



For Review and Comment Purposes Only – Not for Implementation  
**DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMS BULLETIN**  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

DATE OF ISSUE  
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SUBJECT:

Framework for Delivery of Supports  
Coordination Services

BY:

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**SCOPE:**

Administrative Entity Administrators/Directors  
County Program Administrators  
Supports Coordination Organization Directors

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this Bulletin is to establish the framework for the consistent statewide delivery of Supports Coordination<sup>1</sup>. Supports Coordination Organizations are responsible for planning, locating, coordinating, and monitoring supports for individuals eligible and registered for Mental Retardation (MR) services. County Programs and Administrative Entities (AEs) are responsible for monitoring Supports Coordination Organizations to ensure services are delivered consistent with the Office of Developmental Programs (ODP's) requirements.

**BACKGROUND:**

The purpose of the Supports Coordination service is to promote an individual's right to an "Everyday Life" utilizing "Person Centered" planning and Self-Determination principles. Support Coordinators (SCs) must use the Office of Developmental Program's (ODP) Home and Community Services Information System (HCSIS) to ensure accountability and promote quality in services and supports. The procedures outlined in this bulletin provide further detail on the roles and responsibilities of AEs, Supports Coordination Organizations, and SCs in relation to the provision of supports coordination services.

In 2003, ODP initiated a workgroup of the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) which developed ten recommendations that called for ODP to provide an adequate number of highly trained SCs statewide. The recommendations also called for standardized practices and individual choice of SCs and Supports Coordination Organizations. These recommendations stated that individuals and families must have ongoing access to effective, responsive, and reliable individual Supports Coordination.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS BULLETIN SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO:

**The Appropriate Developmental Programs Regional Office**

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ODP shared these recommendations statewide through a series of forums securing feedback, which validated the workgroup's direction for Supports Coordination. Testimony at those forums emphasized the need for standardized practices, training directly related to SCs' roles/responsibilities, and streamlined processes. The recommendations were further explored by workgroups comprised of a variety of stakeholders, including SCs, SC Supervisors, people using SC services, families, AE representatives, and ODP staff. The expectations included in this bulletin are based on the input of all of these groups.

### **POLICY:**

#### **Statement of Principles**

SCs should represent and advocate for individuals, promoting their independence. With these principles in mind, ODP worked with SC Supervisors to develop the following "Code of Ethics."

- Value Others: Only when you value others, can other people see the value of your efforts.
- Be Confident and Positive: Confidence and a positive attitude from you will promote a positive attitude towards you.
- Be Familiar: People are more willing to trust and try new suggestions from someone with whom they are familiar.
- Be There for Them: Being accessible for questions/concerns helps to maintain a positive, constructive relationship.
- Demonstrate Concern: Satisfaction with your efforts comes from the individuals and families feeling that their needs and concerns are heard and understood.
- Demonstrate Good Communication Skills: Everyone involved in the communication process must understand each other completely.
- Agree to Disagree: Turn conflict into a constructive exchange of ideas. Keep energy focused on the desired outcomes.
- Show Commitment: The number one expectation of people is that you will do what you say you are going to do.
- Be Honest: Set a realistic picture of what the system can and cannot do and foster a common vision.

#### **Administrative Entity/County Program Role**

ODP has established the following expectations for AEs and County Programs regarding the administration and delivery of Supports Coordination Services. The AE/County Program is responsible to:

- Monitor to assure compliance with all related and applicable ODP policies and bulletins.
- Share information with Supports Coordination Organizations regarding:
  - Licensing citations
  - Results of the AE Oversight Monitoring Process conducted by ODP

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- Results of AE Self-Reviews
- Independent Monitoring for Quality
- Program and service evaluations conducted by Mental Health/Mental Retardation Boards or Boards of Directors
- Analyze and share aggregate data gathered by the SCs with stakeholders.
- Evaluate each Supports Coordination Organization on at least an annual basis and develop recommendations to address any concerns. For Waiver-funded Supports Coordination Organizations, the review must be completed as per the current AE Operating Agreement. For all other Supports Coordination, this evaluation should include at a minimum:
  - Resolution of individual's concerns
  - Requests for change of SC
  - Analysis of aggregated information to identify trends, needed changes, and training needs.
  - Development, implementation and monitoring of appropriate plans of action to address those trends, changes, and identified training needs.
  - A review of the results of the satisfaction surveys completed by Waiver-funded Supports Coordination Organizations.
- Ensure that individuals are informed at intake of their right to choose a willing and qualified Supports Coordination Organization, and document the individual's choice of Organization in Service Notes.
- Approve and authorize services on Individual Support Plans (ISPs).

### **Supports Coordination Organization Role:**

Individuals who are receiving Supports Coordination through Targeted Services Management (TSM) must have a choice of willing, designated Supports Coordination Organizations. Individuals who are receiving Supports Coordination through the Consolidated or P/FDS Waiver must have a choice of willing and qualified Supports Coordination Organizations. Individuals who are receiving Supports Coordination through base funding should have a choice of willing, designated Supports Coordination Organizations. Should an individual elect to receive Supports Coordination from another Supports Coordination Organization, then the current ODP policy on relocations. Individuals should have a choice of SC.

ODP has established the following additional expectations regarding the administration and delivery of Supports Coordination Services. The Supports Coordination Organization must:

- Provide individuals with the choice of SC, and document that this choice has been presented. An Organization may limit choice due to personnel limitations and geographic distances. The Organization should document the individual's choice process.
- Employ sufficient personnel to meet the standards for service delivery. For Waiver-funded Supports Coordination, these requirements are outlined in the Supports Coordination definition and provider qualification standards included in the Consolidated and P/FDS Waivers, the Provider Agreement for Participation in Pennsylvania's Medical Assistance Program, and the Supports Coordination

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Addendum to this Agreement. For Supports Coordination provided as TSM, these requirements are outlined in Pennsylvania's TSM State Plan and the current ODP/TSM Provider Agreement. For Base-funded Supports Coordination, these requirements are outlined in 55 Pa. Code Chapter 6201 and the Supports Coordination Organization's contract with the County Program.

- Continually evaluate their structure to promote efficiency. Efforts should be made to explore caseload assignments through weighted caseloads, team approaches, and utilization of case aides/clerical staff. ODP will provide technical assistance to agencies for efficiency.
- Become proficient in the use of HCSIS to share information and to promote effective utilization of resources.
- Ensure SCs utilize service notes and the monitoring tool in HCSIS to document findings and concerns, as well as the resolution of those findings and concerns.
- Meet the conflict-free standards as outlined in the current, approved Consolidated and Person/Family Directed Support (P/FDS) Waivers for Waiver-funded Supports Coordination services, and Bulletin 00-02-06, *Revision of Definition of Conflict Free Providers for Targeted Service Management* for TSM services.
- Develop a system to assure individuals' and families' ability to access SCs in a timely manner and assure coverage in the absence of the SC.
- Ensure the completion of quality ISPs for submission to the AE or County Program for approval/authorization, as per the timelines outlined in the ISP Bulletin and Manual.
- Promote and ensure that SCs maintain the required frequency and standards for contacts with Waiver participants, as outlined in the current, approved Consolidated and P/FDS Waivers.
- Ensure that all SCs complete the ODP annual required training in addition to local training and professional development.
- Ensure that all new SCs who will provide Supports Coordination to Waiver participants complete the ODP required orientation prior to working independently with participants.
- If providing Waiver-funded Supports Coordination, complete the standard Supports Coordination Satisfaction Survey as required, and utilize survey results to promote continuous quality improvement activities.

### **Supports Coordinator Roles and Functions**

The role of the SC is to locate, coordinate, plan and monitor. The following SC functions define the actions associated with those roles<sup>ii</sup>:

- Facilitate team participation and ISP development.
- Complete quality ISPs, including critical revisions, using the Supports Intensity Scale® and Pennsylvania Plus and other necessary assessments, as per the timelines outlined in the ISP Bulletin and Manual.
- Distribute ISPs that have been approved and authorized by the AE or County Program, as per the timelines outlined in the ISP Bulletin and Manual.
- Coordinate supports and services.
- Locate services, and make referrals to providers on behalf of individuals.

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- Monitor and verify that the individual receives the quality, type, duration, and frequency of services and supports outlined in the ISP.
- Complete Service Notes to reflect all contact and actions in regards to the individual and his or her services.
- Perform timely recordkeeping.
- Validate health and welfare.
- Provide follow-up and track corrective action.
- Participate in ongoing training to enhance skills.
- Complete the Prioritization of Urgency of Need for Services (PUNS) when indicated.

HCSIS is designed to record SC activities for ISP's/Service Notes/Monitoring, and PUNS.

**The following standards are recommended for providing quality supports coordination:**

1. ISP	Standards
<p>Completion of the ISP.</p> <p><i>For initial and Annual Review ISPs. For SC responsibilities for Fiscal Year Renewal ISPs, please refer to the ISP Bulletin and Manual.</i></p>	Assure individual, family, and/or team participation in the ISP process.
	Team members shall be given adequate notice to attend team meetings of at least 30 calendar days.
	Begin information gathering 90 calendar days prior to the Annual Review Update date.
	Hold the ISP meeting 60 calendar days prior to the Annual Review Update date.
	Enter the ISP in HCSIS, and submit the ISP for approval 45 calendar days prior to the Annual Review Update date.
	Copies of ISPs shall be made available to the team members 14 calendar days prior to the effective date of the ISP.
2. Service Notes	Standards
Document all contacts with individuals, families, providers, etc...	Service notes shall be entered into HCSIS within 7 calendar days.
3. Supports Coordinator Responsiveness	Standards

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Follow-up and track corrective actions.	SCs shall respond to emergency inquiries within 24 hours of receipt of a call or e-mail.
	SCs shall respond to non-emergency inquiries within 5 calendar days.
	SCs shall track appropriate corrective actions relative to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Concerns resulting through ISP Monitoring.</li> <li>✓ Incident management.</li> <li>✓ IM4Q, AE self-reviews, and other external monitoring as they relate to the individual.</li> </ul>
<b>4. Primary Functions</b>	<b>Standards</b>
Locate, coordinate, and monitor.	<u>Locate</u> : Link, arrange for, and obtain needed services including medical, social, habilitation, education, or other community services the individual needs to live at home or in the community.
	<u>Coordinate</u> : Coordinate and develop ISPs with the individual and their planning team, and update the ISP as needed based on the individual’s needs. Provide ongoing management of services and support stipulated in the ISP in cooperation with the individual, family, and providers of service.
	<u>Monitor</u> : Establish and implement a means to assure the individual is receiving the appropriate quality, type, duration, and frequency of services and supports outlined in the ISP.
<b>5. Monitoring Services</b>	<b>Standards</b>
	Monitoring findings shall be entered into HCSIS using the standard ISP Monitoring form within 14 calendar days of the date of monitoring.
	Monitoring must occur in accordance with ODP policy and meet the required standards of funding sources received by the individual.
<b>6. Monitoring Process</b>	<b>Standards</b>
Each monitoring contact should promote the values of “Everyday Lives” and Self Determination.	Everyone can and does make choices.
	Everyone can and does have control over his/her life.
	Everyone is different and there is value in difference; therefore, supports need to be individualized.
	Each monitoring with the individual will include a review of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Progress towards implementation of the</li> </ul>

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	<p>ISP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Individual’s health and welfare.</li> <li>✓ Incidents.</li> <li>✓ Licensing citations of the service, if applicable.</li> <li>✓ Individual’s satisfaction with services/supports.</li> <li>✓ Quality of services/supports and cost effectiveness.</li> <li>✓ Support outcomes and any barriers.</li> </ul>
<b>7. Monitoring Outcome</b>	<b>Standards</b>
<p>The outcome of the monitoring process is to identify, document, and recommend resolution to issues or comments regarding the abovementioned standards.</p>	<p><b>Issues:</b> any situation that warrants corrective action and timely response by an individual providing supports.  <b>Issues are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Circumstances that negatively impact an individual’s quality of life.</li> <li>✓ Where an individual is not receiving the appropriate quality, type, duration, and frequency of services as identified in the ISP.</li> <li>✓ If an individual is dissatisfied with the manner in which the services or supports are delivered.</li> </ul> <p><b>Comment:</b> Commendations, recommendations, or anything unusual or noteworthy that may necessitate team attention, but not immediate action.</p>

Through effective, responsive, and reliable customer service, the SC empowers individuals and families. For this to transpire, the SC listens to what individuals need, helps them plan for those needs, assists them in choosing services and supports, and monitors implementation of those planned services.

ODP, with the help of a variety of stakeholders, will develop and maintain a *Supports Coordinator Electronic Resource Guide* outlining recommended roles, functions, and training for SCs.

**Support Coordinator Training Recommendations**

Effective January 1, 2008, each SC and SC Supervisor with an assigned caseload was required to complete a minimum of 40 hours of annual training. The required 40 hours will be a combination of ODP sponsored training and local training and professional development. Local training and professional development can be completed in various forms (i.e., training received from a County Program or Administrative Entity, ODP Regional Office, Health Care Quality Unit, etc.). Effective January 1, 2008, each SC

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Supervisor without a caseload was required to complete the required ODP sponsored training. ODP will announce a *Supports Coordinator Training Curriculum* in the Learning Management System (LMS) mandating the required ODP sponsored courses for each calendar year.

Required annual training hours for new SCs should be prorated based on the first full month following their hire date. For example, an SC hired on June 15<sup>th</sup> is required to complete a minimum of 20 hours during that calendar year. New SCs who provide Supports Coordination to Waiver participants are also responsible to complete the ODP required SC Orientation prior to working independently with participants. The completion of the SC Orientation will result in 12 hours of training credit toward the 40 hour annual requirement.

When applicable, trainings received by a SC while employed by another Supports Coordination Organization could be used to fulfill this recommendation, if appropriate documentation is available to substantiate the SCs participation.

To support the training of SCs, ODP offers scheduled Statewide and Regional training, as well as customized trainings through local training and technical assistance plans. In addition to the above instructor-led training, ODP supports the training curriculum with courses for SCs through the College of Direct Support, web-based, video or teleconferencing. To supplement the Supports Coordination training effort, a *Supports Coordinator Electronic Resource Guide* and other resources will be readily available.

Each Supports Coordination Organization shall develop and implement a process for documenting, tracking, and monitoring the fulfillment of training recommendations.

### **Quality Improvement**

Quality is everyone's responsibility. To promote quality in the delivery of Supports Coordination, all stakeholders including individuals, families, providers, and SCs should have the ability to share service and supports assessment information and use this information to provide better quality services and supports.

To promote the quality of Supports Coordination, ODP will continue to work with the stakeholder community, especially individuals, families, SCs, Supports Coordination Organizations, and AEs and County Programs, to evaluate Supports Coordination services and recommend policies and procedures designed to improve Supports Coordination Services.

To promote quality in Supports Coordination, Supports Coordination Organizations should:

- Regularly assess the quality of Supports Coordination services.
- Provide SCs with the necessary tools and supports to function effectively.
- Encourage individual and family involvement in evaluation of Supports Coordination. For Waiver-funded Supports Coordination, this can be accomplished through the implementation of the required ODP Supports Coordination Satisfaction Survey.

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- Provide all external monitoring information relevant to the individual to the SC for consideration in the development and revision of the ISP.
- Assure follow-up with complaint resolution.
- Implement recommendations that result from ODP's AE Oversight Monitoring Process and other external evaluations, such as IM4Q.
- When providing Waiver-funded Supports Coordination, complete the standard Supports Coordination Satisfaction Survey as required and implement corrective action based on the results.

To promote quality in services and supports and, therefore, the lives of the people whom they support, the SC should:

- Provide quality customer service. Listen to what people need, help them plan for those needs, assist in choosing services and supports, and routinely assure implementation of planned services.
- Be accessible to the individuals they serve and their families.
- Develop and help to implement ISPs that contain needed services and desired outcomes that enrich people's lives.
- Monitor supports and services to ensure that people are safe and that they are receiving needed and desired supports and services.

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<sup>i</sup> This Bulletin applies to Waiver-funded Supports Coordination, Targeted Service Management, and Base-funded Supports Coordination.

<sup>ii</sup> For a detailed list of Supports Coordination responsibilities, please refer to:

- Appendix C of the current, approved Consolidated and P/FDS Waiver for Waiver-funded Supports Coordination; and
- The current, approved Targeted Service Management Pennsylvania Medical Assistance State Plan Amendment for Targeted Service Management.