



CDPA Peer Mentoring

Consumer Resource Kit

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What is CDPA Peer Mentoring?

CDPA Peer Mentoring connects CDPA consumers with an experienced consumer or designated representative who is trained in coaching, active listening and program knowledge. They are considered a peer because they have lived experience using CDPA in New York State - just like you.

Peer Mentoring has been demonstrated to work across diverse sectors, from higher education to mental health recovery. CDPAANYS has a long and demonstrated history of running successful CDPA Peer Mentoring programs. All Peer Mentors have completed a rigorous training to become coaching and subject matter experts.

Peer Mentors can help you with:

- How to Enroll In CDPA
- Understanding the CDPA Program
- Recruitment & Hiring
- Advertising & Interviewing Assistants
- Training & Supervision
- Communication Skills
- Knowing Your Rights
- COVID-19 Related Issues
- And more!

**Call the CDPA Peer Mentoring Hotline today
to speak to a Peer Mentor!**

1-855-423-7733

MEET OUR PEER MENTORS

Athena

My name is Athena Savides. I am a CDPA Peer Mentor with the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Association of New York State (CDPAANYS) from Brooklyn, New York. From December 2014 to March 2016, I worked as a Peer Mentor as part of CDPAANYS' Balancing Incentives Program project, *Using Peer Mentoring to Increase the Availability and Effectiveness of CDPA*.

When I am not working, I enjoy studying French and singing. I graduated from Brooklyn College with a degree in French in 2014. I joined the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program in 2012, and have been managing and directing my own personal assistants since then.

Becoming a Peer Mentor was a natural extension of my experience teaching French. I have taught in a variety of settings: a public library, public schools, and informal meetup settings. Working with these varied groups of people, I have been able to build upon my skills in guidance and collaboration.

As Peer Mentors, we guide people through their learning experiences every day. I strive to help the consumers and families who reach out to the CDPA Peer Mentoring Program work to find their own solutions. I feel that by helping others, I am more fulfilled, knowing that I can use my own experience as a Consumer to empathetically help to navigate Consumer Direction.

Joanne (Bilingual English/Spanish)

My name is Joanne Taveras. I am a Designated Representative for my grandmother, I have a son and I live in Queens. This bio will tell you more about myself, my background and the reasons I became a Peer Mentor.

I was born in New York but grew up in the Dominican Republic with my grandmother since I was 2 months old. I came to the United States permanently when I was 9 years old and had to adapt to a new culture and new language. It was hard at first ,but perseverance and my grandmother's guidance helped me get through it. This is one of the reasons that I love my grandmother: she is not only grandmother, but also mom and dad.

Fast forwarding to the future: I am married for almost 15 years (in December) and have a 10 year old son. He's an active boy who keeps me running all over the place with his activities. Before he was born, I used to work for a marketing department at a law firm in NYC. It was a very fast paced job! We decided that it was better to work from home and take care of my son. I landed a part time job for a Consulting Firm based in Georgia in which I am able to work from home and continue doing what I was doing in-house. This gives me the flexibility to be a mom, wife, and caregiver for my grandmother. I also attend religious services and have a strong faith. As a family, we enjoy traveling, playing games, having gatherings with friends and just relaxing at home.

I decided to become a Peer Mentor because I love to help others, especially the elderly. I think they can sometimes be a vulnerable group, similar to children. When I changed from a home health agency to CDPA, I saw the benefits in directing your own care. I was able to help some of my grandmother's friends sign up to CDPA as well.

It brings me a lot of satisfaction when someone thanks me for making a difference in their life. Being a CDPA Peer Mentor is allowing me to continue doing so in a larger spectrum.

Sandra

My name is Sandra Lamb. I am a CDPA Peer Mentor with the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Association of New York State (CDPAANYS). I have been successfully using the CDPA program myself for over 30 years. My years of experience and knowledge have led me to become a seasoned peer mentor. I get tremendous satisfaction from aiding callers in problem solving and successfully directing their own care.

I attended the State University at Albany and have a degree in Communications and a minor in Business. I was an active member of the disabled students organization. Under my leadership, a higher degree of architectural accessibility was achieved on campus. After I finished my four year degree, I continued on an advisory basis. During my final year at the University, I worked directly with the University Administration to continue the push to ensure greater accessibility would continue long after I graduated.

Since college, I have volunteered at several organizations supporting causes that I feel strongly about. I am dedicated and committed to lobbying state and county representatives to ensure that they're aware of the vital role that CDPA and other necessary programs play to the disabled and elderly communities, and the need for lawmakers to strengthen them.

Not Just "Family Caregivers:" Ways to Recruit & Hire Personal Assistants

Are you interested in applying to the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance (CDPA) program, but do not have a Family Caregiver who can work as your personal assistant (PA)? Good news! With the CDPA program, almost any adult that is legally able to work can be your personal assistant. Personal assistants may be anyone other than the consumer's spouse, designated representative, or the parent if the consumer is younger than 21.

Many CDPA Consumers exclusively hire PAs who are not relatives - but how do they find them?

Where can you find personal assistants to hire? Below are some ideas:

- 1) Referral from friends or family members;
- 2) Referral from religious services you attend;
- 3) Post an ad in websites such as <https://www.indeed.com>, www.craigslist.com;
- 4) Are there any colleges or nursing schools in your area? This can be a good place to find a personal assistant;
- 5) If you are in the New York City area, Consumer Directed Services' website: <https://www.consumerdirectedservices.com/>

Now that you have found the right personal assistant in your search, what is your next step?

- 1) **Schedule an interview.** Before the interview, write an outline of your tasks and responsibilities for the personal assistant so you can discuss during the interview;
- 2) **Write a list of questions to ask the candidate;**
- 3) **Background check/check references** – this is optional. Some fiscal intermediaries (FI) will pay for background check costs! Ask your FI for more information.

Remember, the CDPA Peer Mentoring program is here to guide you through the process of recruiting and hiring your personal assistant. They are available and happy to help answer questions you may have.

Call a Peer Mentor today at 1-855-423-7733 or send an email to peers@cdpaanys.org!

Consumer Responsibilities

The CDPA Program has many benefits for consumers. However, those benefits come with a certain degree of responsibility - and when those responsibilities are not met, they can have a costly impact on both you and your fiscal intermediary (FI).

It is critically important to meet the responsibilities and requirements of the CDPA program. After all, it is a Medicaid program, overseen by multiple government agencies. Something as seemingly simple as forgetting to remind a PA to get their annual physical and PPD test completed on time could mean they don't get paid.

One common issue is being late on paperwork and expecting the FI to be flexible or lenient when this happens. If an FI is subjected to a surprise audit from the Department of Health or other government agency, there are serious consequences to the FI. If it is discovered that a consumer's case records lack up-to-date medical documentation for their PAs, the FI can be subjected to substantial fines and will be required to reimburse the funds to Medicaid that were paid out to the PA during the time period they were not in compliance.

One frequent question we see is why some FIs restrict PAs from working more than 40 hours a week. While the FI is required to pay time and a half for all overtime hours worked, most do not receive sufficient funding through Medicaid to cover overtime hours. For this reason, CDPA consumers must hire enough PAs to cover their home care hours to minimize use of overtime.

This is also one of the reasons why CDPA consumers are advised to get more than one backup PA, so that when emergency situations occur (for example, a PA gets sick or injured and cannot work), the consumer can call on their backup PA. Planning ahead in this way safeguards the consumer to ensure they always have care/coverage, while keeping overtime to a minimum.

If a fiscal intermediary has been cited on more than one occasion for non-compliance because of a consumer's failure to meet their responsibilities, it may be determined that the FI has failed to meet their obligations to the program. This could result in the FI being banned from participation in this program or forced to shut down - which limits your choices as a consumer.

The best way to ensure that your FI meets these requirements is for you, the CDPA consumer, to learn about your rights and meet your obligations to the program.

If you are a CDPA consumer having some difficulties and need assistance with your program, you can reach a Peer Mentor by phone at 1-855-423-7733, or send an email to peers@cdpaanys.org. We are here to help.

The Unique Role of Designated Representatives

As you are applying to the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance (CDPA) program, it is important to get familiar with the different roles the program has for participants:

1. **Consumer** – the person receiving the services.
2. **Personal Assistant** – the person working for the consumer.
3. **Designated Representative** – is the person who represents the consumer when the consumer is non self-directing.

Let's discuss the unique role of the Designated Representative. The Designated Representative is a responsible adult (can be the consumer's parent, legal guardian, friend, family member or another trusted adult), subject to the social services district's or managed care plan's approval, who is willing and able to perform some of the following responsibilities on the consumer's behalf:

1. Be responsible for recruiting, hiring, and training, supervising, scheduling and terminating the personal assistant(s) of the consumer's choosing in adequate numbers to meet the needs of the consumer.
2. Maintain an appropriate home environment for the safe delivery of care required by the consumer.
3. Train the personal assistant(s) to implement the plan of care.
4. Inform the social services district or managed care plan and the fiscal intermediary (FI) of any change in status or condition including but not limited to: hospitalizations, address and telephone number changes, vacations, etc.
5. Assure the accurate and timely submission of the personal assistant's required paperwork to the FI including time sheets/records, annual worker health assessments, and required employment documents.

There are more responsibilities that the Designated Representative has that are not listed here.

CDPA Peer Mentors are available and happy to help answer questions and explain more about what Designated Representatives are and what they do. They can be reached by phone at 1-855-423-7733 or by sending an email to peers@cdpaanys.org.

On Choosing a Fiscal Intermediary

Choosing a Fiscal intermediary is an important step in joining CDPA. Fiscal intermediaries, commonly called FIs, are the companies that you work with to pay your personal assistants (PAs) to work with you.

It is recommended to ask for a list of FIs from your Managed Care Plan or local department of social services. This way, you have a complete list of your options. Once you have a list, how do you choose an FI?

First, if you already have a PA in mind, you can ask them what questions they have. For example, some PAs may already have medical or dental insurance through a different job, or through their family. Others may care more about being able to work overtime, or having a higher hourly rate of pay. It is important to communicate with your potential PAs about these considerations.

Here are some additional suggestions of questions to ask potential FIs:

- What are the rate and schedule of pay for your PAs?
- What work benefits are offered to PAs?
- Can the FI staff communicate in your language?
- What form of electronic visit verification (EVV) does the FI require for your PA? Consider whether you and your PA would both be comfortable using that form of EVV for your PAs' signing in and out.

If you have any additional questions regarding fiscal intermediaries, electronic visit verification or any other topics related to CDPA, please feel free to reach out to a peer mentor by phone at 1-855-423-7733, or send an email to peers@cdpaanys.org.

Tips for Interviewing Personal Assistants

How do you decide whether someone who is interested in working as your personal assistant (PA) is right for you? Interviewing helps ensure that you have found a good candidate. Once you have chosen what do you consider to be the best responses to your advertising, here are some tips you can consult for having effective interviews:

1. Conduct phone screenings

Calling promising candidates can be a great way to get to know them before scheduling an interview. you may find that you can already tell on the phone whether a candidate would be a good fit for you.

2. Choose a setting

If, for any reason, you are uncomfortable conducting interviews in your own home, you may want to choose a neutral location, such as a local restaurant or cafe. For other options that fit current social distancing guidelines, please feel free to reach out to a peer mentor.

3. Know your questions

Plan out questions that are important for you to ask your PA candidates. If it is helpful to you, make a list of them, so you do not forget to ask something during the interview.

4. Describe the job

Give the candidates an idea of what is expected of them at the job and the tasks they will do have to do with or for you. Again, it may be helpful to make note of this for yourself before the interview begins.

5. Encourage open communication

As you are asking questions, it is helpful to remember that your candidates may have questions too. They will want to know details about the position, or how they can best assist you. Open communication flow between you and the candidates will help the interview go smoothly.

I hope these tips help you feel more comfortable and confident in your next personal assistant interview. Remember, it is normal to be nervous - and your PA may be nervous too!

For further assistance with interviewing, call a CDPA Peer Mentor for further information at 1-855-423-7733 or send an email to peers@cdpaanys.org.

PA Supervision & Effective Communication

What is the best way to make sure your personal assistant (PA) knows what you need or want them to do? Your style of supervision could be affecting your communication with your PA.

As was written in an earlier post on interviewing, allowing open communication between you and your PA is important. It is the main tenant of a style called coaching supervision.

In a “traditional” employer/ employee relationship, the supervisor tells the employee what to do and how and when to do it. They set the rules and enforce them. On the other hand, in "coaching" supervision, an employer listens to employees' ideas, and works with them to brainstorm ways to resolve difficulties. Instead of telling the employee what to do, coaching supervision makes it a collaboration.

In order to ensure that you are communicating effectively with your PA, here are some tips that you could follow:

- Ask open-ended questions, starting with words like **who, what, when, where, or how**, instead of yes or no questions.
- Be as clear as possible.
- Be firm when something is non-negotiable, such as your safety
- Use "I" statements; for example, "When you do this, I feel..."

For clarification or additional suggestions, contact a CDPA Peer Mentor today!

When you are beginning to work with a new PA, communication is sometimes a trial and error process. If you feel that a PA is continuing to have difficulty understanding, or responding to, your communication style, you could consider setting a (regular) time to meet with them one-on-one. If you are uncomfortable with that idea, you could try sending them an email instead, for instance.

If you would like additional guidance on supervision and communication with your personal assistants, you can reach a Peer Mentor by phone at 1-855-423-7733, or send an email to peers@cdpaanys.org.

CDPA Can Jumpstart Your Life

Goals are important when starting out an independent life. Whether it is by going to school, working, or moving into your own place, setting goals can help you form a stronger sense of personal identity and independence.

The Consumer Directed Personal Assistance (CDPA) program can help you reach these goals while living and interacting with your community. As you, the Consumer, set the schedule of your own CDPA hours with your personal assistants, you can easily accommodate your school, work and social schedule.

Your CDPA personal assistants can help you at work, at school, or anywhere in the community.

These services do not have to take place in your home. That is why CDPA can also help young people move out of your family's home and into your own. Once you are approved and authorized to begin, CDPA services can be used anywhere in New York State - not just the county you live in.

This means that you can receive personal assistance services:

- While away at college;
- On vacation with friends or your significant other;
- At work and on work-related trips;
- While going out on dates, seeing friends, and other social engagements;
- During political protests and advocacy actions.

Being in charge of your own care comes with responsibility and can be hard work, but in turn, CDPA can give you the agency and freedom to do what you want and take charge of your own life.

Are you looking to jumpstart your life and gain more freedom and independence? If you have more questions about how to use CDPA, please call a peer mentor at 1-855-423-7733, or send an email to peers@cdpaanys.org to get started.

Why CDPA is the Safest Type of Care During COVID-19

In the wake of COVID-19, the impact on the country as a whole has been great. It has impacted our economy, the way we work, the way we live, our education system, the medical field; the list is endless. As we all know, there is a segment of society that is greatly at risk: our seniors and the disabled community. We have all heard it play out across the news: horror stories from nursing homes and institutions during the pandemic. Coverage of these problems has brought this more to light now than ever.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance (CDPA) program has allowed many to stay in their homes and communities. CDPA makes it possible for vulnerable people to avoid the dangerous exposure and tragic loss of life that residents of nursing homes and adult living facilities experienced. It has proven to be invaluable for both the consumers that utilize it and the personal assistants (PAs) that work in it. Giving consumers power and control over who comes into their home also gives them the power to safeguard themselves.

CDPA consumers and PAs work together to brainstorm solutions to ensure each other's safety. In some cases, consumers provided for their PAs to stay and sleep on-site to avoid routine travel and risk of infection on public transportation. In other cases, consumers or their families drive PAs who work for more than one consumer to their other consumers' homes in an effort to reduce exposure. When PPE could not be obtained, some PAs took to making and creating reusable face coverings and gloves.

During COVID, CDPA fiscal intermediaries (FIs) have been able to obtain masks and protective equipment, distributing what they could to PAs in the field caring for consumers. Even some Managed Long Term Care (MLTC) insurers were able to authorize extra gloves/protective equipment when other means of supplies fell short for consumers and their PAs.

CDPA brings together caring, dedicated people and organizations who are committed to self-direction and providing individualized services to seniors and people with disabilities in the community. When run correctly, CDPA functions as an unstoppable team of dedicated professionals to care for the most at-risk and vulnerable New Yorkers.

Are you and your loved ones currently dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic in New York? If you need assistance or would like to share your experience, you can reach a Peer Mentor by phone at 1-855-423-7733, or send an email to peers@cdpaanys.org.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. New or Applying Consumers
2. Fiscal Intermediary Questions
3. Managed Care Plan Questions
4. Hiring PAs Questions
5. Training/Supervising PAs Questions
6. CDPA Program Rules Questions
7. COVID-19 Questions
8. Laws & Regulations Cheat Sheet

1. New or Applying Consumers

Who is eligible for CDPA?

To be eligible for CDPA, you need to have an active Medicaid case and go through an assessment to see if you need home care assistance.

How do I enroll?

If you have a managed long term care (MLTC) plan or managed care plan, contact your nurse care manager and ask to schedule an assessment for the consumer directed personal assistance (CDPA) program.

If you don't know who your care manager is, call your plan's Member Services. Tell them you are a current member and ask to be connected to your care manager.

I don't have Medicaid. How can I apply?

You can apply for Medicaid at your local department of social services. In New York City, the Human Resources Administration (HRA) processes Medicaid applications.

Link to list of county DSS locations: https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/ldss.htm

I have Medicaid but I don't know if I have Medicaid through the county or through a managed care plan. Can you look it up?

CDPA Peer Mentoring is not affiliated with Medicaid or the New York State Department of Health. This means that our Peer Mentors do not have access to private health information - so please do not email or share confidential identifying information!

I was told my husband/wife can take care of me or I can take care of my child who is a minor.

Sorry, but the regulations and laws of Medicaid and this program do not allow a spouse or parent of a minor child to be paid as a personal assistant.

How much does this program pay?

Personal assistants are paid hourly. The hourly wage depends on which fiscal intermediary/agency you choose.

Do I have to use an agency?

Yes. New York State requires every consumer to choose a fiscal intermediary/agency and work with them. There is no legal option paid for by Medicaid that will allow a consumer and personal assistant to be reimbursed for services without the use of a third party agency.

2. Fiscal Intermediary Questions

I'm having problems with my FI. Do I have to stay with them?

We recommend trying to work issues out and communicating with program staff at your FI, who are there to help you. Many problems are resolved quickly this way. It is possible to change to a different agency if your problems continue and cannot be resolved.

How much does [SPECIFIC FI] pay?

Different fiscal intermediaries have different rates of pay and different benefits. If you want to compare your options, ask your case worker or care manager at the county LDSS/your managed care plan for a list of agencies in their network. You can then contact them directly and compare.

My FI is using a new phone app/device for timekeeping and I don't like it. Can I refuse to use it?

All FIs are required to use "Electronic Visit Verification" starting January 1, 2021. Everyone in New York will have to switch to using some form of technology. However, if you find the technology your FI is using is invasive, not accessible or is difficult to use, they should hear from you so they can make improvements.

My FI says my personal assistant needs to do a background check or drug test. Is that true?

Personal assistants are not technically required to have federal background checks or drug tests, but they do need to attest that they are not addicted or habituated to alcohol, drugs or narcotics. Some consumers may choose to have them take these tests. Some FIs have extra requirements that are more than what is legally required.

My PA is not getting paid because their paperwork is due. Can the FI do this?

Yes. The FI will get in legal trouble if they bill Medicaid for PAs who are working with expired paperwork! Everyone is concerned about Medicaid fraud. As the consumer, you need to make sure your PAs' paperwork is done in time.

My FI says my PAs are supposed to have the same schedule every week. Is that true?

No. In CDPA, you can allocate your hours differently each week as long as you do not go over your authorized hours. Being able to set your own schedule is your right as a consumer.

Why won't my FI give me medical equipment (gloves, masks etc)?

FIs are not required by law to provide these resources and do not receive funding to provide them. Most FIs are struggling financially with rate cuts from insurance companies and the State. If you are interested in learning more about these issues, contact CDPAANYS at 518-813-9537.

My FI won't let my PA(s) work overtime. Don't they have to?

FIs are required to pay time and a half for any hours worked over 40 in a week per the federal Fair Labor Standards Act. However, most FIs do not receive enough funding from the State to be able to pay overtime, and they are allowed to restrict their overtime policies. The solution to this issue is to recruit and hire additional PAs to cover your hours.

3. Managed Care Plan Questions

Search for a Managed Care Plan by County:

<https://www.nymedicaidchoice.com/choose/plans-by-county/>

List of all Managed Care Plans:

https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/managed_care/mltc/mltcplans.htm

I'm having problems with my managed care plan. Do I have to stay with them?

If you have been with your plan less than 90 days, you can switch to a new plan. If you have been with them more than 90 days, you have to stay for a year before you can change plans.

My plan cut my hours! What should I do?

Ask for the change in writing and be persistent about it. Next, call the ICAN at 1-844-614-8800. They are a team of counselors, many of whom are lawyers, who exist to help people in managed care. Link to ICAN website: <https://icannys.org/>

I need to make a complaint about my managed care plan. How do I do that?

In your Member Handbook, there is information about the plan's Grievance and Appeal process. You can also call the Managed Long Term Care Complaint Line at the NYS Department of Health: **1-866-712-7197**

My plan says my personal assistant can't live with me, but I know that's wrong.

Show them the program regulations and clarification of who can work as a PA on the NYSDOH website: https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/redesign/mrt90/cdpas.htm

4. Hiring PAs Questions

BLACKLIST: THESE PEOPLE CANNOT BE PA

1. Spouse
2. Parent of a child younger than 21
3. Designated Representative

What are the requirements to be a PA?

PAs must be 18 or older and authorized to work legally in the United States. In CDPA, you are responsible for training them, so they don't need formal health care field training. All PAs must have an annual health assessment, PPD test for tuberculosis, and immunization/vaccine records before they can begin work.

I'm having trouble hiring PAs because the pay is so low. What can I do?

We hear what you're saying. The rate of pay is a major problem in this state. The work PAs do is worth so much more than minimum wage. What ways have you tried so far to find workers?

Can my PA work for me using 2 different FIs?

No, they can work for different consumers through a different FI, but consumers are not allowed to use two different FIs to "split" their services.

Can I use overtime to have one PA cover all my hours?

You need to discuss overtime with your FI. If they allow overtime and your PA is not working an unreasonable amount of hours, this could work. If not, they might tell you that you need to hire more PAs or they can't work with you any more.

What do my backup PAs need?

Your backup PAs, if they want to be paid, need to complete all the same onboarding paperwork as your regular PAs. Some people also use "informal" or unpaid backup.

Can I use CDPA on the weekend but have regular home care during the week?

You will need to speak to your managed care plan or the county social services office. Usually, you will be asked to choose one or the other.

5. Training/Supervising PAs Questions

My PA isn't doing a good job. What should I do?

How you decide to train and supervise your PA is a very individual choice. There is no "one size fits all" solution to these issues, but a good first step is to ask yourself whether you have clearly communicated to them what their job responsibilities are and what you expect from them.

Can my PA run errands for me while I am at home or at an appointment?

Yes, as long as the errands are directly related to something on your care plan. You do not have to be physically together for the entirety of the shift.

I need to fire my PA. What do I do?

As the consumer, you have the right to decide to terminate a PA who isn't working out. Don't forget to communicate with your FI and let them know the PA is no longer working for you.

6. CDDA Program Rules Questions

My [RELATIVE] has mild dementia. Is she considered self-directing?

This has to be determined by an assessment performed by a registered nurse. Contact your caseworker or care manager.

Who can work as a PA? Does it have to be family?

Your PA doesn't need to be family. A PA can be anyone who is not your spouse, designated representative, or the parent of a minor child.

We are separated but not divorced. Can my ex-partner be my PA?

In New York, separation means you are still married. You need to be legally divorced before your ex-partner is eligible to work as a PA.

Is a step-parent able to work as a PA for a minor child?

If the step-parent has not adopted the child, they can work as a PA.

Why can't the PA take care of my pets/garden/other tasks?

Your PAs are only permitted to be paid to assist you with what is on your plan of care.

What is 24 hour live-in?

24 hour live-in is a special type of authorization where the PA's shift is 24 hours long but they are paid for 13 hours. If the PAs cannot rest or sleep for 5 hours without interruption, the consumer is not suitable for live-in.

What is “split shift?”

Split-shift refers to continuous care, where a consumer receives 168 hours a week of authorized service. This means there is always a PA on duty actively working.

7. COVID-19 Questions

My FI won't provide PPE. Why not?!

Fiscal intermediaries often do not have access to PPE or money to purchase it. Over the past year, their funding has been cut by Medicaid and managed care plans. However, there is proposed legislation right now that will require plans to pay for and supply PPE.

I heard essential workers are getting hazard pay. But my FI says that isn't true.

Personal assistants are extremely important to keeping people safe during the pandemic. However, the hazard pay is currently being discussed by the federal government. New York's Medicaid program has no funding for hazard pay, so FIs can't offer more.

I'm in traditional home care and told my aides to stop coming. My agency also offers CDPA. What should I do?

If you qualify for home care, you can choose CDPA. Are you willing and able to hire, train and supervise your own personal assistants? Do you understand the difference between home care and CDPA? If you decide CDPA is right for you, you can work with your agency/FI and managed care plan to switch programs.

I don't feel comfortable letting anyone into my home during the pandemic.

That is your right. It is important to communicate with your PAs clearly and establish rules around this. Also make sure you have backup.

PAs wearing masks for extended periods of time - help?

You can use a paper towel or other soft item to help with the irritation.

My PAs are afraid to keep working because of COVID-19 and I have no informal supports.

If you are in this situation, we would advise to talk to all your PAs and backup PAs about safety and trying to negotiate a situation where everyone feels safe. We recommend speaking to a Peer Mentor and your FI.

8. Additional Resources

WNYLC Law Center: A very comprehensive resource on all aspects of CDPA. Maintained by the Evelyn Frank Legal Resources Center. <http://www.wnylc.com/health/entry/40/>

CDPAANYS Website: The Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Association of New York State is a nonprofit trade association and advocacy group that represents FIs, consumers and designated representatives who use this program. <http://www.cdpaanys.org>

NYSDOH Website on CDPA: Includes up to date program regulations and laws pertaining to CDPA, as well as guidance documents, policy updates and more. https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/redesign/mrt90/cdpas.htm

Independent Consumer Advocacy Network (ICAN): Free counselors/legal assistance for tough questions about eligibility, fair hearings, etc. For consumers in managed care.

ICAN Phone Number: 1-844-614-8800

ICAN Website: <https://icannys.org/>