

Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services
Division of Developmental Services
Virginia Standard Operating Procedures for the SIS® and Review Process

What is the Supports Intensity Scale® (SIS)?

The Supports Intensity Scale is a standardized and norm-referenced assessment which was developed in 2004 by the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD). This assessment has been tested nationwide to ensure validity and reliability. More information can be found on the AAIDD web site: www.aidd.org.

The SIS is an assessment of an individual's support needs at the time of the interview. The SIS gathers information through an interview with the individual and people who know the individual well and with whom they have frequent contact. The people who answer interview questions are called "Respondents."

A "Respondent" is defined as a person who has known the individual well for at least the last 90 days and has observed the individual closely in one or more environments for substantial periods of time. 90 days following an individual's assignment in the Waiver Management System (WaMS) to the SC, the assigned SC may participate in the individual's SIS interview as a respondent.

A trained Interviewer collects information from respondents and/or the individual on many aspects of community living. The interview questions focus on the supports an individual would need if he/she were to do these activities like any other person his/her age living in the community without a disability.

A copy of the SIS report, is sent to the family and providers within 15 business days of the SIS interview by the SC. If electronic attempts to email the report are unsuccessful, an extension of 5 additional business days is permitted for the delivery of a hard copy. A copy of the SIS report is maintained in the individual's record by the SC and providers.

Virginia Standard Operating Procedures for the SIS

1. The SIS is administered by an AAIDD endorsed SIS Interviewer. Only an AAIDD SIS with the Virginia Supplemental Questions will be utilized.
2. Unless otherwise indicated, it is expected that the individual participates as a respondent in his/her interview. The individual is free to choose his or her level of participation in the interview. Regardless of the individual's participation level, the SIS Interviewer must meet the individual.
3. Legal guardians must be invited to participate in the SIS interview.
4. The SIS Interviewer will explain the reason for the SIS, the assessment process, and the role of respondents prior to starting the interview.
5. The SIS interview must be conducted with at least 2 respondents present throughout the entire SIS interview.
6. Respondents must represent different areas of the individual's life (e.g., home, work, and/or community).
7. Each question on the assessment must be asked and opportunity for discussion given during the assessment. Each item in the assessment must be described before it is rated.
8. The respondents describe the individual's support needs to the Interviewer for each item asked. Based upon the information shared by respondents and the Interviewer's professional training, the Interviewer will ask any needed follow-up questions and make an item rating determination. The Interviewer will share the final rating of each question with the respondents.
9. Sections 1A and 1B of the SIS identify exceptional medical and exceptional behavioral support needs. The Virginia SIS Supplemental Questions will be completed as indicated.

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10. At the beginning of the assessment, the Interviewer will
 - a. Document the names of all participants on the “Virginia Standard Operating Procedures Checklist for the SIS Interview.”
 - b. Immediately following the session, the Interviewer will verbally review the “Virginia Standard Operating Procedures Checklist for the SIS Interview” with participants and will ask for their verbal agreement/disagreement with these items. The Interviewer will note the responses and the time at which they were obtained, on the form. Respondents will sign next to their names on the bottom of the Checklist for the SIS Interview.
 - c. If a respondent must leave before the interview has ended, he/she will be asked before leaving to indicate his/her agreement or disagreement that SOPs were followed while he/she was present.
 - d. A SIS interview will not move forward with less than 2 respondents.
11. No audio or video recording of the SIS interview is permitted. This prohibition includes the use of security recording devices.

What if there are concerns about how the SIS was conducted?

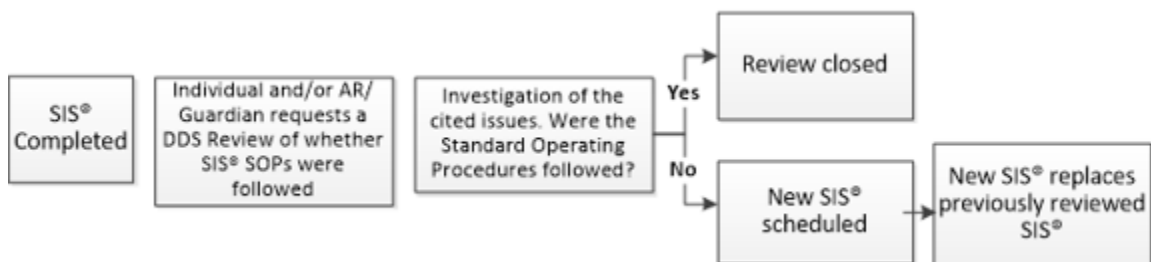
The individual, and/or his/her guardian/authorized representative who participated in the interview may request DBHDS to review whether the Virginia Standard Operating Procedures for administration of the SIS were followed.

A SIS rating itself is not appealable, as on-going professional training is required to assign an accurate rating.

Process for Individuals and Guardians to Seek Review of Compliance with the Virginia Standard Operating Procedures:

1. If a SIS standard operating procedure review is desired, the individual, and/or his/her guardian/authorized representative who were in attendance at the interview, shall request review within 30 business days of the date of receipt of the SIS report by submitting a completed and signed copy of the Virginia SIS Review form along with a letter that details the specific ways in which the requestor believes the Virginia Standard Operating Procedures were not followed.
2. The Review form, letter, and any supporting documentation shall be mailed to the SIS Review Unit DBHDS Division of Developmental Services (DDS), PO Box 1797, Richmond, Virginia 23218-1797.
3. The Virginia SIS Quality Manager in consultation with the DDS Regional Support Manager, the vendor, and the SC will investigate the issues raised. DDS will issue a decision finding that the Virginia Standard Operating Procedures were either followed or not followed. A final decision will be rendered within 60 business days of the date the Review form is received by DBHDS. Notification to the requestor and SC/CM will be sent within 3 business days of the decision.
4. If it is found by DDS that the Virginia Standard Operating Procedures for the administration of the SIS were not followed, a new SIS will be requested and scheduled with an AAIDD endorsed Interviewer within 90 days of the decision rendered by DDS. If it is found by DDS that the Virginia Standard Operating Procedures were followed, the review will be closed with no further action.
5. The DDS determination regarding compliance with the Virginia Standard Operating Procedures is final.

Review Process Flow Chart



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This form is used to report that the interview was not conducted according to Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). If this is not your intent, do NOT complete the form.

Please send a completed and signed copy of this form with a letter detailing the specific ways in which the Virginia Standard Operating Procedures for the administration of the SIS were not followed to DDS SIS Review Unit at the address listed below. Information about the Review process is available at www.dbhds.virginia.gov under Getting Help/Waiver Services/Supports Intensity Scale

Name of individual who receives services: _____

CSB/BHA/Training Center: _____

Please check item(s) not followed during the SIS.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Check items NOT followed during the SIS	Standard Operating Procedures for Conducting a SIS (This list is not all inclusive. Refer to pages 1 & 2 for all SOPs.)
	The SIS Interviewer left the assessment with a full picture of needed supports both in the home and in the community.
	During the introduction, the SIS Interviewer explained the reason for the SIS, the assessment process, and the role of respondents.
	The SIS interview was conducted with at least two respondents who are defined as persons who have known the individual well for at least the last 90 days and have had recent opportunity to observe the individual in one or more environments for long periods of time. 90 days following an individual’s assignment in the Waiver Management System (WaMS) to the SC, the assigned SC may participate in the individual’s SIS interview as a respondent.
	At least 2 respondents were present for the entire interview.
	Opportunity for discussion was given after each question.
	Items on the assessment were described as necessary.
	Based on information shared by respondents, the Interviewer confirmed the appropriate SIS ratings.
	The final rating of each question was shared with the respondents.
	The SIS exceptional medical and exceptional behavioral questions were discussed in the interview.
	Other (Identify the SOP that was violated.)

Print NameSignatureDate

Relationship to Individual Receiving Service

Contact Information: Phone number, mailing address

Mail this form, letter and any supporting documentation to:
DDS SIS Review Unit
DBHDS
PO Box 1797
Richmond, VA 2321

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SIS Interview Information for Respondents

- In order to achieve a current and accurate picture of needed supports, it is requested that respondents not bring the following:
 - Copies of old SISs
 - Copies of SIS expanded clarifications or
 - Other assessments like the Virginia Individual Developmental Disabilities Eligibility Survey (VIDES), Inventory for Client and Agency Planning (ICAP), etc., as they are not needed.
- If respondents require a break, the assessor will pause the assessment to allow everyone the same opportunity.
- In order to assure the interview is conducted with full attention on accurate and timely completion of the SIS:
 - laptops or tablets should be turned off and put away for the duration of the interview, unless being utilized as a personal communication device.
 - Cell phones should be turned off or set to vibrate and should not be answered unless the respondent has informed the interviewer, prior to the interview, that he expects to receive an emergency call.
 - Texting is not permitted during any part of the interview.
- AAIDD does not allow audio or video recording of the SIS interview.
- During the interview, it is the respondent's responsibility to accurately and honestly describe needed/provided supports in response to the Interviewer's questions so the Interviewer may determine an accurate rating.
- To ensure that the Interviewer has a clear picture of the supports needed for the individual, he/she will ask follow-up questions. The Interviewer, based on the answers of the respondents and his/her training and knowledge of the SIS, will determine the appropriate rating.
- If Important "To's" and Important "For's" are identified during the SIS, they should be for the coming plan year only.
- At least 2 respondents must remain for the entire interview.
- At the beginning of the assessment, the Interviewer will confirm the names of all participants on the "Virginia Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) Checklist for the SIS Interview"
- Immediately following the SIS, the Interviewer will review the "Virginia Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) Checklist for the SIS Interview" with participants and will ask for their agreement/disagreement with these items.
- The Interviewer will note the responses regarding the SOPs on the form. If a respondent must leave before the interview has ended, he/she will be asked before leaving to indicate his/her agreement or disagreement that SOPs were followed while he/she was present. The participant will also be asked to sign the SOP Checklist.