



EMPLOYER HANDBOOK

New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Self Directed Option (SDO)

WELCOME!

WELCOME TO THE NEW JERSEY FISCAL/EMPLOYER AGENT MODEL OF SELF-DIRECTION!

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Introduction

Public Partnerships is the fiscal intermediary for individuals who choose to participate in the NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities Fiscal/Employer Agent model of self-direction. Public Partnerships acts as an agent in the administration of this DDD service option, managing payments to employees and vendors from funds allocated by DDD. Our two primary functions are to:

- Help you manage the financial responsibilities of being an employer

Provide exceptional customer service so that you have the guidance and support needed to successfully participate in this self-direction option

Founded in 1999 for the sole purpose of serving individuals enrolled in self-directed programs, Public Partnerships has supported thousands of people in achieving greater independence through the Fiscal/Employer Agent model of self-direction.

The Role of the Fiscal Intermediary

A fiscal intermediary provides administrative and billing support for individuals self-directing some or all of their services. As the fiscal intermediary for DDD's Fiscal/Employer Agent model of self-direction, Public Partnerships responsibilities are to:

- Supply and process the forms needed to complete employer enrollment and employee hiring
- Provide orientation and training on the Fiscal/Employer Agent model and Public Partnerships services
- Help you and your employees understand and comply with program rules
- Process and issue employee and vendor payments
- Ensure employer and employee taxes are appropriately withheld, filed and paid
- Provide exceptional and responsive customer service, including addressing any issues or concerns that may arise

Individual Referral to the Fiscal/Employer Agent Model of Self-Direction

Individuals and their families who are interested in self-directed services should discuss the available options with their support coordinator. Once you decide to participate in the Fiscal/Employer Agent model, your support coordinator initiates the enrollment process by submitting an **Individual Referral** to Public Partnerships by emailing an Individual Referral Form to njddd-sc@pcqus.com. The Individual Referral form is available on the Public Partnerships NJDDD website, under the Program Documents tab.

Upon receiving the referral, Public Partnerships will:

- Create a placeholder file for the individual in the BetterOnline web portal
- Call the individual/family to provide information about employer and employee enrollment

Employer Enrollment

In the Fiscal/Employer Agent model, the individual receiving services enrolls as the Employer of Record (EOR) or designates someone else to enroll as the employer (usually a trusted family member or friend). The EOR is responsible to recruit, hire, train, manage and, if necessary, dismiss employees. EOR information is obtained (a) when Public Partnerships does the initial telephone outreach following receipt of the referral, or (b) by calling Public Partnerships at a later time to add/change the employer. To enroll as the employer of record:

EMPLOYER provides the following to Public Partnerships:

- Individual's name and six-digit DDD ID number
- Employer's name, date of birth, social security number, physical address, email address, and phone number

PUBLIC PARTNERSHIPS creates the employer enrollment packet and sends it to the employer by email or USPS mail, depending on the employer's preference. The employer enrollment packet includes:

- Form SS-4: Application for federal Employee Identification Number
- Form 2678: Employer/Payer Appointment of Agent
- Form M-5008-R: Appointment of taxpayer Representative
- Workers' Compensation Questionnaire
- Broker of Record Authorization
- Authorized Representative Form (required if anyone other than the individual receiving services or employer of record will be signing employee timesheets or vendor invoices)

EMPLOYER completes enrollment documents and submits to Public Partnerships by email or fax. *To avoid delay, employer should submit all enrollment documents together.*

Employee Enrollment

The employer initiates an employee's enrollment either (a) when Public Partnerships does the initial telephone outreach following the referral, or (b) by calling Public Partnerships at a later time to add the employee. To enroll an employee:

EMPLOYER provides the following to Public Partnerships for each employee:

- Employee name, date of birth, social security number, physical address including County mailing address (if different), email address, and phone number

PUBLIC PARTNERSHIPS links the employee to the individual's profile in the BetterOnline web portal and creates a pre-populated employee enrollment packet. Public Partnerships sends the enrollment packet to the employee by email or USPS mail, depending on the employee's preference. The employee enrollment packet includes:

- Employee Information and Attestation Form
- Employee Hourly Wage Form
- Form I-9: Employment Eligibility Verification
- IRS Form W-4: Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate
- Form NJ-W4: Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate
- The Central Registry of Offenders Against Individuals with Developmental Disabilities Employee/Volunteer Consent for Employers to Check Registry
- Employee Certification Form Permission for Background Check and Release of Information
- New Jersey Universal Fingerprint Form
- Fair Labor Standards Act Live-In Exemption Form
- Difficulty of Care Letter
- Stephen Komninos' Law: Pre-Enrollment Drug Testing Form
- Child Abuse Record Information Form

EMPLOYEE completes enrollment documents and submits to Public Partnerships by email or fax. *To avoid delay, employee should submit all enrollment documents together and continuously monitor their email for registration information related to pre-employment drug testing and Child Abuse Record Information background checks.*

Employee Hourly Wage

You will need to negotiate/determine the hourly wage for each service the employee will provide. Be sure to discuss this with your support coordinator to ensure the hourly wage is within "reasonable and customary" limits and can be supported by the budget.

The **Employee Hourly Wage Form** must identify the hourly wage for each service the employee will provide on the corresponding service code line and must be included when the employee submits his/her enrollment documents to Public Partnerships.

Employee Screenings

New Jersey requires that all new employees to the Fiscal/Employer Agent model be screened for a criminal history, child abuse history, and use of controlled dangerous substances.

Employee Fingerprinting / Criminal History Record Information (CHRI) Check

All new employees must be fingerprinted and must consent to and pass a Criminal History Information Record (CHRI) Check, conducted by the NJ State Police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Following the instructions on the NJ Universal Fingerprinting Form that is included in the employee enrollment packet, your employee must:

1. **Schedule a fingerprinting appointment as soon as possible** at an IdentGO/Morpho Trust location in the State of New Jersey.
2. **Bring the NJ Universal Fingerprinting Form and government-issued identification** (e.g., NJ driver's license) to the fingerprinting appointment.
 - After fingerprinting is completed, an IdentGO/Morpho Trust receipt with a Process Control Number (PCN) and Date/Time of Printing will be given to the employee—employee should save this receipt until enrollment is confirmed.
3. **Call Public Partnerships to provide the PCN and Date/Time of Printing.**
 - A delay in providing this important information to Public Partnerships may cause a significant delay in the employee enrollment process.
 - Public Partnerships cannot retrieve background check results without the PCN and Date/Time of Printing as it appears on the receipt.

Employee Child Abuse Record Information (CARI) Check

All new employees must consent to and pass a Child Abuse Record Information (CARI) Check by completing and submitting the CARI Check Application online. The employee will receive an email from support@njportal.com inviting them to complete the application online. This submission is required to move forward with employment. The employee will be required to provide a complete list of their children and their dates of birth (if applicable) along with a complete address history dating to 1980 (if applicable). The CARI Check, conducted by the NJ Department of Children and Families, will identify any employee history of proven child abuse or neglect. Because the CARI Check process can take up to 30 days to be completed, you can hire an employee *conditionally* pending receipt of the CARI Check results. If the results identify a record of child abuse, the employee will be terminated.

Employee Drug Testing

All new employees must consent to and pass a drug test for controlled dangerous substances. You cannot hire an employee who will not consent to or does not pass a drug test. The NJ Department of Human Services covers the cost of the drug test, which is a urine screening for the following controlled dangerous substances:

- Marijuana
- Cocaine
- Opiates, including heroin, codeine/morphine, and prescribed semi-synthetic opioids
- Amphetamines/Methamphetamines
- Phencyclidine (PCP)

An employee who tests positive for any controlled dangerous substance will be given the opportunity to speak with a Quest Diagnostics Medical Review Officer within 24 hours to discuss any relevant, legitimate medical explanations, such as a current prescription. You cannot hire the employee during this review process.

Drug Testing Process

During employee enrollment, Public Partnerships will contact **i3screen**—the drug-testing vendor contracted by the NJ Department of Human Services—to submit a request for i3screen to email a **Pre-Enrollment Drug Testing Order** to your employee. This is what will happen next:

1. Your employee will receive an email from i3screen with a Pre-Enrollment Drug Testing Order, notifying him/her to **schedule a drug test through the i3screen web portal** (link is included in the email).
 - All drug tests are conducted at a Quest Diagnostics Center that provides this service.
2. **Your employee has two business days to schedule and complete the drug test.**
 - It is important that your employee check email often during enrollment, as failure to keep the scheduled appointment or complete the drug test within the required two business days may be considered a refusal and your employee's enrollment may be suspended.
3. Your employee will be asked to **provide a urine sample on the day of the drug test**, which will be sent to a regional testing center.

The NJ Department of Human Services receives negative drug test results within 48 hours. It may take longer to receive a positive test result. In the event of a positive test result, a Quest Diagnostics Medical Review Officer will contact your employee to discuss the result. Failure to respond to the Medical Review Officer within 24 hours will be considered a non-contact positive and your employee's enrollment may be suspended.

The Division of Developmental Disabilities through Public Partnerships will suspend your employee's enrollment if his/her urine sample tests positive, and Public Partnerships will notify you of the suspension within five business days.

Your employee is subject to random quarterly drug testing during their time of employment. If selected, this notification is emailed directly to the employee.

Central Registry Check

All new employees are required to consent to and pass a check of the NJ Department of Human Services Central Registry of Offenders against Individuals with Developmental Disabilities. An offender identified on the Central Registry cannot be hired/enrolled as an employee in the Fiscal/Employer Agent model of self-direction.

Employee Trainings

DDD requires all new employees in the Fiscal/Employer Agent model to complete a series of trainings, many of which the employee will complete online, through the College of Direct Support. Public Partnerships emails the College of Direct Support login credentials to the employee after enrollment is completed. The following trainings, except those under "When applicable", are required for all employees.

Within six months of hire

- DDD System Mandatory Training Bundle:
 - DDD Life Threatening Emergencies (Danielle's Law)
 - DDD Shifting Expectations: Changes in Perception, Life Experience and Services
 - Prevention of Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation: Modules 1, 3, 4, 5, and 7
 - DDD Stephen Komninos' Law Training
- Prevention of Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation Practicum (on-site competency assessment after completing Prevention of Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation modules)
- Individual/Family-Developed Orientation (length, content determined by the individual/family)

Within six months of hire and every two years

- CPR Certification (recertification every two years)
- Standard First Aid Certification (recertification every two years)

When applicable, new employees must also complete Medication Training, Behavioral Supports Training and/or Specialized Training within six months of hire.

For additional details about DDD-mandated trainings, please refer to DDD's Supports Program or Community Care Program policy manuals.

Employee Earned Sick Leave

Since the NJ Earned Sick Leave Law went into effect in October 2018, all employees in the Fiscal/Employer Agent model of self-direction earn sick leave, as follows:

- Sick leave is earned at a rate of one hour of sick leave for every 30 hours worked, per employer, per benefit year (calendar year from January 1 to December 31)
- The maximum sick leave an employee can earn in a benefit year is 40 hours per employer
- An employee can carry up to 40 hours of sick leave earned in a benefit year into the next benefit year
- An employee can use up to 40 hours of earned sick leave, per employer, per benefit year, in 15-minute increments
- The option to be paid for unused sick leave at the end of a benefit year is not available in New Jersey's Fiscal/Employer Agent model of self-direction

Public Partnerships maintains a record of hours worked, sick leave earned, and sick leave used by each employee in the BetterOnline web portal.

Workers' Compensation

Employers in the Fiscal/Employer Agent model of self-direction are required to carry worker's compensation insurance. Public Partnerships purchases the workers' compensation policy on behalf of the employer, and the annual cost of the policy is deducted once per year from the budget. The workers' compensation policy is in effect for one year and covers all an employer's employees. Public Partnerships renews the policy annually for as long as the employer continues to employ DDD-funded employees.

PLEASE NOTE:

New Jersey law prohibits employees from working/providing services for an individual unless and until a workers' compensation insurance policy is in place.

When Can an Employee Start Working/Providing Services?

An employee can begin working/providing services once **ALL** of the following steps are confirmed as being completed:

- Employer of record enrollment (confirmed by Public Partnerships)
- Employee enrollment (confirmed by Public Partnerships)
- Billable rate is calculated by Public Partnerships and emailed to your support coordinator (confirmed by Public Partnerships and support coordinator)
- Service that will be provided by the employee is added to the individual's service plan OR employee is added to an existing service (confirmed by support coordinator)
- Plan is approved (confirmed by support coordinator)
- To support hiring of the first employee, PPL will initiate an Orientation call to the Employer of Record to inform and educate the EOR on the timesheet submission process and training requirements. It is the responsibility of the Employer of Record to share this information with all of their employees.

After you and your employee complete the enrollment process, Public Partnerships uses the employee hourly wage, as provided on the Wage Form in the enrollment packet, to calculate the billable rate ([hourly wage + mark-up for employer taxes = billable rate](#)). Public Partnerships emails the billable rate to your support coordinator, who then

adds it to the service in your plan. Once the authorization is approved, it is the responsibility of the Support Coordinator to respond to the e-mail and advise PPL of the start date on the authorization.

After the plan is approved, DDD electronically transmits the service authorization to Public Partnerships. Public Partnerships cannot issue a payment to the employee until this transmission is received and uploaded.

Employer Orientation

Public Partnerships initiates an Orientation call to the employer once the employer and their first employee have fully enrolled and an authorization has been received from the Support Coordinator. Public Partnerships sends the following information to the employer by email or USPS mail, depending on the employer's preference, upon completion of the orientation call :

- Consumer & Employee(s) Public Partnerships identification numbers
- Payroll Schedule
- Paper Timesheet and Instructions
- Electronic Timesheet Instructions
- BetterOnline Registration Instructions
- Employee Training Certification Form & Instructions

PLEASE NOTE:

*Workers' compensation coverage start date supersedes service or employee start date.
Employees cannot be compensated with state or federal funds for work conducted before or between effective worker's compensation coverage.*

Getting Your Employee Paid!

After your support coordinator notifies you that your employee can start working, the next step is getting your employee paid!

Employee Timesheets and Service Documentation

Employee timesheets are submitted electronically through the **BetterOnline** web portal or the **Time4Care** mobile application. For employers or employees who are unable to submit timesheets electronically, paper timesheets can be faxed in to Public Partnerships. Electronic submission is the preferred method.

Employees are paid:

- every two weeks
- based on hours submitted according to the payroll schedule
- only for services that are authorized in the service plan

Employees should record on a daily basis the hours they work, rather than waiting until the end of the pay-period.

Employees should record on a daily basis notes documenting the services provided. There are fields available for entering service documentation on electronically submitted timesheets. Paper timesheets will be revised to include an area for service documentation.

Employee Payments

As a fiscal intermediary with the State of New Jersey, Public Partnerships is responsible for issuing employee payments and withholding, filing and paying employer and employee taxes. You do not need to make any payments yourself to your employee or to any federal or state tax departments. Public Partnerships issues these payments on your behalf.

Payments are issued to employees through one of these options:

- Direct deposit to the employee's checking/savings account (preferred)
- ADP ALine Debit Card™ (if the employee does not have a bank account)
- Paper check

Information about these options are included in the employee enrollment packet. Employees can request to change their payment method at any time by calling Public Partnerships Customer Service or completing a new Direct Deposit form.

Employee Taxes

Your employee is required to pay all applicable federal, state and local taxes on earned wages. Public Partnerships deducts employee taxes from your employee's pay based on the tax withholding information provided by your employee at the time of enrollment. Public Partnerships also distributes W-2 Wage Earnings reports to employees annually.

Overtime

DDD's Fiscal/Employer Agent model of self-direction does not permit employees to work more than 40 hours per work across all services provided to an individual and does not permit overtime pay.

Employees who live with you may qualify for the federal Fair Labor Standards Act Live-In Exemption from Premium Overtime Pay. Your employee cannot work more than 40 hours per week and your employee can never work more hours than are authorized in the service plan.

Can I Hire Additional Employees?

Yes. Once you are enrolled with Public Partnerships as an employer, you can recruit and hire new employees if/when the need arises.

To hire a new employee, call Public Partnerships Customer Service at 844.842.5891. You must be ready to provide the new employee's name, date of birth, social security number, physical address, mailing address (if different), email address, and phone number. The new employee enrollment will follow the same steps identified in **Employee Enrollment**.

Can I Change an Employee's Hourly Wage?

Yes. You need to discuss any employee wage change with your support coordinator first, to make sure the new wage falls within "reasonable and customary" limits and the budget can support it. You also need to discuss the wage change with your employee. To change the hourly wage of an existing employee:

- Employer completes the Employee Hourly Wage Change Form (available on the Public Partnerships NJDDD website, under the Program Documents tab).
- Employer and employee both sign the form
- Employer submits the form to Public Partnerships
- Public Partnerships processes the form and calculates the new billable rate (new hourly wage + mark-up for employer taxes = new billable rate)
- Public Partnerships emails the billable rate to your support coordinator, who uses it to change or add a service

It usually takes 5-8 days for Public Partnerships to process an Employee Hourly Wage Change Form after it is received.

PLEASE NOTE:

The new employee hourly wage is not in effect until the support coordinator revises the plan to include the new billable rate, and the plan is approved.

How to Recruit / Hire Employees

An employee is a person you recruit and hire to provide DDD-funded services that meet your needs and have been authorized in your service plan. As the employer, you are responsible to:

- Write a job description
- Interview candidates and decide which one can meet your needs and matches your expectations
- Determine the employee's hourly wage
- Determine the employee's work schedule
- Explain to the employee how you want the services provided and what your expectations are (including the consequences if expectations are not met)
- Make sure your employee completes all necessary paperwork, background checks and drug screening requirements to be hired
- Review and approve timesheets according to the Public Partnerships payroll schedule
- Assess your employee's job performance and provide feedback to your employee
- Make sure no employee works more than 40 hours per week across all the services they are providing for you (unless Public Partnerships has a valid live-in exemption form on file)
- Contact Public Partnerships Customer Service Department by phone at 1.844.842.5891 or by email at njddd-cs@pcgus.com if you have any questions or concerns

Writing a Job Description

Before you start recruiting for an employee, it is a good idea to write a job description. This helps potential employees know whether they will be able to perform the job and meet your expectations.

You can also use the job description to help you train your employee, monitor their job performance and make sure they are doing the things you hired them to do.

A job description should include:

- A summary of the basic duties and tasks you expect an employee to perform, and information about how you want the employee to perform them
- The qualifications you want an employee to have
- The days and times you want the employee to work

Discuss the job description with your employee to make sure they understand and agree to the duties and tasks you expect them to perform. Have your employee sign a copy of the job description and keep it in your records.

If your needs change, you can update the job description. Be sure to review the job description with your employee any time you make a change to it, and at least once a year.

Employee Qualifications

It is a good idea to review a candidate's qualifications before you hire him/her. Employees must:

- Be 18 years of age or older
- Not be a parent/step-parent, spouse or guardian of the individual
- Report to work on time, and contact you if they are unable to report to work on time
- Agree to perform the duties and tasks in the job description, and as identified in the individual's service plan
- Understand that the terms of employment are at-will, and termination of employment is the right of the individual/employer

Interviewing Job Candidates

A face-to-face interview with a job candidate is always a good idea. It gives the candidate an opportunity to get to know you and learn directly from you about the job requirements and expectations. If a face-to-face interview is not possible, you can conduct a telephone interview.

Schedule a day and time that works for you and the job candidate. If the interview will take place in your home, be sure to provide directions. If you prefer not to conduct the interview in your home, you can find another location that works for both of you. Be sure you and the candidate have each other's telephone numbers, in case either of you needs to make a change to the scheduled interview.

It is helpful to prepare some questions for the candidate before the interview. Below are some examples of interview questions:

- Can you tell me about yourself and your work experience?
- What do you like the most and least about work you have done in the past?
- Do you have training or experience supporting someone with similar needs?
- Are you prompt and reliable?
- How much notice would you need if I wanted to increase your hours or change your schedule?
- Are you able to provide assistance with lifts or transfers using appropriate equipment?
- Can you think quickly on your feet? Give me some examples.
- How do you handle differences of opinion with an employer? Can you give me an example?
- Do you have reliable transportation?
- Describe your strengths.
- Describe your weaknesses.
- What questions do you have for me about the job?

Deciding How Much to Pay an Employee

You determine what your employee's hourly wage will be, as long as the wage is within "reasonable and customary" limits and can be supported by the budget. Here are some things to think about when deciding how much to pay an employee:

- How much experience does the employee have in similar jobs?
- When do you need the employee to work? Employees may expect a higher wage for late nights or weekends.
- What kinds of tasks do you expect the employee to perform? Are they typical daily living tasks or do they require a higher skill level to meet your needs?

Making an Offer of Employment

After you have finished interviewing candidates and decided which one you want to hire, call the candidate to make an offer of employment. If the candidate accepts your offer, contact Public Partnerships Customer Service to have an employee enrollment packet sent to the employee. Your employee cannot begin working/providing services for you until (1) Public Partnerships confirms completion of employee enrollment, (2) your support coordinator adds the service to the plan, and (3) DDD/Support Coordination Agency approves the plan.

Abuse, Neglect or Exploitation of an Individual with an Intellectual or Development Disability

Abuse, neglect or exploitation of an individual with an intellectual or developmental disability is against the law. To report suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation of an individual with an intellectual or developmental disability, call the DDD Hotline 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at **800.832.9173 (press 1)**. Calls may be made by any person having reasonable cause to believe that an individual with an intellectual or developmental disability has been a victim of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Complaints and Grievance Process

Public Partnerships strives to provide the best fiscal intermediary services possible. If someone is dissatisfied with our services at any time, an individual, employer of record, authorized representative or employee can file an official complaint or grievance.

Filing a Complaint

An official complaint is a statement of dissatisfaction with services provided by Public Partnerships.

How do I file a Complaint?

To file a complaint, you can either (a) call Public Partnerships Customer Service at 844.842.5891 and inform the representative you wish to file a complaint, or (b) complete and submit the Complaint Form (available on the Public Partnerships NJDDD website, under the Program Documents tab).

What happens next and when?

Public Partnerships will document your complaint and a representative from the Public Partnerships Program Management team will contact you within two business days with a response/resolution. If necessary, the complaint will be further reviewed and you will be contacted within seven business days with a final response/resolution.

What if I am not satisfied with the response/resolution?

If you are not satisfied with the response/resolution provided by Public Partnerships, you can file a Grievance (see below).

Filing a Grievance

A grievance is a concern or disagreement with your services that Public Partnerships was not able to address to your satisfaction during the complaint process.

How do I file a Grievance?

To file a grievance, you can either a) call Public Partnerships Customer Service at 844.842.5891 and inform the representative you wish to file a grievance, or (b) complete and submit the Grievance Form (available on the Public Partnerships NJDDD website, under the Program Documents tab).

What happens next and when?

Public Partnerships will review your grievance, work on a resolution, and then notify you of the resolution.

Employer/Employee Forms and Information

The forms mentioned in this handbook, as well as additional information and resources for you and your employees, are available on the Public Partnerships NJDDD website, under the Program Documents tab: www.publicpartnerships.com/programs/newjersey/ddd/index.html

Contact Information

CONTACT METHOD	PURPOSE
<p>1-844-842-5891 (phone: English) 1-844-842-5892 (phone: Spanish) njddd-cs@pcgus.com (email: all)</p> <p>Customer Service Hours Monday to Friday – 8:00 am to 6:00 p.m. EST</p>	<p>General inquiries related to PPL services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BetterOnline Portal registration • Login assistance or training • Understanding timesheets, payments or Earnings Statement • Payment status • Enrollment support and status • Authorization details received by PPL
<p>NJDDD-ADMIN@pcgus.com</p>	<p>Escalations from the Division Receives Complaint and Appeals forms</p>
<p>njddd-sc@pcgus.com</p>	<p>Receives Referral Form only</p>
<p>1-844-561-5978 (fax) njddd@pcgus.com (email)</p>	<p>Receives program related documents only</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrollment forms • Rate change forms • Verification of employment • Vendor invoices
<p>njddd-training@pcgus.com</p>	<p>Inquiries related to trainings requirements</p>
<p>1-844-231-4793 (fax)</p>	<p>Receives Paper Timesheets</p>