



The Self-Determination Initiative

Why is Self-Determination Important?

Self-determination empowers people to exercise their right to get involved in their community, become more independent, and experience authority over their own lives.

What is the Self-Determination Initiative at DDRC?

DDRC Self-Determination Initiative earmarks funds to help people with disabilities reach goals of their choice that are important to them. It helps families find reliable resources within the community outside of limited disability services. Using these funds during the transition years can help young adults think about what they want to do when they leave school. Funding has been used for things like:

- tutoring to learn how to read or write
- equipment or technology supports to start a business
- communication supports
- career development
- learn how to ride the bus independently
- music skills to play in a band
- camp experiences to build social skills and/or self-esteem
- pay for initial fees for a recreation/fitness center to start a healthier lifestyle

The Self-Determination Initiative was approved by the DDRC Board of Directors with Jefferson County Mill Levy dollars. This initiative is purposely intended to be flexible and fluid in contrast to our Medicaid and State funding streams. It is designed to “jumpstart supports” without creating a reliance on continued funding and services.

Who’s Eligible?

People who:

- are 18 years old or older
- live in Jefferson County
- are eligible for developmental disabilities adult services through DDRC
- are open to thinking differently while finding resourceful ways to work toward a future they are passionate about

The person at the focus of the planning, and those who love the person, are primary authorities on the person's life direction. The essential questions are: "Who is this person?" and "What community opportunities will enable this person to pursue his or her interests in a positive way?"

- John Obrien and Herb Lovett

1st Step

Arrange to learn about personal futures planning. This planning helps young adults not only think about their interests but it creates a blueprint to help them explore their goals.

2nd Step

The results of the planning process can help young people identify certain activities or projects that may be paid for with Self Determination dollars. These activities or projects are described in an application form. The application form must show how the activities or projects will lead to greater Self Determination for the applicant. A plan on how to spend the money, budget, will be part of the application.

3rd Step

Applications will be reviewed by a committee made up of DDRC and The Arc in Jefferson County. Typically, applicants will learn what was approved/not approved through a letter sent within approximately a month and a half.

4th Step

Arrangements will be made through DDRC to begin funding the activities or projects that were approved.

5th Step

DDRC will stay in touch with your family about the benefits your young adult is gaining from the self-determination support.

**Contact Katie Taliercio
DDRC Self-Advocacy Coordinator
To begin the planning process
(303) 462-6528**