

SUPPORTED DECISION-MAKING AGREEMENTS IN VIRGINIA: AN OVERVIEW

WHAT?

Supported Decision-Making- Making a decision with the help of people you trust. They help you think about your different options, but you make the final decision.

Supported Decision-Making Agreement- A way to show in writing who you want to support (help) you, in what areas of life, and how you want to be supported. You can change or cancel it at any time. The Decision Maker and their supporters (or helpers) all agree to what is written in the Supported Decision-Making Agreement.

WHY?

Supported decision-making and Supported Decision-Making Agreements help individuals with disabilities get help with making decisions while keeping their legal rights and ability to make the final decision. They also help to increase independence and control over their own life (self-determination). It is free and considered to be a least restrictive option for getting help with making decisions.

WHO?

Decision Maker- The creator of the Supported Decision-Making Agreement. You must be at least 18 years old, have a diagnosis of an intellectual or developmental disability, and not have a legal guardian or conservator.

Supporters- The people you trust and select to help you understand and make choices.

Supported Decision-Making Facilitator- The person you select to help make sure your agreement is working and everyone is doing their part. This is not required and the person may also be one of your Supporters.



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WHEN?

While you have to be at least 18 years old to create a Supported Decision-Making Agreement, you can use supported decision-making at any age to help with making choices and increasing self-determination. You can also start the discovery process and talking about decision making before someone turns 18. Learning to make choices takes time and should be practiced from an early age. There are tools that can help you start the discovery process and talk about decision-making on the DBHDS website.

HOW?

Supported Decision-Making Agreements can be made by you and the people you trust to be your Supporters. You can talk with the people you trust and use the activity sheets (Discovery Tools) to help you think about what you want or need help with, how you want help, and who you want to help you. You can use Virginia's Supported Decision-Making Agreement form or your own form. If you make your own Supported Decision-Making Agreement form, make sure it includes these things: who you want as your Supporter(s), when you want help, how you want to receive help. Make sure that you and your Supporter(s) agree to the information and sign the form.

WHERE?

More information on supported decision-making, Discovery Tools to help with creating your Supported Decision-Making Agreement, and the Virginia Supported Decision-Making Agreement template can be found on the DBHDS website.



SCAN ME

