

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS

- 1. How do you support new residents during the transition into your services?
- 2. What is the staff-to-resident ratio in your homes?
- 3. What does a typical day look like for residents?
- 4. How do you ensure the health and safety of residents—both physically and emotionally?
- 5. How often do staff communicate with families about a resident’s well-being and progress?
- 6. How do you handle disagreements between staff and family about a resident’s care?
- 7. Can you share the results of your most recent OPIA?
- 8. How does your organization address any findings from an OPIA report?

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**Alliance for the Betterment of
Citizens with Disabilities**

Empowering People: Providers Shaping Policies

An alliance of community providers in New Jersey devoted to improving the lives of individuals with complex developmental disabilities.

**Looking for an Adult Day or
Residential Program?**

52 KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK



The questions we recommend that you, the individual, family and/or guardian ask the provider, when you are considering residential and/or day program supports and services.

ASK QUESTIONS

In the world of services and supports for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are living in, or planning to live in, the community, the stakes for decision-making are high. The consequences of your choices can have a significant impact on you, and if you are a parent, on your son or daughter. Asking questions is essential to identify and fill in gaps in understanding and to make the best possible decisions for yourself or for your loved one receiving services.

One way to identify whether a provider is a good match for you is by how they respond to your questions. A good provider will welcome your inquiries.

WHY WOULD A PROVIDER WANT TO LISTEN, ANSWER, AND ASK QUESTIONS?

- It shows they take pride in their staff and agency.
- It provides input they can use to improve their services.
- It helps them learn more about you.
- It increases the likelihood that the decision will be a good fit for you, your son or daughter, and the agency.

In addition to speaking with other individuals, families, and colleagues, here is a list of questions we recommend you ask us, the provider.

QUESTIONS DAY AND RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS.

1. What is your organization's mission and philosophy regarding supporting adults with I/DD?
2. How do you ensure person-centered planning and individual choice in daily life and long-term goals?
3. How do you tailor services to the unique needs and goals of everyone?
4. Are families involved in goal planning or progress reviews?
5. Are families involved in care planning or invited to team meetings?
6. What is your visitation policy?
7. How do you welcome and orient new participants to the program?
8. How do you support social interaction, recreation, and community inclusion?
9. What qualifications and background checks are required for DSPs?
10. What kind of training does your staff receive, and how often?
11. How are staff trained to support individuals with varying abilities and behaviors? How often are they trained?
12. How do you support individuals with increased behavioral needs or those who have a behavioral acuity (if applicable)?
13. Do you have staff trained in crisis prevention and intervention?
14. Are there nurses or health professionals on-site or available as needed?
15. How do you handle staff turnover, and how is consistency of care maintained?
16. What does your program do to retain quality staff, and how many of your current team members have been here long-term?
17. What internal quality assurance processes do you have in place to ensure the program meets participant needs and state standards?
18. Are emergency protocols and safety procedures reviewed regularly with staff?
19. What emergency protocols are in place for medical issues, behavioral crises, or natural disasters?
20. What systems are in place to prevent abuse, neglect, or exploitation of residents?
21. What is your reporting process if an incident of abuse or neglect is suspected or confirmed?
22. How are families informed about incidents?
23. Can you provide data on any recent substantiated incidents in your organization and how they were addressed?
24. Have you received a provisional license in the past year? What was the reason and was it corrected?
25. Do you provide respite services?
26. Can you provide testimonials from other families or guardians?

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR DAY PROGRAMS

1. Do you provide transportation to/from the program?
2. How is transportation to and from the program managed?
3. How do you decide which group my family members will be part of?
4. What is your staff-to-participant ratio?
5. What does your yearly calendar (program closures, early dismissals) look like?
6. What are the hours of your program?
7. What is your participant attendance policy?
8. What does a typical day look like here?
9. Can we see a sample schedule?
10. How do you individualize programming based on a person's interests and goals?
11. What types of enrichment activities do you offer (e.g., art, music, fitness, technology)?
12. Are there opportunities for participants to make choices throughout the day?
13. Are meals and snacks provided, or do participants need to bring their own?
14. How often do participants engage in activities in the community (e.g., volunteering, restaurant outings)?
15. Do you support individuals in employment, internships, or volunteer roles as part of your program?
16. Does your program offer on-site or coordinated access to therapies such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, or speech-language therapy? If not, how do you support participants who need these services during program hours?
17. How do you communicate with families about progress, incidents, or daily activities?
18. How do you gather feedback from participants and families, and how do you act on it?