

# Assessing Whether a Person is in the Most Integrated Day or Vocational Setting Appropriate to His or Her Needs & Supporting Informed Choice

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## Key Considerations:

- Opportunities for community integration/ inclusion should be available in all day/ vocational settings; however the most integrated setting available is always the setting that enables the person to interact with persons without disabilities (who are not paid staff) to the greatest extent possible.
- Assessing whether a person is in the most integrated day or vocational setting appropriate to his or her needs starts with a determination of whether the most integrated setting available is a setting where the person's support needs can be effectively met by the Direct Support Professional (DSP) providing support to the person and/ or by natural supports.
- Goals for participation in services should always be driven by the person's aspirations, preferences and choices; but it is important to recognize that many goals can be addressed in integrated, community settings. The particular nature of a person's goal(s) will determine which integrated community settings should be used, and those settings should be considered appropriate to the person's needs if the person's support needs can be met by the DSP accompanying the person, or natural supports available to the person, in these settings.
- The person's ability to rely on natural supports should be viewed as a positive outcome of receiving services in integrated community settings. Even partial reliance on natural supports, supplemented by paid DSP supports, should be viewed as a desirable outcome for the person. Other desirable outcomes should reflect what is important to/for the person, with a particular emphasis on identifying the person's goals related to the following:
  - [For working-age individuals] Employment (or career exploration if the person does not yet have an employment goal)
  - [For retirement-age individuals] Meaningful and fulfilling retirement activities
  - Developing new relationships, new sources of natural supports, and maintaining existing relationships that have a positive impact on the person's life
  - Meaningful community involvement, participation in community activities and membership opportunities
  - Self-determination, independence and choice-making
  - Contributing to the local community in a meaningful way
- Partner with families and guardians and have open communication and dialogue with regard to evaluating the most integrated settings in which the person's goals can be pursued and the person's support needs can be met.

- Providers of services, regardless of the settings in which these services are delivered, should be expected and encouraged to build and utilize natural supports whenever possible.
- Changes to a person's desired goals and outcomes, services and providers listed in the ISP should occur throughout the year as needed. Consideration of the most integrated settings in which the person's needs can be met should occur whenever changes to the ISP are made.
- Ensure and document informed choice in three distinct areas:
  - The types of supports to be included in the ISP. Note: Supports should be appropriate in relation to the person's goals. Consult the service definition and expected outcomes of the service as noted in the definition to determine if a particular service is appropriate to offer as an option, given the person's goals.
  - Once specific supports to be included in the ISP are identified, the person should be assisted to make an informed choice about which provider of the service they wish to use. See below for guidance for ensuring and facilitating informed choice of provider.
  - Finally, determine with the selected provider whether the person's support needs can be met if the service is delivered in a fully integrated, community setting where the person will have the opportunity to interact with persons without disabilities to the greatest extent possible. If the person's support needs cannot be met in a fully integrated setting, document the reasons. Then consider and identify the next most integrated setting where the person's support needs can be met, document this in the plan, and request authorization of the service in this setting.
- Changes to a person's desired services and providers listed in the ISP should occur throughout the year as needed. Informed choice should be offered and supported whenever changes to the ISP are made.

**DOJ Guidance:** *Public entities must take affirmative steps to remedy this history of segregation and prejudice in order to ensure that individuals have an opportunity to make an informed choice. Such steps include providing information about the benefits of integrated settings; facilitating visits or other experiences in such settings; and offering opportunities to meet with other individuals with disabilities who are living, working and receiving services in integrated settings, with their families, and with community providers. Public entities also must make reasonable efforts to identify and address any concerns or objections raised by the individual or another relevant decision-maker.*

<b>Review of the Person’s Active Treatment, Day Habilitation, Individualized Day Habilitation, Employment Readiness, and/ or Supported Employment Goals</b>		
<b>Questions</b>	<b>Recommended Tools</b>	<b>ISP Documentation</b>
<p><u>For each goal, ask:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is the goal SMARTER? (Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-Bound, Evaluated and Revised)</li> <li>2. Does the goal reflect the person’s interests and preferences, as documented in the PCT and Discovery tools?</li> <li>3. Are activities to implement the goal taking place, at least some of the time, in the community and with people who do not have disabilities?</li> <li>4. If no: Could the activities take place, at least some of the time, in the community and with people who do not have disabilities?</li> <li>5. If no, is this the person’s choice? If it’s the person’s choice, what alternatives has the person explored? Has that exploration included experiences in other setting and opportunities to assess these other experiences?</li> <li>6. If no, what are the barriers?</li> <li>7. What would need to change so that the person could spend more time in in the community and with people who do not have disabilities?</li> </ol>	<p>PCT Tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Important to/important for</li> <li>• Learning log</li> <li>• Good day /bad day</li> <li>• Communication Chart</li> <li>• Working/ Not Working</li> <li>• 4+1</li> <li>• Like and Admire</li> <li>• Rituals and Routines</li> <li>• Matching</li> <li>• Relationship Map</li> <li>• Any other PCT tool that has already been completed with the person</li> </ul> <p>Positive Personal Profile Job Search/Community Participation Plan Initial and/or On-going Community Integration Plan (for people attending IDS)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise any goals that are not SMARTER and/or do not reflect the person’s interests and preferences to establish SMARTER goals related to aspirations for additional community integration/ inclusion for day/vocational and residential settings.</li> <li>• Opportunities are identified for community participation and engagement based on individuals interests and goals and specific activities are described.</li> <li>• Plan indicates how engagement in these activities further community integration and inclusion.</li> <li>• If the goal cannot be implemented or fully implemented in an integrated community setting at this time, document why not.</li> <li>• ISP goals address issues that have been identified as barriers to community integration and inclusion. If barriers need to be addressed, remember to balance “important to and important for”. Create and document an action plan.</li> <li>• Information continues to be presented to the person and his or her support team about opportunities to increase community integration and inclusion at least on an annual basis.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refer to Individualized Day Supports (IDS) talking points as needed.</li> <li>• For people in IDS, review the Initial or Ongoing Community Integration Plan to ensure that the goals match the person's interests and preferences as reflected in PCT tools, the PPP, and the Job Search/ Community Participation Plan.</li> <li>• Consider using additional or updating PCT and Discovery tools.</li> <li>• If further information is needed for the person to make an informed choice, additional opportunities for explorations are included in the ISP goals.</li> <li>• Identify desired community integration/ inclusion outcomes.</li> <li>• Identify action steps leading to increased community integration/ inclusion.</li> <li>• Document informed choice by indicating how the person has made this decision (see next section).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Action Plan</b></p> <p>If the person might consider IDS or other ways to increase community integration and inclusion, but identifies barriers, the focus should be on addressing those barriers and developing or updating the PCT and Discovery tools to help the person and his or her support team identify potential next steps on a pathway to community integration. The ISP should include goal(s) that support the person's pathway to community integration such as exploration of interests, opportunities to develop new relationships, meaningful community involvement, community membership and contribution and self-determination. Consider a referral to IDS and/or natural supports. Barriers are identified and addressed in ISP goals. Amend ISP as needed.</p>		

Offering Informed Choice of Supports and of Providers		
Questions	Recommended Tools	Action Plan and ISP Documentation
<p><b><u>Informed Choice of Supports:</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are there community/ natural supports available that may be an alternative to paid supports?</li> <li>2. Does the person have experience with these other support options?</li> <li>3. Does the person understand how the services may be different from what he or she is currently doing?</li> <li>4. If yes, what experiences has the person had and what was his/her response? For example:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Has the person talked with people who have used the various service options and what was his/her response?</li> <li>b. Has the person had an opportunity to visit and observe different types of programs and what was his/her response?</li> <li>c. Has the person had an opportunity to debrief with his or her support team and what was his/her response?</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<p><b>PCT Tools:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Important to/Important for</li> <li>• Good Day /Bad Day</li> <li>• Working/ Not Working</li> <li>• 4+1</li> <li>• Matching</li> <li>• Relationship Map</li> </ul> <p>Positive Personal Profile Job Search/Community Participation Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document how the person has made the choice of supports/ service AND the choice of provider. Describe, for example, if the person went on site visits or talked with friends who recommended the service or provider. Include the process and the person’s choice.</li> <li>• If the answer to #8 is yes, develop one or more goals so that the person has experiences that enable him/her to make an informed choice.</li> <li>• If the person refuses to explore alternate services and/or providers, offer a referral to Quality Trust for further exploration.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Informed Choice of Providers:</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Does the person have experience with other providers?</li> <li>6. If yes, has the person talked with other provider organizations and what was his/her response?</li> <li>7. Has the person had an opportunity to visit and observe different programs and what was his/her response?</li> <li>8. If no, is the person willing to talk to or visit other provider organizations and what was his/her response?</li> <li>9. Has the person had an opportunity to debrief with his or her support team and what was his/her response?</li> </ol>		
<p><b>Action Plan:</b> If the person has only paid supports, consider a goal to increase the person’s independence. If the person struggled to make an informed choice, consider goals to increase their experiences with other paid, unpaid, publicly-funded and community support options and a goal to increase self-determination. Barriers are identified and addressed in ISP goals. Amend ISP as needed.</p>		

