

SO... YOU'RE THE BOSS!

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Special points of interest:

- New CDS Training Requirements
- New Criminal Background Check Policy and Procedure
- DSP Toolkit Resource Available
- New Pilot on Documentation
- DDS Looking to Find New Ways to Support Direct-Hire Employers
- Coming Soon! People First Self Advocacy Conference

NEWS! NEWS! NEWS!



In the last few months there have been many changes implemented by the department that impact people who hire and manage their own employees.

Implementation of the new College of Direct Support (CDS) training

requirements have started, new criminal background procedures have been implemented, and a pilot on new documentation requirements has been initiated.

Articles on these important new direct hire practices are described in more detail in this newsletter.

Please feel free to contact your regional Self Determination Director if you have additional questions about any of these matters.

North Region: Sheryl Kemp at sheryl.kemp@ct.gov, or at 860-263-2485.

South Region: Greg McMahon at Gregory.mcmahon@ct.gov, or at 203-294-5063.

West Region: Beth Aura Miller, bethaura.miller@ct.gov, or at 203-805-7430.

There is no such thing as a bad question.

EMPLOYER TIP FOR THE DAY

PAPERWORK IS YOUR FRIEND!

Keeping track of paperwork may not be fun, but it is an important part of being an employer.

Need some new ideas for better managing your paperwork?

Read page 4 for "Filing Ideas", or ask your broker for help!

COLLEGE OF DIRECT SUPPORT TRAINING REQUIREMENTS



The department has initiated the use of the College of Direct Supports (CDS) internet based training curriculum for all new employees hired by consumers and families who are self directing some or all of their services.

Effective 12/1/08, there are four modules that new employees are required to complete within the first 90 days of employment:

- Direct Support Professionalism (5 lessons)
- Maltreatment of Vulnerable Adults and Children (3 lessons)
- Individual Rights and Choices (4 lessons)
- Safety at Home and in The Community (6 lessons)

Any new employee who can produce documented evidence of comparable training received within the last three years from either DDS or a DDS contracted private provider will be waived from the CDS training requirements.

Fiscal Intermediaries will provide new employees with access codes to the online modules in the College of Direct Supports.

Once an employee completes the lessons, the employer (consumer, family member or sponsoring person) has to sign the CDS E-Learning Training Verification Form and submit this form to the Fiscal Intermediary.

Upon receipt of the verification form from the employer, the Fiscal Intermediary will issue a stipend of \$180 to the employee.

For the first phase of the implementation of this new training program, the funds to reimburse the employee will come out the existing allocation in a person's budget. For situations where utilization approaches 100% the additional one-time funds will be allocated by the region to cover the costs of the training.

The Self Determination Directors will be monitoring this initial implementation phase and can be contacted if there are any questions.

CDS-A LEARNING RESOURCE FOR DIRECT-HIRE EMPLOYERS

Direct-hire employers can also access the CDS online system.

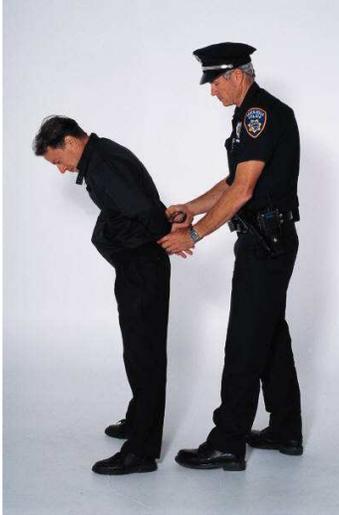
Direct-hire employers who want to access the CDS system can contact their FI. The FI will provide an access code that will allow the employer to see and use all of the available CDS courses (not just the four that self-direction employees are required to complete). There is no charge for direct-hire employers use of this online service.

The CDS system provides several unique features that employers can use to enhance their supervisory skills.

There are online courses for supervisors; there is a portfolio section in each module that helps supervisors to assist employees to demonstrate the knowledge they have learned and

there is an On-the-Job-Training (OJT) section that employers can use to help measure employee performance.

We strongly encourage employers to explore and use this important new resource.



CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS

victions that are not felonies, the FI will forward the criminal background information to Scott Bell, Human Resource Manager, at DDS central office. Scott will review this information with the employer. Previously this review was completed in the region.

ers understand the new requirements that prohibit the hiring of convicted felons and to provide assistance in reading and understanding information contained in criminal history background checks.

DDS requires that a criminal background check be completed for all direct hire employees.

DDS will not authorize payment for any employee who has a felony conviction record.

Based upon this review the employer will determine whether they want to hire the job candidate.

Questions about the new criminal background requirements should be directed to your broker or case manager, or to your regional self determination director.

If a candidate has con-

The purpose of this review is to help employ-

FIND, CHOOSE & KEEP GREAT DSPS

The University of Minnesota has published a toolkit for direct-hire employers titled, "Find, Choose & Keep Great DSPs". This book is an excellent resource for people looking for new ideas on how to find quality, caring and committed direct support professionals.



Ask your broker how you can get a copy of the "Find, Choose, & Keep Great DSP's" toolkit!



DDS has a new transportation website!

You will find information on buses, para transit, ridesharing, trains, and travel training.

Check out how to get reduced fares and what transportation may be available in your town

Check it out at

<http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=2653&q=429550>



NEW DOCUMENTATION PILOT



The department is piloting the inclusion of service documentation on the direct-hire employee time sheets. The service documentation includes the goal areas from the IP and a progress note. The Brokers are working with two consumers from their case loads to test the new time sheets and help evaluate the new format.

The pilot will start in January 2009 and go through March 2009. Expansion to other consumers who self direct services will be initiated over the calendar year 2009 once the format and process have been standardized. Any questions on the pilot can be directed to your Self Determination Director.



Filing Tips To Keep Your Documents Organized

Keeping track of paperwork isn't easy. There are numerous ways to set up an effective filing system. The goal is to be able to find the information you filed in a timely way. Here are some suggestions on how to file your important employer paperwork that you must keep for DDS.

1. Create folders for your direct-hire documentation. When filing, avoid labeling your folders with titles such as "miscellaneous," "general," "pending," or "interesting stuff." Rather, come up with some specific and relevant file names such as "Employee Timesheets", "Support Agreement", "Employee Agreement", etc. Your broker can give you some ideas on what files you need to maintain and how these files should be labeled.

2. Set up a "to-do" file. Label a group of folders 1 through 31, one for every day of the month, and 12 additional folders labeled for each month of the year. Put papers that you need to take care of on a certain date in the correct "to-do" file. Look at these files at the beginning of each week so you know what paperwork needs action or follow-up that week.

3. Consider creating an "idea" file. Drop interesting items in this file with a note explaining why they are there, remembering to put the current date on the note. Every month, examine the file and throw out ideas that you are unlikely to use, then act on the others. Toss out all items after six months; because if you haven't gotten to them by then, you will never get to them.

Self-Direction Employers Get United!

**Sharing information and ideas can be fun
and can help make problem-solving easier.**

We know that hiring and managing your own employees is not always easy. We at DDS would like to learn how we help you to connect with others in order to:

- Share information about hiring and managing employee experiences,
- Ask questions in a confidential, secure forum,
- Brainstorm new ideas to make the self-direction process work better.

How would you like to connect with other individuals who hire and manage their employees?

Please check each box that interests you.

- I prefer making one-to-one personal connections. I would like to have a volunteer peer who is self-directing their supports come and visit me at my home so that we can meet privately.
- I prefer not to travel. I'd like to make connections through teleconferences.
- I prefer to connect through an online listserv.
- I'd like to attend classes on hiring and managing employees.
- I prefer to read newsletters, articles, etc. about hiring and managing employees
- I would like to participate in a regional Advisory Committee
- I'd like to attend a self-direction support group.

If you are interested in being part of a self-direction support group, when would you willing to meet? (Please circle your answer) Day Evening Weekend

How far would you be willing to go to get to a meeting? (Please circle your answer.)

10 miles or less 10-30 miles 30 miles or more

- Please list and describe any other ideas you may have for helping people who self-direct their services to connect with one another:

- CONNECTING IS NOT FOR ME

I feel I already have enough information about self-direction and I do not need to connect with others for more information.

Name:

Region:

Address:

Phone or Email

Please return this completed survey to Robin Wood at DDS, 25 Creamery Road, Cheshire, CT 06106

A Newsletter for People
Who Hire Their Own
Employees

For more information contact
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DDS

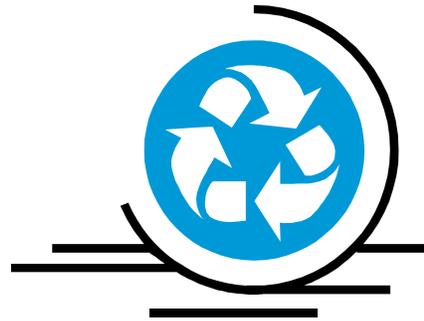
CT Department of
Developmental Services

We're on the Web!
www.ct.gov/dds.com

LAST CHANCE !

TO GET A COPY OF THIS NEWSLETTER SENT DIRECTLY TO YOU!!!

Due to state of the economy and the impact this has had on the DDS budget, this will be the last issue of this newsletter that will be mailed to direct-hire employers. We will continue to post the newsletter on the DDS website, but will no longer provide printed copies via U.S. mail. If you'd like this newsletter emailed directly to you, please provide your name and email address to Robin Wood at robin.wood@ct.gov. We appreciate your support of our efforts to save the environment and to help the department reduce its printing and mailing costs.



COMING SOON! SELF ADVOCACY CONFERENCE

The People First Self Advocacy Conference will be held May 30, 2009 at the Bristol Clarion Hotel in Bristol, CT.

Attendance at the conference is an excellent way to meet new people, learn new skills and have fun!

The conference will begin with a keynote speech by a representative from S.A.B.E., a national self advocacy organization and will end with a dance.

Conference participants will have a choice of attending a variety of

termination and self advocacy movies, or participating in fun hands-on activities.



presentations including traditional theater style sessions, round-table discussions, viewing and discussing self de-

Topics will include information about making good choices of services, hiring your own staff, developing good relationships with others, speaking up for yourself and more!

Keep a look out for the People First conference registration brochure which will be available soon!