



A NEW OPTION! SELF-DETERMINATION

Governor Brown signed Self-Determination into law, so everyone receiving regional center services will be able to choose Self-Determination, if they want.

What is Self Determination? It gives you the chance to choose the services and supports that help you have the kind of life you want!

How can I get Self-Determination? Self-Determination will not start until California gets federal approval, maybe in 2015. Once it starts, it will be phased in slowly for three years, and then opened to everyone. If you want Self-Determination, tell your service coordinator or case manager.

How does it work? Right now the regional center spends money to buy services for you. With Self-Determination, you get to use that money to buy the services you want. First, you would develop a person-centered plan. Then you develop a budget that says how you would spend the money to make your plan work. Your person-centered plan and your budget must be approved by your Individual Program Plan (IPP) team.

Will I get money from my Regional Center? You would not get to hold the money yourself. Your regional center would give the money to what is called a Financial Management Service (FMS). The FMS is a little like a bank, because it holds the money for you and pays the bills for services you purchase. You can choose the FMS you want.

How much money would I get? You would get as much as the regional center paid for your services in the last year. If your needs change, you could ask for more money; for example, if you are completing high school or moving out of your family's home; or if you need more support because your disability changes. But you can never get more money than the regional center would spend on you for regular services.

What can I buy with my Self-Determination money? With your individual budget you could choose to buy some or all of your current services, or you could choose to buy something different. It's your choice! For example, you might decide that you want to spend some of your budget on technology that would make your life better, or you could pay a neighbor to drive you to your job, or you could pay for child care so you can take a college class.

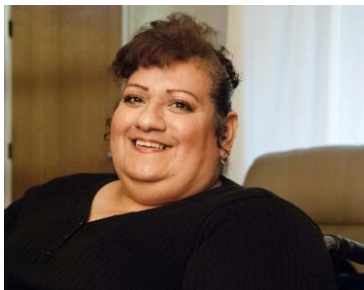
Who can I buy services from? You can buy services and supports from any provider agency, community business, or person who can help you meet your goals. You don't have to use an agency, because you could hire and manage your own workers. The FMS would help you by paying the bills for those services and paying your workers.

There is a lot to do to make a plan, a budget, and manage my own services. Is there someone who can help me? With Self-Determination, you get to choose the people who help you. You can ask friends and family to help you plan and budget, help you manage workers, help you make connections in your community, and solve problems. With your Self-Determination money, you could pay a facilitator to help you identify your needs, develop a plan to meet those needs, find services, and be your advocate. You get to choose your FMS. With Self-Determination, you can get help from people you trust.

What if I don't want Self-Determination? Self-Determination is voluntary. No one has to do it!

SELF DETERMINATION STORIES

Since 1998, California has had small Self-Determination pilot projects for 140 people to see how it would work. Here is what self determination has been like for some of the people in the pilot project:



Maria Marquez, Los Angeles: "Through Self-Determination I learned to use a computer, and then I bought a computer, because that would help me get a job. I used my Self-Determination budget to pay for childcare, so I could volunteer on local advocacy boards, network and get to know people. That helped me get a job at East LA Regional Center. "



Cheryl, Davis, and Rick Wood, Mammoth Lakes: "Before Self-Determination, regional center supported us with diapers for our son. We had to get them from the vendored agency, they were made in Vietnam and of poor quality. We had respite vouchers, but we had to pay people close to minimum wage. Then we could bill once a month, and they would get paid three weeks later. We couldn't retain people to do the work.

"Under Self-Determination, we sit down with the regional center once a year to approve our budget. We can pay personal attendants enough to retain them, and they don't have to wait a month to get paid. We could purchase brand name, quality diapers at Costco, for a quarter of the cost. The regional center used to spend \$45,000 per year on Davis. Under Self-Determination we spend only \$25,000 per year. Yet within this budget we are able to arrange the supports we need. "



Willie West, Ukiah. "Self-Determination gives you control of your services. The regional center still looks over you. But it puts you in control. Self-Determination helped me to grow up and live out on my own; manage my own services and lead a full life. I help out at the race track and the Area Board, and help friends with local businesses. It keeps me pretty busy."



Mei Leckenby and Carol Takhar, Alhambra. "Our sons have grown up with Self-Determination. We find that with Self-Determination, we can think outside the box. Self-Determination is truly person centered, because everything we purchase is all about James and William."



Self-determination is not a particular program or service. It's a way to get support to have the kind of life you want.

For more information on Self Determination, contact the State Council on Developmental Disabilities at 916-322-8481