



M. Jodi Rell
Governor

State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services

DDS

Peter H. O'Meara
Commissioner

Kathryn du Pree
Deputy Commissioner

July 30, 2009

Dear Consumer or Family Member,

The Department of Developmental Services (DDS), along with other state agencies, is making adjustments to our organizational structure and to programs. We have always tried to be cost effective and efficient. Now, as the state faces economic challenges, it is more critical for each agency to do so without sacrificing the quality of our services.

Recently, 395 DDS employees took advantage of the Retirement Incentive Program. We, like all other state agencies, will not be able to refill most of these positions because of the cost savings needed to help balance the budget. We have worked on many initiatives to streamline the administrative work we do but need to make other changes to service delivery to continue to safely support our consumers.

The majority of our positions and service costs are in direct service, primarily residential services in the community, regional centers and Southbury Training School. Since we cannot refill the positions that are vacant in these settings, we have decided to have some of the Community Living Arrangements (CLAs) and Individual Home Supports that are directly operated by DDS shift to private agencies to operate in the future. This shift continues a 20-year trend in the service delivery system and replicates a project we implemented in 2003 to convert 30 CLAs.

You are receiving this letter because you or your family member lives in one of the homes that will be affected by this decision. Hopefully, you received a call from someone in the region who explained this and answered your questions. If not, or if you have other questions, please call _____ at _____.

It's important for you to know the following information about this change:

- You or your family member will stay in the home he or she currently lives in with the same residents.
- The funding for the room and board costs that are paid by the state will continue.
- Consumers and family members will be part of the selection committee that will choose the provider to operate the home in the future.
- Providers will be selected from qualified private agencies whose staff have experience operating residential services. In Connecticut, 79% of the residential settings that support people with intellectual disabilities are run by private agencies licensed and funded by DDS.
- All private residential settings are licensed by DDS using the same standards that are used in the public sector.
- The employment or day program you or your family member participates in will stay the same.
- DDS will continue to provide case management services through the region.

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- No permanent DDS employee will lose his or her job. The permanent employees working in the home will stay in your or your family member's home until the transition is completed and then be deployed to another state-operated residence.
- DDS will hire trained temporary employees to fill the vacancies in your or your family member's home to assure full coverage over the next few months. These temporary employees may be hired by the private agency that is granted the contract to operate the home.

This process will take six to nine months. Private providers will respond to a Request for Proposals (RFP) and be selected by a committee of regional staff, consumers and family members. You will be kept informed through the year of our progress. While the department has determined that the Programmatic Administrative Review (PAR) process is not applicable to the conversion initiative, Regional directors will be offering group informational sessions to address consumer, guardian and family concerns. A meeting will be scheduled in the near future by your regional director to provide you with more detailed information and to answer your questions.

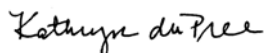
Please be advised that DDS will handle the transition carefully with the best interests of the residents in mind. It will result in a savings because of the cost differences between public and private services. This savings is important to help the economic challenges currently facing Connecticut.

We appreciate your patience and your support of this initiative. Please call your contact person if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Peter H. O'Meara, Commissioner



Kathryn du Pree, Deputy Commissioner

cc: DDS Regional Directors
DDS Case Managers and Planning and Support Team Members
DDS Public Assistant Regional Directors