

Supports Intensity Scale® (SIS®) and PA Plus Manual

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of Public Welfare
Office of Developmental Programs

For Review and Comment Purposes Only- Not for Implementation
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Purpose of the SIS and the PA Plus Manual

The purpose of this manual is to outline requirements related to:

- The rollout and implementation of the Supports Intensity Scale (SIS) and Pennsylvania (PA) Plus as the Office of Developmental Programs' standardized needs assessment (herein referred to as the 'assessment' or the "SIS and PA Plus") for Consolidated and Person/Family Directed Support Waiver (herein referred to as the 'Waivers") participants; and
- The utilization of the assessment information in the Individual Support Plan (ISP) process.

The assessment has been designed to gather information about the support needs of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The assessment reflects a way of thinking that helps us to understand what supports a person needs to have an *Everyday Life* rather than evaluating deficits in skills. By having one needs assessment for all Waiver participants, the consistency and equity of the service system will be enhanced. Having a common structure promotes consistency and accountability for all stakeholders.

What are the SIS and PA Plus?

The SIS is a reliable and valid needs assessment developed and copyrighted by the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) formerly known as the American Association of Mental Retardation (AAMR). In addition, Supports Intensity Scale and SIS are registered trademarks of AAIDD. The SIS can be used for people ages 16-72 and focuses on the level of support needed by a person rather than evaluating deficits in skills. AAIDD has not yet developed a tool for persons under age 16 or over age 72, however, once the tool is developed ODP will anticipate its use. Topics included in the SIS that are covered during the interview include home living, community living, lifelong learning, employment, health and safety, social activities, protection and advocacy, exceptional medical and behavioral support needs, communication, and assistive technology.

The PA Plus, a separate set of additional questions developed by the Office of Developmental Programs (ODP), is administered with the SIS to provide information not included in the SIS. Some of the areas covered in the PA Plus include, vision, hearing, ambulation, communication, assistive technology, and safety.

In Pennsylvania, the SIS and PA Plus are used together to evaluate the support needs of people with intellectual disabilities

The SIS and PA Plus are not routinely used as an annual assessment. The assessment will generally be current for three years. For example, an initial assessment conducted in March 2008 will be reviewed for accuracy in March 2009 and 2010. Using this example, the next full assessment will occur in March 2011. This three-year time frame will capture changes in need without unnecessarily exhausting resources. ODP recognizes the time and effort of all stakeholders involved in this process and has crafted these time frames to

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be respectful of this effort without compromising the purpose and integrity of the process. If a change in support level is experienced prior to the third year, an updated assessment should be requested (see the Annual Review section).

Additional information about SIS and PA Plus is available through Administrative Entities (AEs) and Supports Coordination Organizations. You can also call ODP's Customer Service Line at 1-888-565-9435. More information about the Supports Intensity Scale can be found on AAIDD's SIS website (www.siswebsite.org) and through the Office of Developmental Programs Consulting System's website (www.odpconsulting.net).

Administration of the SIS and the PA Plus

ODP contracts with AAIDD for the use of the SIS and with an independent entity/vendor to administer the SIS and PA Plus. The vendor and all interviewers working for the vendor must be conflict free. ODP only recognizes the SIS and PA Plus assessment conducted by its independent vendor as an acceptable needs assessment. Individuals employed by the independent vendor to administer the SIS and PA Plus are known as interviewers. ODP and AAIDD require that all interviewers have at least a four-year degree and several years of direct work experience with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The selected vendor may specify additional employment requirements.

In order for the assessment to be independent and conflict-free, ODP contracted with an entity that is not a service or non-service provider of mental retardation or autism services in PA. A non-service provider is an organization that does not provide direct services to the mental retardation system (for example: Independent Monitoring Programs and Health Care Quality Units). Interviewers also known as assessors, cannot evaluate members of their own families or those people with whom they have a personal or professional relationship. Interviewers cannot evaluate any person supported by a provider agency/administrative entity or supports coordination entity with which the interviewer is currently employed or has been employed within the last calendar year (365 days).

All interviewers are required to complete ODP and AAIDD training. The ODP training will be specific to the Pennsylvania Service Delivery System (including but not limited to *Everyday Lives*, MR system basics, ODP Medicaid Waivers, and ISPs). The AAIDD training will be specific to the SIS instrument and the administration of the SIS instrument in a manner that is reliable and valid.

Who is a Respondent?

In keeping with AAIDD's recommended protocol, a respondent is a person who answers questions and provides information about the person being assessed during the interview. The respondent must know the person for at least three months, needs to be knowledgeable about the individual and be someone who can talk about the person's needs. The respondent needs to be someone who feels comfortable talking about intimate details of a person's life and support needs.

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The assessment requires a minimum of two respondents to be interviewed. The person him/herself chooses whether or not to participate as a respondent. If the person chooses not to participate or cannot fully participate, then at least two other respondents must be selected. The person him/herself decides who else will be asked to be respondents. If the person is unable to make this decision, the person's family will choose the respondents. If the person is unable and does not have family available to make this decision, the Supports Coordinator will enlist the help of the ISP team to choose respondents.

There is a minimum of two (2) respondents required to complete the SIS and PA Plus. There is not a maximum number of respondents, but size of the group should be considered in order to efficiently complete the interview.

Respondents must have direct knowledge about the person's needs, and be able to communicate information about the person's needs (family, friends, direct support professional, etc.).

People should be invited as respondents who know about the person in their various life activities and throughout their daily routine. As a group, the respondents should be able to speak about the person in all areas of his/her life. It is okay if a respondent only knows about one part of the person's life as long as the entire group of respondents can provide the full view of the person. For example, the group of respondents may include someone who knows the person at home, at work or day activity, school or volunteer location, and out in the community.

Who Will Receive an Assessment?

ODP has adopted the SIS and PA Plus as the standardized needs assessment for all Waiver participants. As such, it will replace the current needs assessments conducted by AEs for **participants in the Consolidated and P/FDS Waivers.**

ODP has developed a multi-year roll out strategy to ensure that full implementation of the assessment occurs. AEs will continue their current assessment practices for Waiver participants until they have been identified through the aforementioned strategy to receive an initial SIS and PA Plus.

According to the current multi-year rollout strategy, all new Waiver participants and some current Waiver participants will begin receiving assessments in the first year. In accordance with Federal Waiver requirements and the AE Operating Agreement, the assessment must occur prior to the initial waiver service implementation for new waiver participants. Thus, AEs must give new waiver participants first priority in determining who will receive an assessment each month.

There is also an urgent request process. These assessments will be allocated by ODP above and beyond the normal number of assessments planned for by the AEs. Please see the Urgent Request Process section for additional information.

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AEs should continue using their current assessment practices for individuals under age 16 and over age 72 and for non-waiver participants. Non-waiver participants include:

- People who are base funded
- People who are on the waiting list and are not planned for Waiver enrollment in the current fiscal year
- People served in public and private Intermediate Care Facilities for persons with Mental Retardation (ICFs/MR).

Identifying Participants

ODP will work with the AEs to determine the Waiver participants who will receive the assessment in a given month. New waiver participants should be given priority.

The number of people identified from each AE to receive an assessment will be based on the total number of Waiver enrollees with the AE, as indicated in the Home and Community Services Information System (HCSIS).

These numbers will be broken down by month and sent to each AE administrator (or specified designee) electronically. AEs will then be responsible for identifying people to receive assessments by month. These names will be submitted to ODP Central Office quarterly. AEs will be responsible for validating the list monthly with ODP (at least 60 days in advance of the assessment month). This gives AEs an opportunity to make changes close to the assessment date.

Individuals identified for new Waiver enrollment will be given priority and will receive the first scheduled assessments. ODP will send the names of new participants to AEs for confirmation. These names are based on information submitted to ODP through the annual planning process. After confirmation by the AE, the names will be given to the assessment vendor.

Benefits of starting with new enrollees:

- Information gathered during the assessment process will be helpful in development of the initial ISP.
- People who are new to the waiver will not have to experience different processes. They will only know the new assessment process and will not have to become accustomed to the old process and then switch to a new process.

For current Waiver participants, AEs should coordinate the timing of assessments to correspond with an individual's annual ISP process. Again, the assessment should occur before the ISP Annual Review meeting so the assessment can inform the development of the ISP.

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Scheduling Assessments

ODP Central Office will provide the names to the vendor electronically through HCSIS. The vendor will have access to basic HCSIS demographics, but will not have access to other parts of HCSIS functionality in order to maintain confidentiality.

AEs will determine the Waiver participants who will receive assessments in each month, based on the schedule for ISP Annual Review dates. Scheduling will be coordinated by Central Office. AEs will inform Supports Coordination (SC) Entities of who will receive an assessment 60 days prior to the assessment. AEs will identify a Point Person for each SC entity who will be the vendor's contact for scheduling.

Acknowledging the relationship between the Supports Coordinator (SC) and the person/family, it is the SC's responsibility to introduce the SIS and PA Plus process to individuals and their families. The SC should also make introductory contacts with provider agencies. In addition, the SC should provide the assessment fact sheet to the individual, family, and providers to help them understand their roles in the SIS and PA Plus process and the next steps.

Prior to scheduling the assessment it may be necessary for the SC to support individuals and families in the identification of respondents (those people who know the individual best and could provide the best possible information for the assessment). If the person/family cannot identify the best respondents, the SC will enlist the person's ISP team to support the identification of respondents.

Failure to Schedule

All waiver participants must receive a needs assessment as per Federal waiver requirements, the Consolidated and P/FDS waivers, and ODP Policy.

An individual's refusal to participate should be communicated to the SC and to the vendor. If the failure to schedule is due to uncooperative actions of the participant such as repeated cancellations or no shows this will be considered as a refusal to participate.

In order to prevent termination from Waiver funded services, reconciliation efforts must be initiated and documented through the AE, SC Entity, and if necessary through ODP designees. Limited attempts to address the reason for the refusal will be made to include personal contact, phone calls, and letters to the Waiver participant.

The Assessment Meeting

The vendor will schedule the assessment meeting, confirm the respondent(s) with the person and family and document this confirmation. The interview may take anywhere from two hours to three hours depending on the individual and the number of respondents. The meeting is to be scheduled at a time and place preferred by the person and family within the month specified by ODP or within 30 calendar days. This

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can include but is not limited to the individual's home, his/her day service provider, or the home of a family member or friend. If the individual has chosen not to participate in the assessment meeting the respondents may choose the meeting location.

The vendor will begin the interview with an introduction and explain how the SIS and PA Plus are administered. The introduction is designed to provide all respondents with basic information so that they can participate meaningfully in the assessment process.

The SIS and PA Plus will be administered separately, but at the same meeting. The SIS will be completed first, followed by the PA Plus. The same respondents will provide the information needed for both components of the assessment. It is preferred that all respondents attend one meeting to complete the assessment. If this is not possible due to scheduling conflicts, the vendor may interview respondents separately and then develop the final assessment results. If requested by the respondents due to scheduling difficulties, the interview may also be conducted by phone. As the vendor is conducting the interview, the assessment information will be captured on paper.

After the Meeting

The vendor will conclude the interview by providing the respondents with a Customer Satisfaction Survey to be returned to the vendor in a postage-paid envelope. The survey will provide valuable feedback on the assessment experience from the respondents' perspective. The vendor will provide unedited results of the survey to ODP.

Information gathered from the SIS during the interview must be entered by the vendor in HCSIS within seven (7) calendar days. Prior to the availability of the finalized copy in HCSIS, a copy of the hand-written assessment can be requested by the individual, family, SC, SC entity staff person, before it is finalized by the vendor. If requested, the vendor must provide a copy within seven (7) calendar days. The information entered in HCSIS will include the date that the assessment was completed, the assessment results, and the interviewer's notes and summary. The interviewer has the next 14 calendar days to finalize this record in HCSIS. Once the assessment is finalized in HCSIS it can be viewed by the SC, AE and ODP through HCSIS.

Once the assessment is finalized in HCSIS it can be viewed by the SC, AE, and ODP through HCSIS. The information obtained through the PA Plus will be maintained by the vendor in a secured database outside of HCSIS until such time that it can be implemented in HCSIS.

The vendor is also required to report any person-specific concerns to the AE and through ODP's Customer Service Line. Response to calls from the vendor on the Customer Service Line will follow the established ODP protocol.

How will the Assessment be Used?

A central concept of the SIS is the intensity of support a person would need to "be successful" at any given task in the general life areas that are identified in the SIS. The

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SIS measures the type of support, the daily support time, and the frequency of the support needed to engage in the activity/task being measured. The PA Plus asks additional questions about capacities and supports not captured in the SIS.

It is important to note that although activities are scored in the SIS and PA Plus, the scores will not drive the development of the ISP. The assessment will not give information about how the needed supports will be provided. The assessment will, however, be utilized to develop the ISP. The ISP team will prioritize and determine how supports will be provided utilizing all available information. It is recommended that the assessment respondents be included in the ISP team so that the needs captured in the assessment are appropriately addressed in the ISP.

Person-centered approaches are crucial to the foundation of the planning process and identifying outcomes. SIS and PA Plus do not identify hopes, dreams, desires, or outcomes. The information gathered will be used to guide the team about the support a person may need to keep them healthy and safe, to achieve personal outcomes, and to have an every day life.

The SIS and PA Plus is ODP's standardized needs assessment. Per Federal Waiver requirements the ISP must address all assessed needs. The ISP must be inclusive of all the services and supports that an individual receives and how those needs are addressed whether by the individual, family, community supports, natural support; paid or non-paid.

Other assessments might be utilized based on an individuals unique needs that may complement the SIS and PA Plus as part of the information gathering process. Information gathering includes the identification, coordination, and collection of individual-specific information, such as formal and informal assessments, communication and learning styles, social/emotional information, medical and development information, Independent Monitoring for Quality (IM4Q) considerations, Health Risk Profiles, incident management information, provider assessments, etc.

Depending on the assessed needs and the team discussion, addressing the needs can be incorporated in many different places in the ISP. For example, how assessed needs are addressed could appear in: Know & Do; Understanding Communication; Health Promotions; What Makes Sense, Behavior Support, Physical Assessment, etc.

The information gathered from the SIS and PA Plus will not be used to diagnose disabilities or evaluate eligibility for mental retardation services and supports. The SIS and PA Plus will not produce or be used in a formula to produce a budget amount. The assessment will not be utilized as the sole basis for determining or reducing services and supports to an individual.

Annual Review

A new assessment will be required at least once every three years for all waiver participants, provided that a change in the level of support is not determined. The ISP

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team will review the ISP and SIS and PA Plus assessment at least annually to determine if there has been a significant change in the support needs of the person since the last assessment. The review of the assessment should take place prior to the ISP Annual Review meeting. If there has been a significant change respective to the level of support, a new assessment must be conducted. The SC must document this review in Service Notes and state if a reassessment is needed. If a new assessment is needed, it should be conducted prior to the Annual Review meeting so the ISP team can consider the results in updating the ISP.

A significant change is any major change in a person's life that has a lasting impact on their support needs, that is anticipated to last more than six months and makes his/her SIS and PA Plus inaccurate and no longer current. Types of changes that may be considered include health status, behavioral issues, skills and ability, availability of technology. These are changes that the person experiences that cause the person's support needs to increase or decrease. For example, a person could have a change in their medical condition that requires more intensive supports. Or a person could get new assistive technology and therefore have less intense support needs than before acquiring the new technology.

The ISP team reviews the current assessment prior to the annual review and answers the question "Has there been anything that happened in this person's life during the past twelve months that would make his/her SIS and PA Plus inaccurate"? If the answer is yes and there has been a change, then a new SIS and PA Plus should be requested.

The SC will request a new assessment through the AE. The AE will determine if the assessment should be requested through the regular scheduling process or through the urgent request process. If a person's support needs have remained stable, then there is no need to do a new SIS and PA Plus.

In emergency situations, AE's should not wait for an assessment to begin changing the person's supports and services to meet his/her new needs. For example, if someone experiences a physical or mental health crisis and needs immediate support, this support should be provided regardless of whether or not a new SIS and PA Plus has been conducted. The ISP team should make the necessary changes to the ISP, but should still request a reassessment for this person. The results of the reassessment must then be used to validate the updated ISP to ensure it is based on assessed needs. Again, the intent of the SIS and PA Plus is not to delay services to people, but to assist in ISP development.

For Review and Comment Purposes Only- Not for Implementation **Stakeholder Roles and Responsibilities**

The following section will identify the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders involved in this process, including ODP, AEs, individuals receiving services and family members, persons supporting the individual, SCs, providers and the assessment vendor. All stakeholders involved in this process must ensure confidentiality and assure the confidentiality of protected health information as defined by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996.

A) Individual/Family Roles and Responsibilities

All persons enrolled in the Consolidated and P/FDS Waivers must have an assessment completed in accordance with the Waiver requirements to identify the level of services and supports needed. Waiver participants are responsible to:

- Collaborate with the vendor at the time of scheduling.
- Identify the respondents.
- Provide accurate and detailed information during the assessment interview.
- Participate in the use of the information in ISP planning and implementation through the team process.
- Communicate to SC any significant change in a person's support needs as may result in a reassessment.
- Participate as part of the ISP team in the annual review of the assessment at least annually to determine if it is current and accurate.

B) Supports Coordinator Roles and Responsibilities

The SC may or may not be a respondent for the assessment, but it is ODP's expectation that the SC attend the assessment meeting. The role of the SC is to use the information gained from the assessment in the development of the ISP. The SC is responsible to:

- Introduce the SIS and PA Plus process to individuals, families and providers through discussion and distribution of the ODP's SIS and PA Plus Fact sheet.
- Support individuals/families with identifying respondents and/or provide contact information for the respondents.
- Enlist input from the persons team regarding respondents, if the individual and family are unable to identify respondents.
- Assist with coordinating the scheduling of the assessment as appropriate.
- Share information with the vendor that will assist with the scheduling of the assessment.
- Identify and share with the vendor any specialized supports necessary for a successful interview process such as situational sensitivities or the need for a translator.

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- Attend the assessment meeting, if participating as a respondent, to provide information regarding the individual's support needs and glean information that is useful for the ISP process.
- Attend the assessment meeting to observe and learn more about the person if not identified as a respondent and to glean information that is useful for the development of the ISP.
- Capture all activities SC related to the assessment in service notes (i.e., initial contact with person/family, contact with vendor, scheduling, attendance in meeting, etc)
- Provide copies of the finalized assessment to the ISP team for reference during the ISP meeting.
- Utilize the information from the assessment in the ISP team process.
- Initiate a request for a new assessment through ODP's determined process if the person experiences a significant life change.
- Ensure that the individual or family receives a copy of the finalized assessment if requested.
- Ensure advocates for Pennhurst class members receive a copy of the finalized assessment.

C) Supports Coordination Entity Roles and Responsibilities

The SC Entity will oversee and support the responsibilities of supports coordination in the assessment process. The SC Entity will be responsible to:

- Ensure SC and SC Supervisors are appropriately trained to support the assessment process.
- Identify the SC Entity Point person regarding coordination of scheduling the assessment.
- Assist the SC with communication to individuals/families, provider and vendor prior to and after the assessment as necessary.
- Review ISPs to promote maximum use of the assessment in the ISP Process.
- Review and evaluate requests from SC's for reassessments and urgent request.
- Track timelines for annual reviews and urgent request(s) of SIS and PA Plus assessments.
- Assure requested copies of the assessment are received by the individual and/or family upon request.
- Ensure advocates of Pennhurst class members receive a copy of the finalized assessment.

D) Provider Roles and Responsibilities

The role of the provider is to assist individuals receiving Waiver services in the assessment process. The Provider is responsible to:

- Provide supports to individuals to participate in the assessment if necessary.

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- Collaborate with SCs, SC entities and the vendor, specific to issues relating to scheduling and/or rescheduling.
- Provide information about the person's support needs if identified as a respondent.
- Communicate to the SC any significant change in the person's support needs.
- Participate in the use of the information in ISP planning and implementation through the team process.
- Participate as part of the ISP team in the annual review of the assessment.

E) AE Roles and Responsibilities

As per the AE Operating Agreement and Waiver requirements, AEs must ensure that all Waiver participants have a standardized needs assessment. The AE is responsible to:

- Share information regarding the assessment process with individuals/families, advocacy organizations, supports coordinators, support coordination entities, providers and stakeholders, including: Bulletin 00-07-02 "*Overview of the Supports Intensity Scale® and the PA Plus*", ODP's SIS© Fact Sheet".
- Verify demographic information on all Waiver participant names provided by ODP.
- Identify people to receive assessments and send information to ODP Regional Office.
- Collaborate with SCs, SC entities and the vendor, specific to issues relating to scheduling and/or rescheduling.
- Notify ODP Central Office of all refusals to participate (AEs must include information regarding their attempt to remediate).
- Ensure that services provided through the Waiver are based on assessed needs and the person's ISP.
- Initiate the urgent request process with ODP if appropriate.

F) Vendor Roles and Responsibilities

The vendor is an impartial, unbiased entity whose role is to complete the assessment. The interviewer is not a member of the ISP team. The vendor's roles and responsibilities are outlined in its contract with ODP. Some of the vendor's key functions are to:

- Ensure that all interviewers complete the required AAIDD training and ODP specific training prior to conducting assessments.
- Initiate the scheduling process.
- Contact the person, family and all of the respondents to schedule the assessment.
- Confirm the respondents with the person and family and to document this confirmation.
- Capture information in the notes they keep at the time of the assessment meeting in order to provide SCs with rich detail regarding the needs of the person.

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- Provide interpreters as needed to promote full participation from all respondents.
- Enter the information gathered from the assessment into HCSIS within seven (7) calendar days of completion.
- Finalize the information entered in HCSIS within fourteen (14) calendar days.
- Report any person-specific health and safety concerns to the AE and to ODP's Customer Service Line
- Ensure confidentiality of personal information.
- Make necessary accommodations for cultural and physical needs.

G) ODP Roles and Responsibilities

As the State Medicaid Agency for the Consolidated and P/FDS Waivers, ODP retains authority over the administration and implementation of the waivers. ODP is responsible to:

- Provide AEs with the number of Waiver participants to receive assessments.
- Provide names to the Vendor upon validation from the AE.
- Monitor AEs in accordance with the AE Operating Agreement to ensure that all Waiver participants have a completed assessment and that services provided through the Waivers are based on assessed needs and the person's ISP.
- Provide training and up to date information to all stakeholders regarding the SIS and PA Plus.
- Provide training and up-to-date information to the vendor on the Pennsylvania Developmental Programs System including but not limited to *Everyday Lives* and ISP development.
- Conduct oversight/monitoring of the vendor to ensure contract compliance.
- Monitor the vendor to ensure reliability and validity of the assessment.
- Manage the urgent request process.

Urgent Request

The urgent request process will be managed by ODP Central Office and is a process used to request a new (initial) assessment or a reassessment. This process is used if the change in the person's support needs is unplanned and time sensitive. If a new SIS and PA Plus assessment is needed immediately and cannot wait to be scheduled through the regular scheduling process, the AE Administrator, Regional Program Manager, ODP Bureau Director, or their designees can initiate the urgent request process. It is anticipated that only a small number of assessments will be scheduled through the urgent request process.

AEs must decide whether to use the regular AE scheduling process or the urgent request process. The urgent request process can be used for arranging new (initial) assessments and reassessments. Requests for assessments made through the urgent request process are not linked to funding. If additional funding is needed, a request for funding should be made through the Individual Emergency Status Form (IESF) process as per the AE Operating Agreement.

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All requests are made to the ODP Central Office Point Person. If an AE submits a request to the Central Office Point Person, the ODP Regional Program Manager must be copied.

ODP will make the final determination on all urgent requests. When ODP makes a decision, this decision will be shared with the vendor (if the assessment will be provided) and the requestor (whether or not the assessment will be provided). Not all requests from AEs will be granted. Requests will be granted based on the need for the assessment as determined by ODP based on information provided by the AE and the capacity of the vendor to conduct the assessments.

The maximum timeline for completion of the assessment requested through the urgent request process is 45 calendar days from initiation of the request. ODP will have 15 calendar days to make a determination regarding the need for the assessment. If ODP determines the need for an assessment, ODP will contact the vendor to request an assessment be completed. The Vendor must complete urgent assessments within 30 calendar days of ODP's request. ODP will attempt to move as quickly as possible to meet these time sensitive requests.

What Happens If There Is A Disagreement?

Interviewers will be trained by AAIDD in how to reconcile responses and determine scores if respondents provide conflicting information. At the assessment meeting, the interviewers will explore why these differences of opinion are occurring and encourage consensus. The interviewer will capture these differences in the notes that accompany the assessment results when they are shared with the person, family, and SC.

In the situation where either the respondents are not interviewed at the same time or there is a conflict of opinions, the interviewer will be trained to use their training and professional judgment in determining the assessment results. Assessment results are determined by compiling all the information that is shared and discussed during the meeting.

The SIS and PA Plus **assessment results cannot be appealed** through fair hearings and appeals. In accordance with Federal Waiver requirements, Waiver participants retain the right to appeal through the Hearing and Appeals Process if a service is reduced, terminated, denied or suspended.

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Glossary of Terms

AAIDD – The American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (formerly American Association on Mental Retardation – AAMR). AAIDD developed and normed the Supports Intensity Scale.

CMS - The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is the agency within the Department of Health and Human Services that is responsible for federal administration of the Medicaid, Medicare, and State Children’s Health Insurance programs.

Interviewer or Assessor – The interviewer is employed by the Vendor and is responsible for asking questions and documenting responses on the SIS.

Individual Support Plan – The Individual Support Plan (ISP) is a plan for each person developed with the person and the people they choose. The ISP must include at minimum the estimated duration and frequency of each funded service, and the type of provider to furnish each funded service that is necessary to meet the needs of the person, as identified through the statewide assessment instrument, and the planning process.

ODP’s Customer Service Line (888 Line) – 1 (888) 565 - 9435

Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) – The Office of Developmental Programs is the state agency responsible for administering the statewide mental retardation and autism service systems.

PA Plus – A set of questions added to SIS in Pennsylvania. The PA Plus provides additional planning information not covered in the SIS (e.g. vision, hearing, ambulation, communication, assistive technology, safety).

Person-Specific Concern – Any identified or suspected Health and Welfare concerns.

Respondent – A person who knows the person for at least 3 months and who can answer questions and provides information about the person being assessed during the interview. The respondent must be knowledgeable and someone who can talk about the person’s needs. The respondent needs to be someone who feels comfortable talking about intimate details of a person’s life and support needs.

Significant Life Change – Any major change in a person’s life that has a lasting impact on their support needs. A significant life change is a change in a person’s support needs that is anticipated to last more than six months and makes his/her SIS and PA Plus inaccurate and no longer current. Types of changes that may be considered include health status, behavioral issues, skills and ability, availability of technology. These are changes that the person experiences that cause the person’s support needs to increase or decrease.

Supports Intensity Scale (SIS) – Developed by AAIDD as a standardized needs assessment that focuses on the level of support needed by a person, not deficits in

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skills. The SIS was designed to measure frequency, intensity and type of supports an adult with developmental disabilities needs to be successful in a variety of life activities.

Urgent Requests - A process used to request a new (initial) assessment or a reassessment. This process is used if the change in the person’s support needs is unplanned and time sensitive. If a new SIS and PA Plus assessment is needed now and cannot wait to be scheduled through the regular scheduling process, the AE Administrator, Regional Program Manager, ODP Bureau Director, or their designees can initiate the urgent request process. The urgent request process is managed by ODP Central Office. It is anticipated that only a small number of assessments will be scheduled through the urgent request process.

Vendor – The independent entity contracted by ODP to administer the SIS and PA Plus in Pennsylvania.

ODP Contact Information

ODP Customer Service	(888) 565 - 9435
Central Regional Office	(717) 772 - 6507
Northeast Regional Office	(570) 963 - 4391
Southeast Regional Office	(215) 560– 2245
Western Regional Office	(412) 565 - 5144