

Consideration in Provider Selection:

This document is provided as a guide for persons with disabilities, their families, and advocates. Questions can be selected from the list as they are applicable and important. Some questions will make more sense when interviewing an agency provider and others will logically apply to a limited (individual) provider.

Staff / Provider Questions:

- What qualifications must direct service people have? What training is required? What kind of screening is done of new staff?
- What is the average length of time that direct service people have worked for your agency; or how long have you been in business?
- Where is your office located? Is it a long distance call for me or do you have an 800 number?
- How will I get help if there is an emergency or if a substitute support person is needed?
- How often will a supervisor visit the direct service worker? How often will I be asked how I feel about the direct service person?
- How long have you or have your agency been provided supported living services?
- What types of disabilities do people you serve have?
- Do you have any references and/or consumer satisfaction surveys?
- What is your philosophy about supported living?
- What past accomplishments is your organization, or are you as a limited provider, proud of?
- Do people who receive services have any say in how you do your business? If so, how?
- What policy/procedure do you have in case there is a conflict between you and I?
- What happens if I don't like my staff person?
- What happens if I am physically or verbally hurt by them?
- What other agencies do you collaborate with such as Social Security or BVR?
- What is your policy or position on including family members and taking direction from them?
- Do you currently have any citations or other restrictions on your agency?
- Will your direct service person come from the same town where I live?
- Do I get to interview and decide who my direct service people are?
- Will you or the direct service worker be on duty on holidays, days off, or when I'm sick.
- What say do I have in establishing staff schedules?
- Describe how I can be sure when someone comes to work with me that they care about me?

Service Questions:

Many of the questions in this section assume that you have already established an Individual Service Plan with the county supported living service coordinator. If you haven't, these questions may give you some new idea about what you can expect.

Money

If it is my ISP how will you:

- Help me with my money and bills?
- Protect my money from being stolen by staff?
- Help me budget for food, clothes, entertainment?
- Make sure I get the most from all my benefits such as food stamps, Social Security, Medicaid? Help me work with other agencies to do so?
- Cooperate with or act as my payee?

Will you:

- Make financial records open to audit by someone I choose?
- Give me a written contract if I am expected to pay for any of your services?

Community Access

If it is my ISP how will you :

- Help me expand by community activities?
- Help me get to know people in my neighborhood and community?
- Help me out if other housemates don't want to, or can't, go also?
- Handle situations where each house member must be in different places at the same time?
- Participate in community activities with me if I ask?

Health Care

If it is my ISP will you:

- Help with my medications, including filling prescriptions and understand what I am taking?
- Make sure that staff, including substitutes, are trained to meet my medical needs?
- Help me make and get to medical appointments when I need and want them?

Other

- Do I get to choose and change my own health care people?
- Will you go with me I ask, and help me understand what the doctor says?

Housekeeping

If it is my ISP how will you:

- Help me plan menus and shop for food?
- Help me clean, given that everyone's idea of "clean" is different?
- Help me cook?
- Help me do laundry?

Transportation

- Who are you suggesting as my housemates? Why? Do I get to choose who to live with?
- Who decides where I live?
- Who has keys to my house?
- May I live alone?

General

- What happens when my staff person can't come; how will the substitute know what to do?
- Who decides whether I need "behavior modification"; and who decides what it will be?
- What happens if my legal guardian and I disagree?
- How will you help me to get more experience with making good decisions for myself?
- What are my rights?
- What are my responsibilities?
- What can I do if I'm dissatisfied with you or your service?