

Family Member Engagement Guide

The Family Member Engagement Guide is a tool that families can use to discuss services and supports with service providers and their regional center (RC). This guide helps you know what questions to think about so that you can discuss your family member's RC service needs; flexibility and innovation of services while maintaining safety; and how to make choices that are best for them during the COVID-19 pandemic. You may use all or some of your answers when you talk with your RC and service provider.

Current Goals, Activities, and Services

1. Think about the goals in your family member's Individual Program Plan (IPP). Do any of these need to change because of COVID-19?
2. How does your family member currently spend their days?
3. What does your family member like about their days?
4. What does your family member dislike about their days?
5. How are RC services and supports currently provided?
6. What RC services and support works well?
7. What RC services and supports would you like to change?

Changes in Health Status, Changes in Family Member Work Status

1. Have there been changes to your family member's health? If so, does your family member need any support to address these health concerns?
2. Has your family member had any new or increased behavioral challenges?
3. Have you or your family member experienced any of the following while at home: stress; isolation; death of a family member, caregiver, or friend? Does your family member need support to address these concerns?
4. Have there been changes to your work or your source of income? If so, how do these changes impact the services you need from the RC?
5. Have you, another person in the family or caregiver had a serious illness related to COVID-19?

Safety Equipment and Safety Protocols

1. Do you and your family member have access to personal protective equipment (PPE) such as masks, gloves, sanitizers? If not, do you need help getting PPE?
2. Do you or your family need training about how to use PPE?
3. Is your family member able to stay safe by wearing a mask, social distancing, not touching their face, hand washing, or temperature checks? If not, are there any disability-related reasons your family member cannot stay safe?
4. Have you tried other PPE that works better for your family member such as a clear face shield?

Service Needs and Options

Think about the services your family member received from the RC before and during the stay at home order. You may want some of those services to continue. You may want some of those services to be changed. You may want some different services.

1. If your family member received remote services, such as through Zoom, were these remote services helpful? Do you want these remote services to continue? Do you have ideas of how to make them better?
2. If your family member received individual therapies such as Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services, speech or early intervention services, did those services stop? If so, do you want those services to start again in your home, once your local Department of Public Health allows it?
3. Are you comfortable with your family member participating in programs outside of your home or outdoors when safety protocols are followed? If so, what type of activities are you comfortable with? Are there types of activities you don't want your family member to do?
4. Do you want to learn about other kinds of services your family member can receive at home? For example, through "participant directed services," you can hire a person you choose, including someone in your family. This person can provide respite, day care, transportation, services provided by a licensed nurse, day services, personal assistance, independent living skills and supported employment services. You can find more information about participant directed services on the [DDS website](#) to discuss with your RC.

Communication with Service Providers, RC Service Coordinators and Staff

Think about how you and your family member communicated with RC staff and service providers during the stay at home order. It may have been by phone, by email or technology like Zoom.

1. Which of these communication methods worked best for you?
2. What ways would you like regional center staff or service providers to communicate with you in the future?
3. Did you or your family member have any problems using technology to communicate with service providers or regional center staff?
4. Is there technology you need to better communicate with regional center staff or service providers or to receive remote services?
5. Do you or your family member need training in using technology?

Training Needs

1. Do you or your family member need training about how to use a mask, hand washing, social distancing or other safety guidelines?
2. Have you asked your provider for social story or communication boards to help your family member learn how to use PPE or follow other safety guidelines?
3. Do you or your family member need training to better use technology? Does your family member need adaptive equipment to be able to use technology?
4. Would you like training about different types of services, the different ways that services can be provided, and any changes that can be made when services resume?