

Office of Aging and Disability Services

Shared Living Handbook

Effective August 1, 2012

(Amended on July 11, 2012 by the Shared Living Redesign Committee – revised 3-1-2014)

Introduction: Shared Living is an option in a range of housing and support options for individuals with intellectual disabilities. This program is supported by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) through the MaineCare program (Section 21, Home and Community Based Waiver Services).

The Office of Aging and Disability Services (OADS) within DHHS is strongly supportive of this program and will take steps to continue to grow this option for housing and living supports for individuals with intellectual disabilities. This Handbook is designed to provide a guide to the Shared Living Program, including expectations and outcomes.

The DHHS regulatory framework implements a team approach to the provision of shared living services, with each member of the team playing a key role in the success of the program.

OADS is responsible for administering:

- Direct Support Professional training for all Shared Living Home Providers.
- Medication Administration training required for all Shared Living Home Providers.

Shared Living Home Providers are responsible for:

- Obtaining the requisite training and determine where and when the training will be obtained
- **In order to be reimbursed for the OADS approved medication administration course the Shared Living Provider/Prospective Contractor must have successfully completed the following four lessons in the Maine College of Direct Support, online and**

classroom training modules: Introduction to Developmental Disabilities, DSP Professionalism, Maltreatment, Individual Rights and Choice. The remainder of the Maine College of Direct Support - Direct Support Professional training, must be completed within six months.

The individual's Case Manager, who either works for state government (OADS) or for an agency specifically designated by OADS to provide case management services, is responsible for:

- Developing and writing the Person-Centered Plan with input from the individual's team and overseeing the coordination of the meetings.
- Playing a key role in quality assurance, particularly in assessing the quality of life experienced by the individual living in a Shared Living home.

Administering Agencies provide essential contracted consultative services to the Shared Living Home Provider and supportive services to the individual served. Administering Agencies are responsible for:

- Recruitment and matching the individual's and team needs with an appropriate home on behalf of DHHS-OADS.
- Billing of MaineCare and disbursement of MaineCare dollars for all services provided to the individual.
- Assessing, for the benefit of the individual's team, whether the Shared Living Home Provider meets the qualifications as stated in DHHS-OADS guidelines and Medicaid Benefits Manual (Maine Care Section 21).
- Playing a key role in quality assurance, particularly by providing consultation regarding compliance with MaineCare regulations as outlined in the MaineCare Benefits Manual and in assessing the quality of life experienced by the individual living in the Shared Living home.

Important areas to note:

- The Shared Living Home Provider is self-employed and provides the Shared Living service (Home Supports) as an independent contractor of an Administering Agency.
- DHHS-OADS acts as the placement entity.
- A Shared Living Home Provider is in business for him/herself and works independently in his/her own home and community with minimal oversight and control.
- A Shared Living Home Provider must maintain his/her qualified status by adhering to DHHS-OADS policy, MaineCare rules, and other pertinent State laws and regulations.
- The Shared Living Home Provider supplies, at his/her own expense: all housing, food, transportation, equipment, tools, materials, supplies, and care giving activities to perform the provisions of the Shared Living service (Home Supports).
- A Shared Living Home Provider, in order to be reimbursed for the OADS approved medication course must successfully complete the following College of Direct Supports Direct Support Professional online and classroom training modules: Introduction to Developmental Disabilities, DSP Professionalism, Maltreatment, Individual Rights and Choice. The remainder of the online and classroom sessions must be completed within six months.
- A Shared Living Home Provider has the right to contract with the agency of his/her choice for purposes of providing Share Living Home services to an individual per DHHS-OADS and MaineCare Benefits Manual rules.
- The Shared Living Home Provider is not paid wages for the services he/she provides. He/she receives a stipend at an annual rate set by the Administering Agency and funded by MaineCare. This payment is classified by the Internal Revenue Service as a “Difficulty of Care” payment.

What is Shared Living? Quite simply, Shared Living provides a home and supports for an adult with intellectual disabilities in the home of a qualified contracted provider. Shared Living is

somewhat like foster care, but different in emphasis, in that the home is a more cooperative sharing of space and supports between adults. The individual becomes part of the fabric of the Shared Living Home Provider's life, the provider's family, home, and community.

Who is shared living for? Shared Living is for any individual with intellectual disabilities who prefers to live in a family-type home, who is eligible for MaineCare services under Section 21 Home and Community-Based Waiver, and whose Person-Centered Planning team has determined this to be an appropriate living option. Shared Living can be for any individual if the correct match is found. For example, the program is generally not designed for individuals with nursing care needs unless the Shared Living Home Provider has the experience and skills to meet those needs.

Benefits of the Shared Living Model: Shared Living provides many benefits to both the individual and the Shared Living Home Provider. Some of the benefits include:

- Inclusion in the community. Community inclusion has been and continues to be a major focus of supports for people with disabilities. The Shared Living model has proven to be a good means for providing true inclusion in a person's community if the individual is matched and well supported by the Shared Living Home Provider.
- Shared Living can provide both a stable support system and a higher quality of life for the person receiving services. The issue of staff people "revolving" in and out of the person's life is minimized by the model.
- Shared Living is a lifestyle choice that allows the Shared Living Home Provider to provide services from their home; it is not for everybody.
- The MaineCare rules and this model require Shared Living Home Providers to have training certifications in providing services to people with intellectual disabilities and maintain those training certifications. The service quality review performed by all team-members helps assure DHHS –OADS (and the person served) of the highest possible quality and the continued cost-effectiveness of the services.

What are the Expected Outcomes?

The expected outcomes of Shared Living are that the individual has an improved quality of life through:

- Becoming part of the Shared Living Home Provider's family. The individual is welcomed into and becomes an adult member of the family, participating in family activities.

- Receiving services as identified in their plan and making progress towards goals.
- Becoming part of a community. Community activities and community inclusion are a routine part of the individual's life.
- Continuing to engage in personal interests and relationships including relationships with his/her family and friends.

Who can be a Shared Living Home Provider?

A person who has a desire to share his/her home and family life with an individual with intellectual disabilities may become a Shared Living Home Provider if he/she has:

- Successfully passed background checks as required by MaineCare Benefits Manual. All other adult household members who live full- or part-time in the home and/or who will provide support to the individual must also pass background checks.
- Successfully passed team interviews and home visits to assure that the Shared Living Home Provider is both qualified to provide services to the individual and has a home that meets all health and safety environmental standards according to the MaineCare Benefits Manual and DHHS-OADS.
- Successfully completed the training required by DHHS-OADS and MaineCare Benefits Manual for Developmental Services, and verified that he/she has time to provide daily services/supports that meet the needs of the individual and is willing to work towards the goals the team has identified in the Person-Centered Plan.
- Successfully complete the following four Maine College of Direct Support Direct Support Professional online and classroom training modules: Introduction to Developmental Disabilities, DSP Professionalism, Maltreatment, Individual Rights and Choice before working alone with a person. The remainder of the Maine College of Direct Support must be completed within six months.
- Once all these requirements are met, the Shared Living Home Provider must contract with an Administering Agency and comply with all DHHS-OADS and MaineCare requirements.

What is the role of the Shared Living Home Provider?

A Shared Living Home Provider has many responsibilities and plays a pivotal role in the life of the individual sharing his/her home as well as the individual's family. The Shared Living Home

Provider has some basic roles of providing a supportive home environment, inclusion in the community and providing the appropriate level of support. The ultimate goal of the Shared Living Home Provider is being responsible for the day to day activities that accomplish the desired outcomes as identified by the individual's Annual Plan. The Shared Living Home Provider:

- Is responsible for and provides care up to a 24-hour-a-day basis per the Person Centered Plan.
- Maintains a clean and healthy living environment in accordance with the environmental and safety standards and any necessary individual-specific environmental or safety standards.
- Assists in transition or move-in plans and move-out plans.
- Participates as part of the Person-Centered Planning Team.
- Attends to the individual's physical health and emotional well-being.
- Includes the individual in family and community life assisting that person to develop healthy friendships and community activities.
- Provides community access to services and activities desired by the individual including religious affiliation (if desired), physical activities, shopping, volunteering, etc.
- Maintains professional daily documentation in accordance with Maine Care requirements. This includes documentation of progress toward the goals and activities identified in the Person-Centered Plan. This documentation is required by regulation as proof that the MaineCare service for which reimbursement is sought has been provided and is a necessary prerequisite to reimbursement.
- Maintains daily documentation of all medication administered to the individual in accordance with medication administration standards per the DHHS-OADS' Medication Administration in Shared Living and Family Centered Home Support curriculum.
- Provides nutritious meals and snacks.
- Provides for transportation to appointments, activities and employment.
- Reports any unusual incidents to the individual's team (Case Manager, Administering Agency and guardian) and, when appropriate, through the Reportable Events Reporting System.
- Maintains homeowners or renter's insurance at all times.
- Maintains a properly registered, inspected, insured and maintained vehicle.
- Protects the confidentiality of all individual-related documents and information.

- Maintains open communication with the Case Manager, Administering Agency, guardian and Person-Centered Planning Team.
- Enters into a contract for professional support with the Administering Agency.
- Reports to the individual's team any changes in household members or legal status of household members.

What is the role of the Administering Agency?

Administering Agencies work with the individual's team to:

- Find qualified Shared Living Home Providers.
- Assist with matching individuals and Shared Living Home Providers.
- Provide quality assurance reviews.
- Provide billing on behalf of and consultation to shared living providers via a contracted arrangement.
- Perform recruitment activities, including advertising, home visits and reference/background checks. The agency supports the team in assessing whether the Shared Living Home Provider and his/her home meet the criteria to be a Shared Living Home Provider as defined by DHHS-OADS and MaineCare.
- Participate with the Case Manager, Shared Living Home Provider, the individual and his/her family in the matching process which includes making visits to the home and answering questions.
- Conduct quality assurance activities as identified in the Person Centered Plan, DHHS-OADS policy and MaineCare Benefits Manual:
 - Maintain regular contact with the Shared Living Home Provider according to the Person Centered Plan and MaineCare standards.
 - Collect requisite daily documentation, as required by the MaineCare Benefits Manual. Documentation may be maintained at either the Shared Living home or at the Administering Agency offices, but must be available within 24 hours for MaineCare or DHHS-OADS auditing purposes.
 - Conduct home visits as specified in the Person-Centered Plan to assess compliance with Health and Safety Codes, appropriate documentation

requirements (progress notes and medication administration reports) and general requirements for an appropriate home environment. At a minimum, the Administering Agency must do a home visit every other month with phone contact during the month that the home is not visited. The Administering Agency must share a copy of the completed DHHS-OADS Shared Living Home Visit Quality Assurance Tool with the Case Manager and the Shared Living Home Provider.

- Assure that required background checks initially and every two years thereafter are completed in accordance with MaineCare Benefits Manual standards.
- Data entry to DHHS-OADS for all reports on medication errors and reportable events related to the individual.
- Report to OADS any issues with medication administration, documentation or any other significant issues impacting ongoing support of the individual.
- Act as the billing agent and so provide MaineCare billing services for the Shared Living Home Provider and team.
- Document all quality assurance activities including home visits, phone contacts and consultations.
- Partner with the Case Manager to share information and coordinate activities. Share any individual or home-related concerns with the Case Manager. Partner with other Person-Centered Planning Team members.
- Report concerns to the Case Manager and, when necessary, to the district office of OADS.

What is the Role of the Case Manager?

Case Managers perform important functions in the following areas:

- **Referral:** The Case Manager is responsible for assuring that Shared Living is identified as a needed service in an individual's Person-Centered Plan or service plan. After meeting with the individual's team, a de-identified thumbnail sketch is developed describing, in a paragraph, the needs identified relative to the individual wishing to live in a Shared Living home, and any unique wishes or requests (such as geographic location, interests, etc.). This request for proposal is sent to all Administering Agencies for review for possible matches.
- **Match Process:** The Case Manager is the team member primarily responsible for coordinating with Administering Agencies to find a Shared Living Home Provider that is a match with the individual's specifications for a home. Administering Agencies consult

with the Case Manager on possible matches and this information is shared with the person seeking a Shared Living match. The Case Manager informs the individual and/or guardian about the possible matches identified.

Once a potential match has been identified the team, under the coordination of the Case Manager, arranges for a visit to occur during which the Administering Agency, Shared Living Home Provider and the individual further explore the potential for a permanent match. This process is adjusted to reflect the needs of the individual and therefore varies from person to person as far as number of visits, overnight stays or other considerations prior to a permanent transition.

- **Transition:** Once a match between an individual and a Shared Living Home Provider is identified the Administering Agency, Case Manager and individual and/or guardian arrange a transition plan to the home. The transition plan is developed in a pre-placement meeting prior to a permanent move. The Case Manager facilitates this meeting and authors the Person Centered Plan making any necessary changes, modifications or adding any miscellaneous items needed to successfully transition the individual into the new living arrangement.
- **Funding and Approving the Move:** The Case Manager is responsible for submitting the proposal (created by the Administering Agency), the funding request form, the PCP Addendum that authorizes the move and the guardian signature that approves the PCP Addendum and the move location and provider. The Case Manager is the conduit of the Prior Authorization from DHHS to all the team members.
- **Post Placement:** The Case Manager assures the transition plan is implemented in collaboration with the Administering Agency, Shared Living Home Provider and the individual and/or guardian. The Case Manager conducts two home visits when the individual is present in the home with the Shared Living Home Provider within the first two weeks of placement. On one of these visits the Case Manager uses the DHHS-OADS Shared Living Home Visit Quality Assurance Tool and documents findings within the home. Any pertinent information from the Shared Living Home Visit Quality Assurance Tool is made available to team members for discussion. More visits addressing any transition issues may occur at the discretion of the Case Manager.

A post-placement meeting occurs within 30 days after an individual has moved into a Shared Living Home. The Case Manager facilitates the meeting and reports the results of the two visits. The entire team assesses the transition plan and makes necessary recommendations.

At the post-placement meeting the Case Manager and team determine the future frequency of Case Manager and Administering Agency visits to the Shared Living Home. At a **minimum** the Case Manager must do a home visit every other month (some of which are unannounced) with phone contact during the month that the home is not visited. The Case Manager must share a copy of the Shared Living Home Visit Quality Assurance Tool with the Administering Agency and Shared Living Home Provider. The individual MaineCare member who resides in in the home must be present for at least 2 of the Case Manager Home Visits per year.

- **On-going Checks and Quality Assurance:** As outlined in Section 13 of the MaineCare Manual regarding Case Management Services, it is the responsibility of the Case Manager to assure that the person's plan, including health and safety issues, goals and objectives, and coordination of services, is implemented by the team. The Case Manager is focused on the outcomes for the individual and works with the team to assure the plan is implemented.
- **Person-Centered Planning:** Case Managers are responsible for authoring and monitoring the Person-Centered Plan in Shared Living Homes. The Case Manager will assure that all services are included in the Person-Centered Plan including Shared Living, Community Supports or Work Supports.

How do I apply to be a Shared Living Home Provider?

If you are interested in becoming a contracted Shared Living Home Provider, please fill out the standard Questionnaire form <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads/disability/ds/shared-living/documents/shared-living-questionnaire.doc> and submit it to the Administering Agency in your area http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads/disability/ds/resource_directory/index.shtml

Or visit <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads/disability/ds/index.shtml>