



Supported Decision Making

Adapted from How to Make a Supported Decision-Making Agreement: Guide for People with Disabilities and their Families

Written by: American Civil Liberties Union

Adapted and Presented by: Lindsay Sloan, DDC Center for Self Advocacy Outreach Coordinator

Definitions



- Supported Decision Making: A way to get help making choices while you control the final decision that is made.
- Supporters: People who help you understand and make your choices.
- Deciders: The person who makes the final decision, or YOU!
- Supported Decision Making Agreement: A document that outlines life areas, level of assistance needed, and designates specific supporters chosen by the decider.

What Makes a Good Supporter?

- Someone you trust
- Knows you well
- Someone who agrees to be a supporter
- **YOU CAN CHANGE YOUR SUPPORTERS AT ANY TIME**



Examples of Supporters?

- Family members
- Friends
- Professionals
- Experts
- Service Providers





Life Areas



Communication

Personal Care

Staying Safe

Home and
Friends

Health Choices

Partners

Travel

Jobs/School

Citizen



What level of support do I need

- I can do this alone
- I can do this with support
- I need someone else to do this for me



What do supporters do?

- Gather Information
- Process and understand the information
- Communicate your choice

Figuring Out Who is Who

- Decide which supporters you want to help you for each area where support is needed.
- Write down a specific name
- Always ask and receive consent from your supporters





How Do We Make Choices?

Talk about it. Who did you talk with?

Write down your possible options.

Write down the good and bad things about each choice (pros and cons).

Visit places (like a home, office, or school).

Do research.

Talk to people who had made the same choice before.

What Level of Support Do I Need - Communication

- Telling people what I want and don't want
 - I can do this alone
 - I can do this with support
 - I need someone else to do this for me
- Telling people how I make choices
 - I can do this alone
 - I can do this with support
 - I need someone else to do this for me
- Making sure people understand what I am saying
 - I can do this alone
 - I can do this with support
 - I need someone else to do this for me





What level of support do I need – **Personal Care**

- Taking care of my personal hygiene (for example, showering, bathing, brushing teeth)
 - I can do this alone
 - I can do this with support
 - I need someone else to do this for me
- Remembering to take medicine
 - I can do this alone
 - I can do this with support
 - I need someone else to do this for me

What Level of Support Do I Need – Staying Safe

- ▶ Making safe choices around the house (for example, turning off the stove, having fire alarms)
 - ▶ I can do this alone
 - ▶ I can do this with support
 - ▶ I need someone else to do this for me
- ▶ Understanding and getting help if I am being treated badly (abuse or neglect)
 - ▶ I can do this alone
 - ▶ I can do this with support
 - ▶ I need someone else to do this for me
- ▶ Making choices about alcohol and drugs
 - ▶ I can do this alone
 - ▶ I can do this with support
 - ▶ I need someone else to do this for me



What Level of Support do I Need – Home and Friends

- Choosing where I live
 - I can do this alone
 - I can do this with support
 - I need someone else to do this for me
- Choosing who I live with
 - I can do this alone
 - I can do this with support
 - I need someone else to do this for me
- Choosing what to do and who to see in my free time
 - I can do this alone
 - I can do this with support
 - I need someone else to do this for me



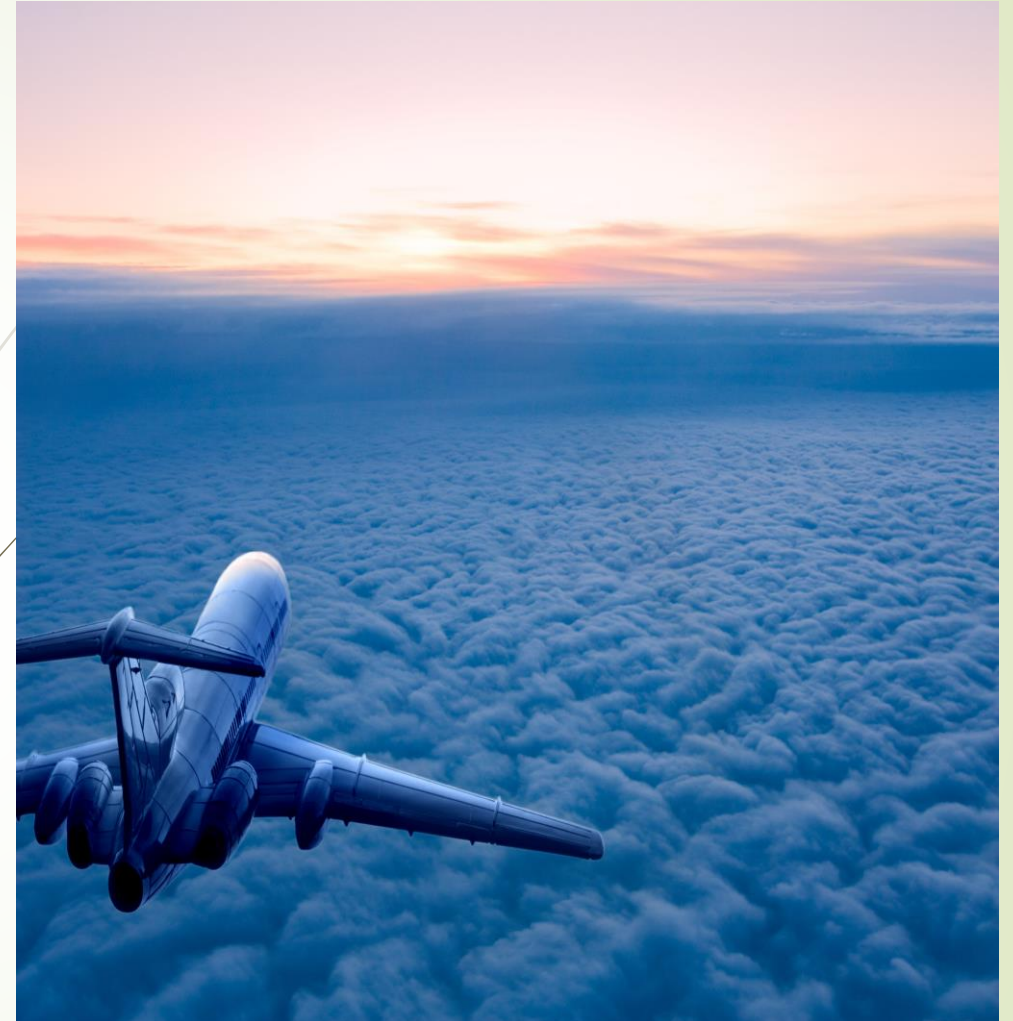


What Level of Support Do I Need – Health Choices

- Choosing when to go to the doctor or the dentist
 - I can do this alone
 - I can do this with support
 - I need someone else to do this for me
- Making medical choices in everyday situations (for example, check-up, medicine from the drug store)
 - I can do this alone
 - I can do this with support
 - I need someone else to do this for me
- Making medical choices in serious situations (for example, surgery, big injury)
- Making medical choices in an emergency

What Level of Support Do I Need - Travel

- ▶ Traveling to places I go often (for example, getting to work, stores, friends' homes)
 - ▶ I can do this alone
 - ▶ I can do this with support
 - ▶ I need someone else to do this for me
- ▶ Traveling to places I do not go often (for example, doctors' appointments, special events)
 - ▶ I can do this alone
 - ▶ I can do this with support
 - ▶ I need someone else to do this for me



What level of support do I need – Jobs

- Choosing if I want to work
 - I can do this alone
 - I can do this with support
 - I need someone else to do this for me
- Understanding my work choices
 - I can do this alone
 - I can do this with support
 - I need someone else to do this for me
- Choosing classes or training I need to get a job I want, and taking these classes
 - I can do this alone
 - I can do this with support
 - I need someone else to do this for me



What level of support do I need - Money

- ▶ Paying the rent and bills on time
 - ▶ I can do this alone
 - ▶ I can do this with support
 - ▶ I need someone else to do this for me
- ▶ Keeping a budget so I know how much money I can spend
 - ▶ I can do this alone
 - ▶ I can do this with support
 - ▶ I need someone else to do this for me



What level of support do I need - Citizen

- Signing contracts and formal agreements
 - I can do this alone
 - I can do this with support
 - I need someone else to do this for me
- Choosing who to vote for and voting
 - I can do this alone
 - I can do this with support
 - I need someone else to do this for me



Why Does Any of This Matter?

- Right now, SDM is a recognized Alternative to Guardianship, but the **SDM Agreement** is not specifically listed as a legal document
- **Therefore**, professionals and institutions do not have to recognize and abide by an SDM agreement if it is presented
- SB 535 has the Supported Decision Making Act in it. It just has to be signed by the governor.
- We have until April 11 to get the governor to sign SB 535. If you are a self-advocate or family member, call the governor's office at 505-476-2200 and tell them why Supported Decision Making is important to you and to sign SB 535.



Resources

- ▶ Susan Mizner, ACLU Disability Rights Program smizner@aclu.org 415-343-0781
- ▶ Jonathan Martinis, Burton Blatt Institute at Syracuse University
jmartin@law.syr.edu
- ▶ American Civil Liberties Union Disability Rights Program:
www.aclu.org/supported-decision-making-resource-library
- ▶ National Resource Center for Supported Decision-Making
www.supporteddecisionmaking.org
- ▶ Center for Public Representation Supported Decision-Making Pilot Project
www.supporteddecisions.org

