

Questions & Answers

The New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) is moving its fiscal intermediary services to Public Partnerships starting in June 2017. DDD will also be moving from the Agency with Choice model, where the fiscal intermediary is the employer of record, to the Fiscal/Employer Agent Model, where the individual is the employer of record and the fiscal intermediary performs related administrative functions. This Q&A document, which will be updated routinely, addresses issues specific to how self-direction will work with Public Partnerships. You can learn more about the transition timeline, informational and enrollment sessions, training, and much more by clicking [here](#).

ABOUT SELF-DIRECTION

What is self-direction?

Self-direction gives an individual maximum control over their support services. This means that the individual chooses the services they receive, when they receive them, and who provides them. There are two models for self-direction:

- Agency with Choice (AwC)
- Fiscal/Employer Agent (F/EA)

What is the Agency with Choice Model?

In this model, the agency serves as the employer of record. This model was used by Easter Seals; they would hire, manage, and pay the Self-Directed Employee.

What is the Fiscal/Employer Agent Model?

In this model, the individual receiving services is the employer of record. The individual is responsible for hiring, dismissing, training, and managing the Self-Directed Employee. Public Partnerships is responsible for setting up the individual's employer account, paying the Self-Directed Employee, and withholding, depositing, and filing employer and employee taxes on the individual's behalf. **The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) has selected the Fiscal/Employer Agent Model. Public Partnerships will replace Easter Seals as the payment agent.**

What are the benefits of the Division's Fiscal/Employer Agent Model?

- The Fiscal/Employer Agent Model gives the individual greater choice, control, and freedom over their life, because the individual can:
 - Hire a family member (except for a parent, legal guardian, or spouse)
 - Hire a family member who lives at their home
 - Choose to pay the Self-Directed Employee a higher wage

ABOUT THE TRANSITION TO PUBLIC PARTNERSHIPS

Who is Public Partnerships?

Public Partnerships is a fiscal intermediary that is partnering with the Division of Developmental Disabilities to provide guidance and to help support individuals and Self-Directed Employee transition to the Fiscal/Employer Agency model. Public Partnerships has been serving as a fiscal intermediary for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities for almost two decades in more than 25 states. In New Jersey, we have served individuals enrolled in Division of Aging programs for over 10 years.

What will Public Partnerships do as the fiscal intermediary for Self-Directed Employees in the Fiscal/Employer Agent Model?

As the fiscal intermediary for the Self-Directed Employee Option, Public Partnerships is responsible for the following services:

- Setting up the individual as an employer of record
- Paying the Self-Directed Employee on the individual's behalf
- Reporting and filing employer and employee taxes
- Paying vendors for goods and services
- Reimbursing individuals for approved goods and services

What online services does Public Partnerships provide?

- Individuals and Self-Directed Employees can submit and approve timesheets
- Individuals can submit for reimbursement of goods and service
- Individuals can track their individual budget expenditures
- Individuals and Self-Directed Employees can enroll online

When will Public Partnerships replace Easter Seals as the fiscal intermediary?

The Public Partnerships enrollment period for individuals and Self-Directed Employees will be 5/1/17 through 6/15/17. Public Partnerships will take over payments during the month of June 2017.

How do Individuals enroll with Public Partnerships?

There are two ways to enroll with Public Partnerships:

- Online – Individuals can use Public Partnerships' online enrollment system
- Over the Phone – Individuals can call Public Partnerships to provide enrollment information and email/fax the documentation back to Public Partnerships for processing

ABOUT WORKING WITH SELF-DIRECTED EMPLOYEES

What trainings do Self-Directed Employees (“SDEs”) need to complete?

The Division of Developmental Disabilities requires that all Self-Directed Employees and approved back-ups complete trainings within six months of being re-hired through the Fiscal/Employer Agent Model. Below is an outline of these trainings:

- DDD System Mandatory Training Bundle (DDD Shifting Expectations; Preventing Abuse/Neglect/Exploitation plus on-site competency assessment; Danielle's Law)
- CPR/First Aid (certification every 2 years)
- Medication training and on-site competency assessment (only if SDE is administering meds)
- Behavior Plan training (only if individual has a behavior plan)
- Specialized training, as applicable (individual/family to decide length and topics and if needed)

All of the above trainings will be paid for by the Division and are required only once per hired Self-Directed Employee, with the exception of CPR/First Aid, which must be recertified every two years.

Who will pay for Self-Directed Employee required trainings?

The Division of Developmental Disabilities will fund the cost of the trainings and will pay Self-Directed Employees for their time to complete the trainings.

My Self-Directed Employee works full-time and receives health benefits from Easter Seals. What will happen to those health benefits?

While many workers currently employed as Self-Directed Employees work part-time, some full-time employees received health benefits from Easter Seals. As with any change from one employer to another, health and other benefits from a former employer are discontinued. The SDE wage can be increased, budget allowing, to accommodate those with a benefits change.

What happens if my Self-Directed Employee is injured while on the job?

Public Partnerships provides Worker’s Compensation through your budget at an annual cost of \$92.00, regardless of the number of Self-Directed Employees you hire.

What if I need to hire a Self-Directed Employee before the transition to Public Partnerships?

If you need to employ a new worker before May 1, the application and paperwork will be processed by Easter Seals. Beginning May 1, new Self-Directed Employee applications will be processed by Public Partnerships. Your Self-Directed Employee, who will be employed through Easter Seals prior to May 1, will need to complete a new application with Public Partnerships to continue providing services after June 1.

Where can I learn more?

Click [here](#) to learn more and check back for timelines and information on Participant Orientation and Training sessions, Support Coordinator training sessions, and Enrollment sessions as they become available. Public Partnerships will update this webpage frequently throughout the transition, so be sure to check in routinely for updates.