

SECTION 1

Introduction to Self-Direction

- What is Self-Direction?
- What is a Personal Assistant?
- Kansas Models of Supports & Services
- The Benefits of Self-Direction
- Rights and Responsibilities of Self-Direction
- Resources To Get You Started
- Section 1 Checklist

Introduction to Self-Direction

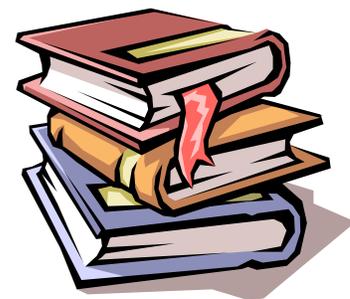
Welcome! The Kansas Personal Assistance Supports and Services (K-PASS) Self-Direction Toolkit offers a step-by-step look at self-direction. As a person with a disability you may be new to directing your personal assistance services or you may want to change the current system you have in place. Many have discovered that choosing to self-direct is the best way for them to make sure they get the individualized services they want.

The purpose of the Kansas Self-Direction Toolkit is to provide people with disabilities the information and tools they need to hire and manage their personal assistant supports and services.

This Toolkit was developed to take you through each step of the process from developing a job description, selecting a payroll agent, advertising for personal assistants (PAs), screening, interviewing, selecting and then training those people you hire, as well as managing, paying and even dismissing a personal assistant if necessary. The Toolkit includes tips on planning for emergency back-up PAs, definitions of abuse, neglect, and exploitation and other useful resources. There is a list of all of the topics, sections and appendices in the Table of Contents.

One way to use the Toolkit is to start with Section 1 - Introduction to Self-Direction, and work your way through each of the other sections one by one. Another way you can use this Toolkit is to pick the section or topic that most interests you and start there. The Toolkit was developed so that you can mix and match the sections in the way that best suits you.

Let's start by defining self-direction.



What is Self-Direction?

Self-direction is a management tool that supports an individual with a disability to be in charge of and responsible for the personal assistance services they receive. A person with a disability can direct their personal assistant services themselves or they can select someone they trust to direct services on their behalf. The law permitting self-direction of personal assistance services was passed by the Kansas legislature in 1989. A copy of the legislation, specifically H.B. 2012 and Kansas statute, K.S.A. 39-7,100, is found in Appendix A.

H.B. 2012

As a result, this legislation:

- Gave persons in Kansas who receive services through waiver programs the option to self-direct their personal assistance services, or to have someone direct services on their behalf.
- Established an exemption to the nurse practice act allowing the performance of “health maintenance activities,” by personal assistants.
- Defined assistant care services.

K.S.A. 39-7,100

- Defined HCBS (Home and Community Based Services) services and gave individuals on the HCBS MRDD Waiver the right to make decisions about their personal assistance services, and direct and control these services.
- Individuals on the Waiver may choose to be in charge and be responsible for their personal care assistance services including, but not limited to:
 - selecting,
 - training,
 - managing,
 - paying, and
 - dismissing of a personal assistant.

What is a Personal Assistant?

A Personal Assistant (PA) is someone who is hired to assist people with disabilities with activities they would do themselves if they did not have a disability. The PA's job duties are different depending on the needs of the person with a disability. The personal assistant's job is to assist his or her employer with daily living activities. This includes, but is not limited to, personal care, housekeeping, community access, health and safety.

In Kansas, personal assistance services can be provided by another person but home modifications or the purchase of assistive devices can also be used to increase independence. Looking at all of the resources available including natural supports, paid staff and assistive technology is important in designing the personal assistance supports and services that help you increase your independence and personal control.

Kansas Models of Supports & Services

Kansas has three primary models of service delivery. They are:

- (1) self-directed services,
- (2) self-directed services with an agency or selected person providing supports and
- (3) agency-directed services.

Let's start with self-directed services. In this model, the person with a disability is the employer. As the employer, you:

- interview and select your payroll agent.
- interview and hire your PA.
- check employment and personal references.
- decide what your PA does and when they do it.
- provide the training your PA needs to be successful.
- make a back-up plan so that you have the supports and services you need when your PA is sick or quits unexpectedly.

Some people with disabilities prefer a different model of supports and services. You can choose to self-direct with supports. In this model, you are the employer and you share responsibilities for the direction of your services with others, either an advocate or an agency. You or your advocate (a trusted person who acts on your behalf) directs some

components of your PA services and the agency has the responsibility to direct the other components.

The third model describes agency-directed services. In this model, the agency is the employer and has the responsibility to provide the supports and services needed including conducting background checks. In Kansas, these agencies are called community developmental disability organizations (CDDOs), community service providers (CSPs) and centers for independent living (CILs).

Self-determination is similar to self-direction but not the same

Thinking about self-direction and how it will work in your life might make you wonder if it is the same as self-determination. Since 1996, Kansas has had a limited enrollment program on self-determination. Self-determination is similar to self-direction but not the same. Persons in the self-determination program have more choice and control on how to use their personal budgets. Persons who are enrolled in the self-determination program are allowed to save funds, have more flexibility in determining the rate of pay for personal assistant services and pay for some non-traditional services.

Self-direction and self-determination both support people to:

- select, hire and manage their personal assistants
- choose services and supports to meet their needs
- budget and spend funds to meet their needs

The table on the next page shows the three models of self-direction in more detail.

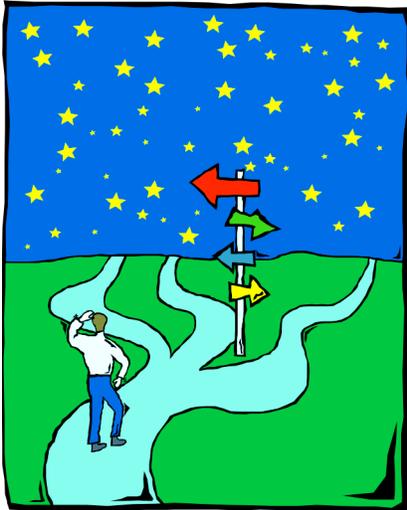
Kansas Models of Self-Direction: Supports and Services

Self-Direction	Self-Direction with Supports	Agency-Directed Service Provider
Person with a disability is the employer.	Person with a disability is the employer.	Agency is the employer.
Person with a disability makes all decisions, including but not limited to, hiring, training and scheduling PAs.	Person with a disability shares responsibilities with others, advocate or agency. Person with a disability or the person acting on their behalf directs some components of PA services.	Agency hires, trains and schedules PAs.
Person with a disability interviews and selects a payroll agent.	Person with a disability and their advocate interview and select a payroll agent.	Agency pays for services. Agency is the payroll agent.
Person with a disability is responsible for his or her own back-up PAs.	Person with a disability and their advocate or agency are responsible for their back-up PAs. Individual may contract with agency for back-up services.	Agency is responsible for providing services and back-up PAs.
Person with a disability is responsible for checking personal and employment references.	Person with a disability and their advocate or agency are responsible for checking references. Individual may contract with agency for this service.	Agency is responsible for checking references and background checks.

Deciding between hiring someone from an agency, hiring an individual on your own or something in between is an important personal choice. You can make this decision for yourself or with the help of someone you choose. Peer support is encouraged. Talking with others who use personal assistant services can be very helpful, especially if you have questions or feel anxious about working with personal assistants for the

first time. As you learn more about self-directing your PA supports and services, you'll be more comfortable deciding how much you want to take on to start. You'll be able to make an informed decision based on what you want to do. In some cases, it may be possible to find a PA yourself and then have that person hired by an agency.

The Benefits of Self-Direction



When you decide to self-direct your personal assistants you take control of your life decisions and resources. As an employer you have the opportunity to make decisions other employers face including one or more of the following:

- Select and hire PAs
- Train PAs
- Set PA's schedule
- Manage, evaluate and provide feedback to PAs
- Pay the PAs selected through a payroll agent
- Fire a PA, if necessary

People in control of these life decisions report benefits including: increased satisfaction with their living and working situations and a higher quality of life.

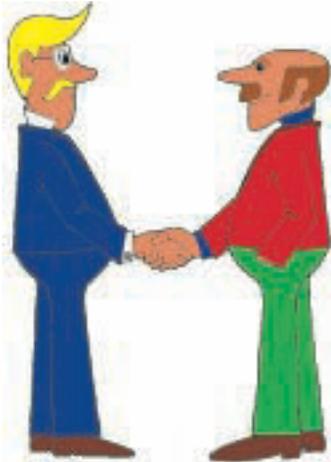
Whether you work with individual personal assistants, an agency or even a volunteer, you'll want to be prepared to act on the choices you make. Learn which community organizations can advocate on your behalf if you need help. To assist you, we have included a list of Kansas organizations, agencies and services to get you started (See Appendix B).

Understanding your rights and responsibilities will help you to be an effective advocate for yourself. Let's start by talking about some of your rights when you self-direct.

Rights and Responsibilities of Self-Direction

As the employer of personal assistants, you have certain rights and responsibilities to yourself and to your PAs. As a person who is self-directing you have the right to:

- Decide who your PA will be
- Direct your personal care
- Decide when your PA will work for you
- Make choices about how much help you want from your provider agency, if you use one
- Be treated with dignity and respect, which includes respect of your privacy and confidentiality
- Replace PAs who don't respect your rights



Experienced employers offer this advice: being a responsible employer makes it easier to keep good PAs. As you understand your responsibilities as an employer, you'll be better able to decide when you are willing or not willing to compromise on your PA services. Persons self-directing have the following responsibilities:

- Be honest and detailed when explaining your needs
- Provide adequate training
- Do not ask your PAs to do tasks that were not agreed upon
- Give positive and constructive feedback
- Be respectful when talking to your PAs
- Make sure your PAs get paid on time
- Develop a workable emergency/back-up plan

You'll more clearly understand how your rights and responsibilities fit into the bigger picture of being an employer as you work your way through the information in the Toolkit.

Resources To Get You Started

Many people with disabilities who self-direct their services say: “Just get started! You can take on more responsibilities later.” This is great advice coming from people who are “walking the walk and talking the talk” of self-direction. Advocates from across Kansas have offered their expertise and their hard work to make the Kansas Self-Direction Toolkit available to support your efforts. Along with the Toolkit, people who self-direct their services and case managers and independent living skills trainers knowledgeable about self-direction, are available to share their expertise.

Section 1 Checklist

Section 1 – Introduction to Self-Direction Checklist	
Check here	
	I understand the term: self-direction.
	I know the definition of PA.
	I read about the Kansas Models of Self-Direction: Supports and Services.
	I understand the benefits of self-direction.
	I read the rights and responsibilities lists.
	I know enough about self-direction to know if it’s something I want to do right now.

