



Community First Choice Support Management Handout

With Community First Choice (CFC), you have the right to play an active role in the services and supports you get. This means you:

- Identify what you need
- Set your goals
- Plan your services

You have a voice in deciding:

- Who will provide your personal assistance and habilitation services
- What qualifications and training the provider must have
- How your services will be provided

Note: To help you learn about your choice of providers, and to make sure you are involved in deciding who provides your services, CFC offers Support Management training. This training teaches you how to select, manage and dismiss your service providers/attendants.

If you use services delivered by a provider agency, Support Management will help you work with your provider agency to select a service provider/attendant who is right for you -- someone who will help you to reach the goals in your service plan.

If you use the Consumer Directed Services option and you, not a provider agency, are the employer, Support Management gives you some extra tools for managing your service providers/attendants. To learn more, see the [Consumer Directed Services Employer Manual](#).

Selecting Service Providers/Attendants

So that you can help the provider agency in the interviewing and hiring process, you need to know what you want in a provider/attendant.

You need to be honest with yourself about what you need, what you like and what you don't like. You also need to think about how you communicate.

How Do You Communicate?

1. Do you like talking or listening?
2. Do you like to talk through a problem, or would you rather first think about it by yourself and then talk about it?
3. Do you like to do things on a whim, or do you like to have everything planned and mapped out?

You can get together with your provider agency and talk about your needs. It will help the provider agency get a better idea of what you are looking for in a service provider/attendant.

- Do you want someone who has had experience with a similar disability?
- Do you want someone who has at least a certain number of years of experience?
- Do you want someone with less experience who is trainable?

Tell your provider what kind of service provider/attendant you need.

Note: Keep in mind, though, that neither you nor the provider agency can turn down a service provider/attendant because of things like a person's race, age, religion, color, gender, sexual orientation, military duty, national origin, disability or veteran's status.

Managing Service Providers/Attendants

This can involve many different skills, like orientation, supervising, coaching, and evaluating. Managing helps to ensure you are getting the services you need to your satisfaction. By managing, you make sure your service providers/attendants understand your expectations.

Orientation

Your provider agency will do the orientation for your service provider/attendant. You have the right to be involved in the orientation so you can be sure your needs are going to be met.

Daily Instruction

Following these simple rules will help you and your attendant work well together and maintain a healthy working relationship:

- Explain clearly how you want your day organized.
- Set clear expectations for your service provider/attendant and for yourself.
- Don't ask the service provider/attendant to bend or break rules. You, too, must follow the rules.
- Offer solutions to problems as they come up. Don't put it off.
- Set aside time to discuss issues and offer praise, advice and feedback. Ask for the service provider's/attendant's feedback about you.
- Be available when the service provider/attendant needs to talk to you or ask you questions.

You may want to think about having a family member, former service provider/attendant or friend show your new service provider/attendant how to perform the tasks you need done.

Create a Healthy Work Setting

- Show appreciation.
- Be open and honest when you suggest ways to improve.
- Offer constructive criticism on the spot. Don't wait until you have reached a boiling point.
- Show respect.
- Ask that your service provider/attendant respect your privacy and property. Setting boundaries can lead to a healthier relationship over time and prevent your provider/attendant from taking advantage of you.
- Celebrate milestones, such as birthdays, work anniversaries, etc.

Offer Praise

- Compliment correct behavior:
 - Describe the correct/appropriate behavior.
 - Say why it helped or how it made you feel (good or better).
 - Say "thank you." Be sincere.

Offer Constructive Criticism

- Help the service provider/attendant understand how to perform the tasks correctly next time. Get help from the provider agency if you need it.
- Be quick to give feedback.
- Don't hang onto criticism for your provider/attendant. Don't include corrections from another incident or bring up things from the past.
- Maintain a calm tone to your voice. Don't be emotional.
- Make your point, but don't overstate it.
- Talk to your service provide attendant the way you would like to be talked to. Be respectful.

Coaching

Coaching is when you help your service provider/attendant learn what your priorities are, how to solve problems, how to make important decisions and how to communicate effectively. Coaching is valuable because it:

- Reduces turnover
- Eases conflict
- Focuses on problem solving

Important Aspects of Coaching

Keep it Between You Two: Make coaching private, never in front of others (unless you don't really have a choice).

Relationship Building: Show an interest in your service providers/attendants. Show you believe in their abilities. Build trust so your providers/attendants feel safe talking to you.

Clearly State Problems: Just talk about the facts. Don't lecture or judge.

Try to See Things as the Service Provider/Attendant Sees Them: Ask open-ended questions. Listen closely. Try to see your service provider's/attendant's side of the story.

Explain How You See Things: Calmly say how you feel about the situation. If you can, tell about a personal experience where you were in a similar situation and how you felt.

Solution Building: Try to pinpoint the cause of the problem. Brainstorm and come up with ways to solve the problem. Ask for ideas and talk about possible results.

Action Steps: Work together to make specific plans for working toward the solution. Set goals to help you get to the solution.

Follow-up: Check in with each other to see how things are going. Don't wait for problems to re-surface.

Evaluation

Each time a supervisor visits, as well as at a specific time each year, your service provider/attendant will be evaluated. Evaluation means deciding whether your service provider/attendant has learned to do the job well based on these three things:

1. Does the service provider/attendant remember how to do the tasks correctly?

- Do you have to repeat instructions to get the result you're looking for?
- Does the service provider/attendant ask you questions you've already answered?

2. Does the service provider/attendant work hard to get the job done?

- Do you have to ask the service provider/attendant to complete tasks?
- Does the service provider/attendant stay busy while on duty?
- Is the service provider/attendant completing tasks correctly and on time?

3. Does the service provider/attendant have good judgment?

- Has the service provider/attendant made any decisions that caused problems?
- Can the service provider/attendant be left alone to complete tasks or do you have to watch this person to be sure things are done right?

One of the most important reasons to evaluate performance is to improve it.

Dismissing Service Providers/Attendants

You will need to let your provider agency know if you decide to dismiss a service provider/attendant. Answering the following questions will help you get ready to share your decision with the provider agency.

Thinking Through Your Decision

You know how much time and effort you have spent telling your service/provider attendant how you like things done. Very likely, your provider agency also has spent time and effort, too. So, it's always a good idea to stop and think:

- Is this really a problem that can't be resolved?
- Am I concerned for my safety, health or property?
- Have there been repeated problems despite your attempts to correct them?
- Did you document the problems?
- Did the service provider/attendant know about your concerns?
- Did you tell your provider agency and case manager about the problems as they were happening?
- Is this a new situation, but one that makes you feel unsafe if you don't take immediate action?

Tell Your Provider Agency

Unless it is an emergency, it is best to tell the provider agency that you want to change service providers/attendants before you take any action. The provider agency will need time to find a replacement before letting your service provider/attendant go. Work with your provider agency to figure out the best approach to telling your service provider/attendant about your decision.

If you do not want to wait, you can ask the service provider/attendant to leave or not to come back, if you are comfortable doing so. Just be sure that you call your provider agency as soon as you can. If you have concerns for how the service provider/attendant will react, be sure and share them with the provider agency. You can ask to have a supervisor from the provider agency be with you when you break the news to your service provider/attendant. Be sure to report any misconduct to the provider agency.

It is important to tell your provider agency your reasons for dismissing a service provider/attendant so that they can find service providers/attendants that work better for you in the future.

Acknowledgement

By checking the “Yes” box below, I acknowledge I received written and verbal Support Management information, as indicated on my service plan.

Yes No

Signature

Date