

## **Final Step: Notify the CDDO**

In order to make your initial service provider choice, (Targeted Case Management, Day Services, or Residential Services), contact the Cottonwood CDDO.

You may also change service providers at any time.

**Tel: (785) 840-1632**

**Fax: (785) 576-1124**

## **Your Single Point of Entry**

With one phone call to the Cottonwood CDDO, you can obtain information about services for people with developmental disabilities available in Douglas and Jefferson Counties.

You can also request eligibility information, application forms, and descriptive brochures on any affiliated organization from this centralized information source. By establishing this single point of contact for service inquiries we hope to make it easier for individuals to get the information they need, promptly and accurately!

# Guide to Choosing Service Providers

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Questions to consider  
when interviewing prospective  
home & community based  
service providers

For more information & resources  
visit us online at:

[www.cddo.cwood.org](http://www.cddo.cwood.org)

Cottonwood CDDO  
2801 W. 31st street  
Lawrence, KS 66047



**Cottonwood CDDO**  
Serving Douglas & Jefferson Counties

# Choosing Service Providers

Finding the right service provider can be difficult; you want a provider that will help you and your family members with a genuine, person-centered attitude. You and your family have the ultimate power to choose your services. This guide provides some pointers on how to help gauge which provider will work best for you.

When shopping for services, there are some things that may help you move through the process:

- Know what to ask before you go. If you take time to prepare questions, you can direct the session in order to get them answered.
- Take notes. This will allow you to refer back and compare between service providers
- Take a trusted friend or family member with you. A second set of ears can provide perspective when making a decision.

## Scheduling an appointment

Sometimes a simple call with questions will give you a sense if a provider will meet your needs. In a preliminary chat you may ask:

- What services do you offer?
- Will there be bilingual staff or sign language interpreters if I need them?
- Will my services be covered by insurance, government funding (such as Medicare or Medicaid), or other resources?

## How do I feel when I walk in?

- Was I greeted in a friendly manner?
- Did they see me in a reasonable timeframe?
- Are the facilities well maintained, clean & safe?

## What are your services?

- What is the mission of the organization? And how long have they been in business?
- How long does it take to begin services? Is there a waiting list?
- How will I or my family participate in planning services?
- What are my rights & responsibilities? What will this cost me?
- If I need other assistance, is it available? Who can I contact if I have more questions?
- Is the organization accredited? If yes, by what accrediting organization, and for how long?
- How many people do they support?
- How many Direct Support Professionals are employed there? What is the rate of turnover?
- What type of supervisory support is provided for direct support professionals?
- How are complaints / concerns / grievances handled?
- How do they assess the satisfaction of the people receiving services? Or the guardians?
- What are their policies regarding reporting of possible abuse, neglect, or exploitation?

## Reflections, Now what?

Now you get to make decisions about what service you would like. This is a personal choice that involves you and your family members. As you look back on your notes and consider the opinions of friends or family members who accompanied you, there are some final questions that are relevant as you decide to participate in services:

- Overall, was the provider courteous, helpful, and respectful?
- Did they answer my questions?
- If they couldn't answer my questions, did they refer me to somebody who could, or offer to follow up with answers?
- If they didn't provide all the services I need, did they refer me to an organization that could, or offer to coordinate with another organization?
- Are hours and location convenient for me?
- Would I be comfortable receiving services here?
- Did staff members seem interested in me and the services I need?

## Visit the CDDO Website

There you will find more information on choosing services as well as the most up-to-date listing of affiliated service Providers in Douglas and Jefferson Counties.

## Targeted Case Management

### Responsibilities:

- How responsive are your TCMs? If I call and leave a message how soon could I expect a return call?
- How familiar are your TCMs with IDEA, the IEP process, and the local school system?
- Can the TCM help with Social Security benefit issues, Medicare/Medicaid issues, and guardianship issues?
- What is the TCMs experience with accessing different types of funding and community resources?
- How does the Person-Centered-Plan Process work? Is the TCM open to other methods?
- How flexible is the TCM in supporting families who want to be very active in the lives of their son or daughter? Or for those who want less involvement?
- What specific types of training does the TCM receive?
- How does the TCM stay informed of all the options available in the community? And how do they keep up with changes in the "System" / "Funding" situation?
- What on-going communication can I expect?
- What are my options for contacting the TCM after office hours?

### Special Circumstances:

- If the Case Manager I choose is unavailable for an extended period of time will someone else cover for them?
- What happens if the Case Manager leaves the agency?

### Agency-Related Questions:

- What is the average number of people on a TCM caseload? What is the staff turnover rate?
- What individuals do you primarily serve? (kids, adults, elderly, specific disabilities)
- Do I get to choose the TCM or does the agency assign someone? Can I meet with the TCMs before making a choice?
- How is this service paid for?
- Is there a waiting list for TCM services?
- Do you have any references, either families, other non-profit agencies, or community resources that I could talk to about the quality of the agency?
- What sort of things is a TCM prohibited from doing?

## Financial Management Services

### Agency Related Questions:

- Do you help me find workers? Or am I solely responsible for finding them?
- What is the rate of pay for individuals that go through your agency?
- How often do workers get paid, and how do they receive their checks?
- Do workers receive a raise? If yes, How often and what is the criteria?
- Do you provide benefits (sick leave, vacation) for workers?
- What happens if my worker does not show up?
- Do you take out taxes?

### Agency-Related Questions (continued):

- Do you reimburse workers for transportation costs or is that my responsibility?
- How much notice do you require if I want to change payroll agents?
- Is there paperwork involved in getting started, and if so what is the procedure?
- Can you tell me something about your agency that I may not have asked you about?
- Please explain what you offer for Information & Assistance services.
- Do you provide any training to workers or is that solely my responsibility?
- What types of activities / duties can the worker perform?

### Background Questions:

- Do you complete background checks for the workers that I chose?
- What kinds of background checks do you run?
- How are background checks paid for?
- Do you notify me about the results of the background checks?

### Authenticare Questions:

- Do you provide training to workers for clocking in and out through Authenticare?
- What happens if a worker made a mistake while clocking in or out?
- What happens if a worker forgot to clock in or out?
- Do you have any requirements for how soon you must be notified of a problem with clocking in or out?

## Residential Supports Provider

### Staffing-Related Questions:

- What initial training does the staff receive prior to working with individuals? What ongoing training does staff receive and how often?
- How does the agency determine the amount of staffing needed for a person? What if life changes require more staffing?

### House/Apartment Questions:

- Who is responsible for maintenance (i.e. carpets, roofing, plumbing, etc.)
- How are roommates chosen? What happens if roommates don't want to live together anymore?
- Does housing cost include other potential costs? (utilities, food, phone, cable, lawn care)
- What am I responsible for providing? (bed, phone, dishes, linens, furniture)
- Ask for a tour of the various living arrangements (group homes, apartments)
- What means, if any, of transportation are available and how is it paid for? What qualifications do you require of drivers?

### Behavioral / Medical Concerns:

- What is the policy regarding management of behaviors and use of psychotropic medications?
- What does the behavior management committee do and who is on it?
- How are medical issues, including medications managed? Who schedules Doctor's appointments?
- Does provider have access to proper adaptive equipment needed? (i.e. lift, or accessible van with lift)

### Agency-Related Questions:

- How will agency notify me of medication, or lifestyle changes? or Suspected Abuse, neglect, or exploitation?
- How will bills be paid and by whom?
- How will personal money & receipts for expenditures be managed? What safeguards are in place to prevent mismanagement?
- How does the agency determine the quality of the services provided?
- If the agency becomes my payee, will there be an additional fee?
- What is the agency's emergency management plan?
- How will the agency accommodate involvement in the community and how often? Who pays for these activities?

## Day Supports Provider

### Day Opportunities:

- What Day Activity options does the agency provide?
- Does the agency provide work where you earn money while learning work skills? How and when are individuals paid?
- Does the work area have proper equipment for work and training?
- How much support/training is available for getting and keeping a community job?
- How will the agency accommodate involvement in the community and how often? Who pays for these activities?

### Staffing-Related Questions:

- What initial training does the staff receive prior to working with individuals? What ongoing training does staff receive and how often?
- How does the agency determine the amount of staffing needed for a person? What if life changes require more staffing?
- What means, if any, of transportation are available and how is it paid for? What qualifications do you require of drivers?

### Agency-Related Questions:

- How will agency notify me of medication, or lifestyle changes? or Suspected Abuse, neglect, or exploitation?
- What am I responsible to pay for? (activities, medications, briefs, etc...)
- How does the agency determine the quality of the services provided?
- What is the agency's emergency management plan?

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