

Choosing an Independent or Supported Living Service Provider

Use this worksheet when you visit a service provider. It has some questions to ask and things to look for. You can fill out the worksheet after, or even during, your visit -- or you can ask someone to help you fill it out. It will help you compare all of the providers you've visited so that you can make an informed decision -- that means a choice based on what you have seen and heard. Because you may visit several providers, print out several copies of this worksheet so that you can use a different one for each provider that you visit.

Service Provider:

Name of person interviewed:

Questions to ask the Service Provider:

- What do you like best about your job?

- How long have you worked here?

- Where is your office?

- What cities do you serve?

- How long have you worked with people with developmental disabilities?

- What kinds of jobs have you had?

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Questions about the services and supports:

- What kinds of services do you provide?

- To whom do you provide services?

- What kind of training do you offer?

- Does the person served get to interview the staff that will be working with him/her?

- Is there anyone you wouldn't provide services to?

- What types of living arrangements do your people have? Do they live alone, with roommates, with spouses or life-partners, with children?

- Do the people you served live in apartments or houses?

- How do you help connect people to be involved in their neighborhoods?

- If I need a roommate, will you help me find one?

- How do you handle issues with people with different lifestyles, such as smoking/non-smoking; early-morning/late-night people; straight/gay; casual/neat; etc.?

- What do your people do during the day? School? Work? Volunteer? What kinds of things do they do for fun?

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- How do you work with other support agencies (if people need help from more than one place)?

- With what kinds of natural supports like family members, friends, churches and clubs do you work with?

- How do you handle emergencies?

- What would happen if I got lost or missed my bus to my day program, would I call you to help me?

- What would happen if I didn't want some of the supports or services that you suggest?

- What happens if I don't like my assigned support person?

Here's a space to write down other things you noticed and would like to remember about the Service Provider:

When you've visited all of the Service Providers on your list, compare your worksheets. We hope this tool helps you in making a great choice!