



# Promoting Health, Safety and Well-Being of Individuals



**New Jersey  
Department of Human Services  
Division of Developmental Disabilities**





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**T**he State of New Jersey, Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) provides and funds a system of supports and services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities throughout New Jersey.

One of the most important aspects of DDD's mission is to protect the health, safety and well-being of the individuals it serves. Additionally, DDD strives to provide opportunities for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to receive quality services and supports, participate meaningfully in their communities and exercise their right to make choices. This includes partnering with their community-based resources to develop these supports and services for individuals eligible for both DDD services and Medicaid.

To ensure, safety, and quality, DHS and DDD provide oversight of these various programs, supports and services.

This guide was developed to help inform individuals receiving DDD services, their families, guardians and other advocates of the wide range of ways DHS, DDD and its community resources work to protect the health, safety and well-being of individuals served. If you are an individual receiving services, a family member, guardian or an advocate of an individual with an intellectual or developmental disability, you are encouraged to review this guide, and become familiar with the information and contact information provided. You may also speak with your DDD contact about any questions or concerns.

# Regional Community Services



**D**DD has Regional Community Services office staff responsible for coordinating services and supports to individuals receiving services through DDD.

For individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities who reside in their own home, DDD staff regularly monitors services and periodically conducts face to face visits with the individual receiving services.

For individuals who reside in a DHS-licensed home within a community setting, DHS and DDD staff monitor these homes through regular and unannounced visits.

Additionally, for emergencies, DDD maintains the following regionally-based, on-call numbers accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week:

## **DDD Northern Region:**

973-927-2600 (Morris, Sussex, Warren Counties)  
973-977-4004 (Bergen, Hudson, Passaic Counties)  
908-226-7800 (Essex, Somerset, Union Counties)

## **DDD Southern Region:**

609-292-1922 (Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth and Ocean Counties)  
609-476-5200 (Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem Counties)

**Report concerns or allegations involving abuse, neglect and/or exploitation of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to the DDD Hotline at (1-800) 832-9173.**

More information on Regional Community Services offices is available on the web at:

<http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd/staff/cso/>

# Case Management



**I**ndividuals who receive services funded by DDD are assigned a case manager (or in some cases a “support coordinator”) who provide case management for the individual and his/her family. The case manager helps develop and monitor an individual’s Annual Service Plan. The Annual Service Plan explains the services and supports an individual will receive and also identifies what resources are required to ensure the health, safety and well-being of that person.

# Quality Assurance

DDD has a Quality Unit that regularly reviews the supports and services provided to an individual to ensure they meet the individual's needs. DDD and the DHS Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services (DMAHS), the state agency that administers the Medicaid program, also conduct a review of services. This helps ensure every individual receives services that meet state and federal requirements, including those related to health, safety and well-being



# Protecting Individuals

DHS, DDD and its agency partners are committed to ensuring the health, safety and well-being of all individuals receiving services from DDD. Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities have the right to be free from abuse, neglect and exploitation and be safe from harm.

Under New Jersey law, certain individuals are required to report abuse, neglect and exploitation of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Required reporters include all employees of DHS, individuals operating a Community Care Residence (CCR), and all employees and volunteers of agencies and programs that receive direct or indirect funding from, or are contracted or regulated by DHS. Agencies must also follow DHS policies for reporting incidents and allegations involving individuals with developmental disabilities.

Additionally, DDD maintains a hotline to receive concerns or allegations of abuse, neglect or exploitation of an individual with an intellectual or developmental disability. Calls may be made by any person having reasonable cause to believe that an



individual has been a victim. **The number to call to report concerns or allegations of abuse, neglect or exploitation is: 1-800-832-9173.**

**Important! If you know about a situation in which the life of a person with an intellectual and developmental disability is in immediate danger due to abuse, neglect, or exploitation, you should call 911 before calling anyone else.**

In New Jersey, if a DHS employee, Community Care Residence (CCR) provider, agency/program staff or volunteer fails to report known or suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation against an individual with an intellectual and developmental disability, he/she can be criminally prosecuted. Not reporting cases of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (or preventing someone else from reporting) is a disorderly person offense.

The following information describes other ways DHS and its agency partners help to ensure individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities are protected and are safe from harm.

# Incident Reports

In addition to reporting incidents/allegations of abuse, neglect and exploitation, DHS policies require all providers and Community Care Residence providers to report other kinds of situations involving individuals served. This includes serious events such as the death of an individual receiving services, calls to 911 in the case of a life-threatening emergency, serious injuries, restraints, rights violations or incidents concerning the physical environment of the individual served. Other less serious situations involving individuals served are also reportable based on DHS policies. Timely reporting and documenting information ensures an appropriate response to incidents and promotes accountability.

Information regarding incidents and allegations is thoroughly reviewed by DDD and DHS staff. This same staff works with agencies and programs to verify accuracy, seek additional information as needed, and document and track the report for appropriate follow-up and response.



Some types of incidents/allegations also require notification to local police, the County Prosecutor's Office, Adult Protective Services, the Ombudsman for the Institutionalized Elderly and other officials. These entities may conduct their own investigation and follow-up depending on the individual situation.

# Incident Response



Whenever an incident/allegation occurs in an agency or program setting, staff in these settings is responsible to ensure the immediate health and safety of the individual. This can include contacting 911, seeking medical treatment for the individual, removing the alleged perpetrator from the alleged victim, and reporting the incident to DHS. Once immediate health and safety is assured, the agency/program initiates an investigation and/or follow-up to the incident/allegation.

Depending on the incident/allegation type, DHS resources may also be used to assure the immediate health and safety of the individual. For example, in response to a reported concern, DDD staff may visit the individual served in the agency or program to assess the individual's health and safety. Local police may be called to respond, or in the case of a concern involving an individual served by a program

and residing in their own home, the local police and/or county-based Adult Protective Services (APS) may be contacted.

Additionally, most incidents, including all allegations of abuse, neglect and exploitation require investigation. For incidents/allegations involving abuse, neglect, exploitation or other serious incidents involving individuals served in developmental

center settings, the Department's Office of Investigations (OI) conducts an independent investigation. For incidents involving abuse or neglect with serious injury, exploitation or other serious incidents involving individuals served in residential community or day program settings, the Department's Special Response Unit (SRU) conducts an independent investigation.

## The Role of the DHS, Office of Program Integrity and Accountability

The Department's Investigative Units are located within the DHS Office of Program Integrity and Accountability (OPIA). OPIA has direct responsibility for a variety of functions critical to helping to ensure the health, safety and well-being of individuals receiving services. OPIA works closely with the Department's divisions, including DDD and other operating units to ensure appropriate response and follow-up when concerns arise involving individuals served or involving agencies/programs. The operating units within OPIA are carefully and deliberately positioned to perform these critical Department functions. It is through these carefully placed units that efforts are undertaken to protect and promote health, safety and well-being.

### OPIA units include the following:

- ◆ Special Response Unit (SRU) – this office is responsible to investigate incidents/allegations involving abuse, neglect and/or exploitation and other serious incidents regarding individuals residing in community settings;
- ◆ Office of Investigations (OI)- this office is responsible to investigation incidents/allegations involving abuse, neglect and/or exploitation and other serious incidents regarding individuals residing in DHS developmental centers;
- ◆ Office of Licensing (OOL) – this office has regulatory authority to license programs for individuals receiving services from several DHS Divisions. The OOL licenses residential programs and Community Care Residences (CCRs) for



- individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Additionally, OOL conducts announced and unannounced visits to these settings as needed in response to concerns;
- ◆ Office of Auditing (OOA) – this office helps ensure fiscal and program accountability of DHS funded and/or contracted agencies and programs;
- ◆ Central Fingerprint Unit (CFU) – this unit processes requests for criminal history.

**Office of Program Integrity and Accountability:**  
(609) 292-1617

**Office of Investigations (OI):**  
(609)292-2102 or (609) 292-1027

**Office of Licensing (OOL):**  
(609) 633-6932

**Office of Auditing (OA):**  
(609) 292-9752

**Central Fingerprint Unit (CFU):**  
(609) 292-0207

**Critical Incident Management Unit (CIMU):**  
(609) 984-9663

**Special Response Unit (SRU):**  
(609) 292-2102

# Risk Management



identify strengths of an individual agency and to assess potential indicators of risk within the system. By identifying these strengths and risks, OPIA is able to promote best practices and provide skilled guidance that support providers in achieving desired outcomes. The information within these reports is regularly and formally reviewed by DHS and DDD staff. Additionally, DHS works with agencies to address concerns raised by this review which helps to ensure the health, safety and well-being of individuals served.

OPIA issues a quarterly data report that evaluates the performance of residential and day program providers. The report is organized using national guidelines that measure key areas related to health, safety, fiscal integrity and overall operations based on information related to agency licensing, auditing, investigations and critical incident reporting.

The Risk Management report provides a way to

The information on the Risk Management Report is designed to serve as a resource for DDD, community providers, stakeholders, service recipients and their families and the general public to better navigate residential and day program services. More information on the DHS Risk Management report is available at the following link: <http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/staff/opia/risk/index.html>

## Be an Advocate

By working together, guardians, authorized family members and providers of supports and services can make sure individuals are well-served and safe. This partnership begins at team meetings, where individualized plans of services and supports are reviewed. At that time, the team, including guardians and family members, can discuss safeguards or interventions that may be required. Such safeguards need to be individualized and specific to each person. Ways to educate the person and promote self-advocacy can be discussed.

When unexplained injuries are discovered or seem to be happening repeatedly, guardians and family



members should immediately ask what steps are being taken to protect an individual from any further injuries. Any concerns regarding the health and safety of an individual should result in the circumstances being discussed and examined.

# Training and Development

DDD recognizes that a well-trained and skilled workforce is vital to the overall success of its mission. This includes providing comprehensive training and the continued development of DDD staff and staff employed with licensed and/or qualified providers. Employees of licensed and/or qualified providers must attend a number of trainings determined to be essential. These trainings include:



Additionally, DDD partners with The Boggs Center at Rutgers, Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, New Jersey's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities. The Boggs Center provides a wide array of comprehensive staff training and development activities to individuals, families, and interested stakeholders as well as provider agency staff.

- ◆ Overview of Developmental Disabilities
- ◆ Prevention of Abuse & Neglect
- ◆ Medication Administration
- ◆ CPR
- ◆ First Aid
- ◆ Danielle's Law

Providers may also have additional enhanced training within their organizations that ensures direct care staff is trained in best practices.

DDD also has invested in the College of Direct Support (CDS). The CDS is a web-based learning system that is used in many states and has proven to be a highly effective, cost-efficient way of providing quality training. DDD works together with community provider organizations on an ongoing basis to promote the development of a skilled and qualified workforce.

More information on DDD services is available at the following link:

<http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd/home/>



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