



Front Door and Self-Directed Services

A Guide for Students in Transition

The Front Door

OPWDD's Front Door is a new initiative that helps promote awareness of service options for individuals and families.

OPWDD services are not available to everyone. Individuals must be eligible based on their need for support. Front Door staff can guide individuals through the steps of determining eligibility. Once an individual is found eligible for services, Front Door staff will do an assessment that helps us to learn about the individual's strengths and needs. Next, an individual will work with a service provider to develop a service plan. OPWDD staff review the plan and approve the needed services. Front Door staff can assist young adults as they prepare to transition from public or residential schools to the OPWDD service system. Examples of adult supports individuals may need include housing supports, education, employment training and supports, and crisis prevention and response.

For more information on eligibility criteria or to apply for services, please visit our website:
http://www.opwdd.ny.gov/opwdd_services_supports/eligibility

Self-Direction

An individual who self-directs chooses the supports and services that are best for him or her, and determines how those services are provided, and by whom. The individual also chooses to employ his/her own staff and/or manage his/her own budget.

Budget Authority: An individual chooses his or her services and may choose to change supports, services, and service providers. Additionally, he or she manages how the funds within their OPWDD-approved individualized service budget are spent.

Employer Authority: An individual has decision-making authority over staff and/or the organizations providing his or her supports and

services. An individual chooses the staff he or she works with, including specifying staff qualifications and recruiting workers. Individuals can also set schedules, determine staff duties, supervise staff, and evaluate staff performance.

An adult can self-direct if he or she is capable of making informed choices and willing to manage self-directed services. In some cases, self-directing individuals select a family member or other identified adult representative to assist them in making choices or to co-manage supports and services. An adult who is not capable of making informed choices can self-direct if a family member or other identified adult representative assists him/her to make choices or to co-manage supports and services. A minor child can also self-direct with an identified adult representative who is a parent, legal guardian, family member, or other identified adult.

Self-directed services can include employment, housing, supports for living at home with family or in the community, and other community supports. Individuals self-direct and manage their supports and services using:

Consolidated Supports and Services (CSS): A plan and budget that includes all necessary services and supports including staffing, staff training, transportation, generic community supports and activities and, in some cases, a housing subsidy. The amount of funding allowed in each budget is based on a Personal Resource Allocation (PRA) and available resources. For more information, please see http://www.opwdd.ny.gov/opwdd_services_supports/supports_for_independent_and_family_living/consolidated_supports_and_services

Self-Directed Community Habilitation: A service that teaches individuals important life skills and allows an individual to select, schedule, and manage their staff and activities.

The New York Self-Determination Coalition website can give you more information on self-determination and self-direction: <http://nyselfd.org/>

For more information about OPWDD's Front Door, or how to make self direction part of your transition plan, e-mail student.transition@opwdd.ny.gov or contact your OPWDD transition coordinator at:

OPWDD's Regional Offices

Region 1

Western NY - (716) 517- 2360

Counties served: Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauque, Erie, Genesee, Niagara, and Orleans

Finger Lakes - (585) 241-5763

Counties served: Chemung, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Seneca, Schuyler, Steuben, Wayne, Wyoming, and Yates

Region 2

Broome - (607) 771-7784 x130

Counties served: Broome, Chenango, Delaware, Otsego, Tioga, and Tompkins

Central NY - (315) 425-5370

Counties served: Cayuga, Cortland, Herkimer, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, and Oswego

Sunmount - (518) 359-7734

Counties served: Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Jefferson, and St. Lawrence

Region 3

Capital District - (518) 370-8043

Counties served: Albany, Fulton, Montgomery, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Schoharie, Warren, and Washington

Taconic - (845) 473-5050 x 169

Counties served: Columbia, Dutchess, Greene, Putnam, and Ulster

Hudson Valley - (845) 947-6017

Counties served: Orange, Rockland, Sullivan, and Westchester

Region 4

Bernard Fineson - (718) 217-6739

Counties served: Queens

Brooklyn - (718) 642-8566

Counties served: Kings

Metro Bronx - (718) 430-0748

Counties served: Bronx

Metro Manhattan - (212) 229-3037

Counties served: Manhattan

Staten Island - (718) 982-1925

Counties served: Richmond

Region 5

Long Island - (631) 434-6160

Counties served: Nassau and Suffolk