



The Independent Facilitator in Self-Determination

Basics

The Independent Facilitator (IF) is someone you hire to help you in the Self-Determination Program through your regional center. Hiring an IF is *optional*. You pay for the IF out of our budget, or you can see if a family member or friend can do it for free (they still have to be trained and qualified). Your regional center Service Coordinator may also serve as your free IF, if you choose.

Please note, all of the information contained in this resource is based on the Person Centered Plan (PCP)/Individual Program Plan (IPP).

Possible Roles of the Independent Facilitator (IF)

- ◆ Define needs (both immediate and long-term)
- ◆ Participate in the Person Centered Plan (PCP)
 - ◆ Additional roles: Conduct the PCP and/or Advocate in the PCP
- ◆ Participate in the Individual Program Plan (IPP)
- ◆ Find & secure resources (providers, programs, services, supports)
- ◆ Negotiate, write, and monitor contracts (rates, service hours, etc.)
- ◆ Help you make and implement your budget
- ◆ Resolve issues (providers, programs, interpersonal, etc.)

*You may choose for your IF to fulfill one or more of the above-suggested roles based on your needs and preferences. For example, you may choose another person to conduct your PCP and assign your IF the responsibility to find and secure resources, negotiate your contracts and implement /monitor your budget.

Qualities of a Good Independent Facilitator (IF)

(Adapted from Support Broker Training (2005), Idaho Dept. of Health & Welfare)

- ⇒ A “skilled generalist”
- ⇒ Recognizes the inherent worth of the person served, uniqueness, and right to live the life they choose
- ⇒ Understands the developmental services system
- ⇒ Creative / Out-the-box thinking
- ⇒ Has a commitment to empower others
- ⇒ Understands and advocates for basic human rights
- ⇒ Able to prioritize work tasks and keep deadlines
- ⇒ Calm under pressure
- ⇒ Can support a client without imposing personal or professional bias

Qualities (continued)

- ⇒ Responsive / Prompt replies to calls, texts, emails, etc.
- ⇒ Tactful and diplomatic
- ⇒ Empathetic
- ⇒ Patient
- ⇒ Trustworthy
- ⇒ Collaborative / Good negotiator
- ⇒ Aware of their own limits
- ⇒ Knows where they can go when they get stuck
- ⇒ Ethics that align with yours
- ⇒ Understanding of your communication style and preferences

Possible Interview Questions to Ask Potential IF

(Adapted from materials provided by DDS)

- * How much do you know about California's Self-Determination Program?
- * What experience have you had as an Independent Facilitator?
- * What training have you had to be an Independent Facilitator?
- * Have you ever facilitated a Person Centered Plan (PCP)? How many?
 - * How do you prepare? What is your style?
- * How well do you know my community?
- * Are you aware of activities in my area that I might be interested in?
- * How would you go about helping me to find services to help me meet my goals?
- * How will you help me figure out my budget?
- * Can you advocate for me at my IPP? IEP? PCP?
- * Can you advocate for me to get benefits, such as SSI or IHSS? Or help me troubleshoot problems with these systems?
- * Do you also help manage workers? How?
 - * How would you help me if I am unhappy with the job that one of my workers is doing?
- * How will you keep in touch with other members of my support team?
- * Are you willing to adapt your services to meet my specific needs and preferences? (Give your own examples of what is important to you).
- * Are you willing to negotiate a price based on my specific needs?
- * Given what you know about what I need, how much would you charge?
- * When are you available to start?

Resources

- Welfare and Institutions Code, Section 4685.8 (c)(2) "Independent facilitator"
- CA Department of Developmental Services: <https://dds.ca.gov/initiatives/sdp/>
- Statewide Self-Determination Advisory Committee: <https://scdd.ca.gov/ssdac/>