

Supported Decision-Making

Supported Decision-Making (SDM) is a way that you can get help making decisions about your personal life, health, and/or money. You choose one or more people who you trust to be your **supporter**. This means, you have a say in who you do, or do not, want to be your supporter. A supporter's job is to make sure you have all the tools and information you need to make your own decisions. Each person's supported decision-making agreement can look different. These agreements are written to explain what you want.

Where can I use this support in my life?

The table below shows examples of how you can use Supported Decision-Making.

Money

Your supporter can help you:

- Budget your monthly expenses
- Choose how much money to spend
- Complete tasks like opening a bank account and filing taxes

Healthcare

Your supporter can help you:

- Schedule and attend doctor's appointments
- Understand medical forms and information
- Choose a treatment plan

School

Your supporter can help you:

- Attend IEP meetings
- Manage schoolwork
- Advocate for accommodations and additional services

Personal life

Your supporter can help you:

- Set personal goals
- Plan your social and community activities
- Organize transportation

Housing

Your supporter can help you:

- Decide where you want to live and who you want to live with
- Tour houses or apartments
- Understand leases and legal agreements

Post-secondary life

Your supporter can help you:

- Plan for college or trade school
- Choose a career path
- Set career goals

Additional information and a full list of references are available at

<https://www.delawareautismnetwork.org/resources/supported-decision-making/>

Steinbrecher, A., Ferrara, N., Mallory, S., & Legal Support Choices Project Advisory Group (2025).

Supported decision-making. University of Delaware Center for Disabilities Studies.

More information about Supported Decision-Making

Who is the decision-maker?

If you use Supported Decision-Making, you are the decision-maker. You can get help from trusted people in your life, but you make all final decisions.

Does Supported Decision Making require a court hearing?

No, a court hearing is not required when creating a Supported Decision-Making agreement.

Can Supported Decision Making be changed? If yes, by who?

Yes, you can update or change your Supported Decision-Making agreement at any time, in writing. You and your supporter(s) will need to sign and date the new agreement.

Where can I go to learn more about Supported Decision-Making?

You have choices when it comes to legal support when you turn 18. Supported Decision-Making is a choice that is available in Delaware. Other states may have different rules or may not offer the same legal support choices as Delaware.

Visit https://dhss.delaware.gov/dsaapd/supported_decision_making.html to learn more about Supported Decision-Making and to download a copy of the Supported Decision-Making Agreement Form.

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