

**CHILDREN’S DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES  
FAMILY DIRECTED SERVICES  
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

LAST UPDATE 11.21.2016

Questions	Answer
<b>What are Family Directed Services?</b>	Family Directed Services is a program for children with developmental disabilities which allows families to use their child’s individualized Medicaid budget (based on their child’s strengths and assessed needs) to purchase and direct the services and supports their child will receive.
<b>What are the advantages of Family Directed Services?</b>	By choosing Family Directed Services, families can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose who they hire and the qualifications they will require</li> <li>• Supervise and direct their child’s support workers</li> <li>• Decide when and where they get the services and supports that meet the needs of their child</li> <li>• Decide the type and amount of services and supports they will purchase</li> <li>• Manage an individualized budget based on their child’s assessed needs</li> </ul>
<b>Is the budget for the Family Directed Services program the same as what would be awarded in the Traditional model?</b>	Most children’s budgets will be the same regardless of which model they choose, Family Directed Services model or the Traditional model. The only exception is children who have been awarded the Act Early Waiver (\$29,300). The Act Early Waiver is only accessible through the Traditional model.
<b>Are there informational sessions scheduled to provide parents additional details about the program?</b>	Yes, Parent Information Meetings are scheduled once per month or can be arranged with a case coordinator. Parents interested in Family Directed Services should contact their Traditional Case Manager or local regional office. A list of regional contacts can be found at <a href="http://www.familydirected.dhw.idaho.gov">www.familydirected.dhw.idaho.gov</a>

Questions	Answer
<b>Are there guidelines available of what type of goods and services can be funded by the program?</b>	Yes, please contact the case coordinator in your area for a copy of the "Guide to Family Directed Service's Allowable Expenses" for detailed information of fundable and non-fundable goods and services. A list of regional contacts can be found at <a href="http://www.familydirected.dhw.idaho.gov">www.familydirected.dhw.idaho.gov</a>
<b>Can a child living with a family member or grandparent participate in Family Directed services?</b>	The child must live with a parent or legal guardian to participate in Family Directed Services.
<b>Can PCS home providers participate in the Family Directed Services program?</b>	If the child's PCS home provider is the child's legal guardian, they can participate in the Family Directed Services program. Otherwise, the child needs to enroll in the Traditional services option.
<b>Can Family Directed Service's funds be used to pay for recreational activities or materials for a recreational activity?</b>	No, Family Directed Service's funds cannot pay for recreational activities or materials required. Funds can be used to pay for a community support worker to provide the necessary, defined supports during the activity as written on the Support and Spending Plan.
<b>Can Family Directed Service's funds be used to pay for a therapeutic activity recommended by a Physical Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Speech-Language Pathologist, physician or licensed psychologist?</b>	<p>Yes, in many cases Family Directed Service's funds can be used to pay for a therapeutic activity. The activity must be a well-established, evidenced-based practice designed to help with a specific treatment need. These activities could be considered if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• they are recommended, in writing, by a PT, OT, SLP, physician or licensed psychologist for delivery through this community-based activity,</li> <li>• address goals identified on the Support and Spending Plan, and</li> <li>• meet the criteria for active treatment.</li> </ul> <p>Examples of such activities include music therapy and therapeutic horseback riding. Providers of the therapeutic activity must meet the professional requirements of their discipline.</p>

Questions	Answer
<p><b>Can Family Directed Service's funds be used to purchase and train a service animal?</b></p>	<p>Yes, under certain circumstances Family Directed Service's funds could be used to purchase and train a service animal. If interested in using your Family Directed Services in this manner, contact your local case coordinator to obtain a Service Animal application. A list of regional contacts can be found at <a href="http://www.familydirected.dhw.idaho.gov">www.familydirected.dhw.idaho.gov</a></p>
<p><b>Can Family Directed Service's funds be used to pay for transportation?</b></p>	<p>Under certain circumstances funds can be used to pay for transportation. Family Directed Service's funds can pay for time in which a community support worker is transporting a child to activities in which the community support worker will be providing support for them. Transportation to other activities cannot be reimbursed as this supplants a parent's responsibility.</p>
<p><b>Can Family Directed Service's funds purchase items such as an iPad?</b></p>	<p>If the purchase of an iPad or an iPad application meets all the funding criteria of the Family Directed Service's program, it could be funded. The iPad or application must be the most cost effective means of meeting the need when compared to reasonable alternatives. For example, an iPad braille application has equal functionality of some braille electronic devices and is less costly; in this case the iPad and braille application would likely be allowable.</p>
<p><b>Is the family liable for making payments to community support staff?</b></p>	<p>No, the "fiscal employer agent", is responsible for billing and payroll functions, including paying your hired staff. The family is not held responsible for making payments however the family is responsible for approving timecards of employees.</p>
<p><b>Do Family Directed Service's funds have to be reported to the IRS on the family's annual personal income tax returns?</b></p>	<p>Family Directed Service's funds do not have to be reported on annual income tax returns. The Family Directed Service's program is set up as a type of "business" - a "non-income generating home health business". There is no tax ramifications associated with this for the participants or the parents in the Family Directed Service's program. Because the Family Directed Service's budget money is non-taxable and is never in the family's possession, the budget money does not have to be reported on the parent's taxes.</p>

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<b>How does a family keep track of billing for the purchase of goods or services?</b>	Families are provided an “explanation of benefits” each month. The current fiscal employer agent provider also has a web portal for managing payroll and the family’s budget. Both the family and support broker have access to the web portal.
<b>Can there be a support broker agency?</b>	No, IDAPA 16.03.13 rules specifically require that the support broker act independent of an agency.
<b>Can criminal history background checks for parents acting as unpaid support brokers be waived?</b>	No, parents acting as unpaid support brokers must comply with all the Support Broker requirements. Additionally, parents acting as unpaid support brokers are responsible for all minimal duties listed in IDAPA 16.03.13.
<b>Are parents held to the coursework and training qualification requirements to become a support broker?</b>	Yes, parents are held to the same standards. All individuals acting as support brokers need to have the skills and knowledge typically gained by completing college courses, community classes or workshops in the human services field, and at least two years verifiable experience with individuals with developmental disabilities. A parent of a child with a developmental disability may count their parenting experience towards the experience criteria.
<b>Does the maximum support broker rate of \$18.72 include taxes?</b>	No, taxes need to be added to the hourly rate for hourly employees. This rate can vary between 10%-13% of the hourly rate.
<b>Can the support worker be paid in a lump sum as opposed to an hourly rate?</b>	No, a community support worker can only be paid in dollars/hour or miles driven.
<b>Can a community support worker or support broker from another region or state be hired?</b>	Yes, a community support worker or support broker that resides in another region or state can be hired to serve eligible children in Idaho. An out-of-state community support worker and support broker must be certified and meet all the qualifications and criteria in the Idaho Family Directed Service's program.

Questions	Answer
<p><b>Can Family Directed Service's funds be used to purchase goods that are gently used?</b></p>	<p>The used item would need to be authorized by the Department case coordinator when approving the Support and Spending Plan. The case coordinator must make sure that the good assures the health, safety and welfare of the child and reasonably meets the child's needs. Also, vendor payment guidelines would apply.</p>
<p><b>Can children who are enrolled in the Family Directed Services option access therapeutic consultation and crisis services?</b></p>	<p>No, therapeutic consultation and crisis services are Traditional waiver services and are not Medicaid reimbursable under the Family Directed Services program. If the child is expected to or is experiencing a crisis, it will most likely be determined that Family Directed Services may not be a fit for the family. In these cases, the Department would work with the family to move into Traditional services.</p> <p>In any case, a crisis team is available for families regardless of their program enrollment. If crisis services are needed, contact your Case Coordinator.</p>
<p><b>If goods are purchased within one month's time does the fiscal employer agent still have to be paid monthly for the remainder of the year?</b></p>	<p>Families choosing Family Directed Services are required to use the fiscal employer agent in order to purchase goods. The fiscal employer agent only bills Medicaid for a month when services are provided or goods are purchased.</p>
<p><b>If a family enrolls in the Family Directed Services program, and doesn't like it, do they have to finish the plan year before switching back to the Traditional model?</b></p>	<p>No, a transition back into the Traditional model can be made once during a plan year.</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answer</b>
<b>If an approved service or good goes on sale after a vendor payment is issued, can a family keep the difference in cost?</b>	No, if a service or good is purchased for a price less than what was approved, the difference in cost must be returned to the FEA and deposited back into the child's budget.