plan and delivery of services; and,
- Monitoring plan implementation.

**Participant-Directed Goods and Services** are services, equipment, or supplies not otherwise provided through the waiver or through the Medicaid State Plan, that address an identified need on the ISP. Examples might include purchase of a microwave to heat food rather than arranging for a staff person to prepare a meal, or installing ramps or guide bars to maintain the ability to remain in the home or community. Goods must assure the health and welfare of the individual, and must be the least costly alternative to reasonably meet identified needs. Because the goal of this service is to allow the participant to acquire services directly through vendors the general public uses for the same types of services, the waiver does not require that these services be purchased through a Medicaid-certified provider. However, the item or service purchased must:

- Decrease the need for other Medicaid services;
- Promote inclusion in the community; or,
- Increase the participant's safety in the home environment.

(see p. 5)

# The SELF Waiver -- More Service Definitions

## Service Definitions (cont. from p. 4)

**Participant/Family Stability Assistance** is a service that enables the individual to understand how best to be supported in their home, and/or to enhance a person's ability to direct their own services. The service can be utilized only by the individual or by family members who reside with the individual. Participant/Family Stability Assistance may include counseling to accommodate the participant's disability in the home, and to access supports offered in the community.



**Remote Monitoring** is the monitoring of individuals in their residences by staff, using one or more of the following systems: live video; live audio; motion sensing system; Radio Frequency Identification; web-based monitoring system; or, other device approved by DODD. The system shall include devices to engage live, two-way communication, with the individual being monitored. *The monitoring service must ensure health and safety*, and individuals in the residence must consent for the service to be used in the home, whether or not they directly receive the service, when the service includes audio and/or video monitoring.



**Remote Monitoring Equipment** is a separate service from Remote Monitoring, billed as a monthly amount.

### What is 'Participant-Direction'?

**Residential Respite** means services provided to individuals unable to care for themselves. Services are offered on a short-term (up to 90-days) basis due to the absence of, or need for relief of, those persons who normally provide care for the individual. Residential Respite can be provided in an Intermediate Care Facility (ICF); in a licensed facility; or in a residence if the provider is an agency provider.

Participant-direction means individuals have authority to make decisions about their waiver services and accept responsibility for taking a direct role in managing their services.

**Community Respite** means services provided to individuals unable to care for themselves. Services are offered on a short-term (up to 60-days) basis due to the absence of or need for relief of those persons who normally care for the individuals. Community respite shall be provided only outside of an individual's home in a camp, recreation center, or other setting where an organized community program/activity occurs.

**Adult Day Support** services are provided separately from any home or facility in which an individual resides, focus on non-work activities, and may include any of these five components:



- *Assessment* – May be formal or informal, for the purpose of developing an Individual Service Plan (ISP);
- *Personal Care* – Includes personal hygiene, eating, communication, mobility, toileting, and dressing;
- *Skill Reinforcement* – Includes implementing behavioral intervention plans, and help with the use of communication and mobility devices;
- *Training in Self Determination* – Includes developing self-advocacy skills, and acquiring skills that enable an individual to become more independent;
- *Recreation and Leisure* – Includes supports identified in the ISP that are therapeutic, and help develop and maintain social relationships and family contacts.



(see p. 6)



## The SELF Waiver -- More Service Definitions & Information

### Service Definitions (cont. from p. 5)

**Vocational Habilitation** services are designed to teach and reinforce concepts related to work, including responsibility, attendance, task completion, problem solving, social interaction, motor skill development, and safety.

**Supported Employment - Enclave** services are intensive, ongoing supports that help people to perform work in a regular employment setting. The service is provided to individuals who work as a team at a single worksite (community business or industry) with ongoing support provided by on-site staff.

**Note:** Supported Employment - Enclave does not include sheltered work or other vocational services furnished in segregated facilities.

### 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 developmental disabilities and their families.



**Non-Medical Transportation** is a service available to enable waiver participants to obtain transportation to access Adult Day Support, Vocational Habilitation, and Supported Employment - Enclave. Non-Medical Transportation is available in addition to transportation provided under the *Community Inclusion* service.

### How Can the Participant Direct Services for the SELF Waiver?

**Budget Authority** is a component of participant direction that allows individuals (or representatives) to allocate their budget to waiver services and to manage their budget accordingly. Individuals must choose Budget Authority for at least one of the applicable services they select, *with these exceptions*:

- Adult Day Supports
- Vocational Habilitation
- Supported Employment – Enclave
- Non-Medical Transportation

**Employer Authority** is a component of participant direction that allows individuals to hire, fire, direct, and manage their staff. It is important to note that recipients of Medicaid-funded services cannot receive waiver funds directly, and therefore there are two Employer Authority options:

- *Common Law Employer*: The individual is the legally responsible and liable employer of staff selected by the individual, meaning that the individual holds the liability for 'wrongful termination' lawsuits, and ensuring that taxes, unemployment, and workers' compensation are deducted.
- *Co-Employer*: The individual enters into an arrangement whereby a third party is the co-employer of staff selected by the individual. The co-employer performs necessary payroll functions as spelled out in the ISP. The individual directs the staff, and is considered the "managing employer." This also is known as the 'Agency with Choice' model.

(see p. 7)

## The SELF Waiver -- More Information

### Components of Participant Direction (cont. from p. 6)

**Note:** The **Employer Authority** option is not mandatory for an individual to select under this waiver, unless the individual chooses an independent provider for any of the following services:

- Support Brokerage
- Community Inclusion
- Participant/Family Stability Assistance
- Integrated Employment
- Participant-Directed Goods and Services

### How does a SELF waiver participant get help managing their own budget?

Help in managing one's own budget is through the use of **Financial Management Services** (FMS). The FMS' purpose is to assist individuals with managing their budgets and to withhold the necessary taxes to ensure that employment meets State and Federal requirements. The FMS is under contract with DODD.

The costs to use the FMS will be outside of the individual's budget. Claims for participant-directed goods and services, and independent providers (*exception: Clinical/Therapeutic Intervention*) will go to the FMS. The FMS will require an ISP and a budget approved by the County Board to pay claims accordingly.

☞ See Frequently-Asked Questions on Back Page ☞



### How does a SELF waiver participant direct their own services?

There are two components of Participant Direction in the SELF waiver.  
They are **Budget Authority**, and **Employer Authority**. (see p. 6)

(see p. 8)



# SELF Waiver ... Frequently-Asked Questions

## Who can help me get a SELF waiver?

To apply, contact your County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

## Is there a waiting list for the SELF waiver?

Your place on the waiting list is your earliest date of request for any of the DODD-administered waivers.

## What if I am denied enrollment or placement on the waiting list?

You may appeal by using your 'due process' rights.

## What if I transfer from an Individual Options (I.O.) waiver or Level One waiver, and then don't like being on the SELF waiver once I'm enrolled?

Once enrolled, you have 180 days from the date of enrollment on the SELF waiver to decide if you want to stay on the SELF waiver or return to your previous I. O. or Level One waiver.

If you have other questions about the SELF waiver you may call DODD Toll-Free in Ohio: (800) 617-6733



**Ohio** | Department of  
Developmental Disabilities

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waiver handbook is a publication of the  
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*This handbook is also available online at  
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