

To: Individuals Receiving DD Waiver Services and Their Families and Caregivers

Subject: SIS® Interview Process

From: Dawn Traver, DBHDS Waiver Operations Director

Date: 7/27/15

You may be aware that the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) has begun a redesign of the Intellectual Disability (ID) and Developmental Disabilities (DD) waivers. One of the benefits of the waiver redesign is an increase in service options for individuals with DD, specifically residential services options. A new requirement within the waiver redesign is for all current and new enrollees to DD waiver services to be assessed on a standardized assessment tool. DBHDS has selected the Supports Intensity Scale® (SIS®) as the assessment that will be used for this purpose. The SIS® asks the individual, and those who support him or her, to answer a series of questions about the person's support needs. The SIS® generally takes about two hours to complete and uses a trained interviewer. The SIS® was designed and tested by the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD). It has been normed and verified as reliable for individuals with autism as well as other Developmental Disabilities. More information about the SIS® can be located at the AAIDD website: www.aaid.org. A SIS® assessment, conducted no later than **April 30, 2016**, is required for continued participation in the DD waiver. The information gathered through this process will inform future service planning, as well as lead to each individual having a "supports budget" that meets his/her needs.

Ascend Management Innovations, Inc. (Ascend) is the service organization that has been selected by DBHDS to conduct SIS® assessments with individuals on the DD waiver. After training with individuals, families, and providers has occurred, Ascend will ask DD waiver case managers for the name and contact information for the individual, his/her family members, and providers who will attend the individual's SIS® interview. It is very important that individuals, their families, and providers speak with and respond promptly to phone messages from Ascend so the required SIS® interview can be scheduled well in advance of the required timeframe. It is critical that, once an interview date and time has been scheduled, the interview takes place as scheduled, except in acute emergencies. Unfortunately, as many individuals will require completion of a SIS® within a limited timeframe, each SIS® must be conducted as scheduled. Additionally, DBHDS is assessed a financial penalty for each SIS® cancelled for non-emergency reasons. Most importantly, the absence of a SIS® assessment by the deadline could jeopardize the individual's continued participation in waiver services.

DBHDS is scheduling trainings across the state to acquaint individuals, families, providers and case managers with the SIS®. These trainings will occur during August and September. Look for an announcement of these dates in your area and plan to attend for important information about the SIS®. In the meantime, we invite you to learn more about the SIS® at www.AAIDD.org and Ascend Management Innovations at www.ascendami.com.

Thank you for your attention and assistance with meeting this upcoming challenge. Our sincere thanks to you as we work to ensure you or your family member is able to live "A Life of Possibilities."