

Veteran Handbook | Veteran Directed Care

Making it Happen: Arranging for Services, Supports, and Goods

SUPPORTED BY [YOUR LOCAL VA MEDICAL CENTER] AND [ADNA NAME]

This handbook will help you as an enrollee in the Veteran Directed Care program. The program is available to you through a partnership between the [AGENCY] and [YOUR VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER PARTNER]. This handbook includes information about how the program operates that you can refer to throughout your time in the program. It also explains who is available to support you in this program. Veteran-directed does not mean doing things all by yourself – people are available to support you along the way. This document defines Veteran Directed Care, outlines your responsibilities, and provides information on what to expect from your Person-Centered Counselor and financial management service. Please think carefully about the information in this handbook. With Veteran Directed Care, choice and flexibility come with responsibilities.

[This is a template for your agency to modify as needed to fit your local situation. Please make sure that you complete all the sections that require you insert the specific names of your program, your agency, your FMS provider, and your VAMC. Also, in the body of this template are sections in red and in brackets – such as this one. These are notes that suggest specific areas where you will need to address predictable variations among Aging and Disability Agencies. *These are not intended to be part of your final document.*]

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Purchasing Goods and Services

Some of what you may want to spend your budget on might be things that would make it easier for you and mean that you will need less help from others. For example, a fax machine might help facilitate a timely submission of timesheets for your employees, or a microwave oven might make it easier for you to prepare your own meals.

When you use your budget for something other than hiring someone to assist you, you need to:

- Decide what it is you are looking to buy
- Find out what is the best price for you
- Get a quote, which is a written document showing how much the service or item will cost, including tax and delivery or setup fees, if they apply
- Work with your person-centered counselor to add the service or item to your spending plan and receive approval by VA
- Upon receipt of VA approval, find out if the business will accept a check from [FMS AGENCY]
- Send the quote with a request for a check to [FMS AGENCY]
- **Any good or service you want to purchase will need to be in your [spending plan](#) approved by the VA so that [FMS AGENCY] knows that it is an approved item. You can access a sample spending plan [here](#).**

Spending Plan: A Veteran's plan that contains the services that the Veteran chooses. It includes the service(s)'s projected cost, frequency, and duration; and the type of provider who furnishes each service. The plan may also include other services and information supports that complement purchased services in meeting the participant's needs.

How to Make Sure My Plan is Working the Way I Want

Once you use the services and supports in your spending plan, how do you make sure they are really helping you? Only you will really know if something needs to change. You might want to ask yourself questions like:

- Am I making progress toward the goals I set when I wrote my spending plan?
- Does the person I hired do what we agreed they would do?
- Am I happier now?
- Do I spend more time doing the things I am good at and enjoy?
- Do I spend time with the people I care about and like?
- How could my life be better?

Person-Centered Counselor: A trained individual who assists individual Veterans with understanding VDC requirements, developing a service and support plan and budget, and identifying where or how the developed service and support plan and budget can be implemented. The Person-Centered Counselor also serves as the liaison between the Veteran and other VDC staff.

If you want to talk with someone about these questions, think about asking your family, friends, or others you trust. You can also contact your **Person-Centered Counselor** to talk these things over.

How to Change My Approved Spending Plan and Budget

The Person-Centered Counselor updates the spending plan throughout the year to reflect changes in need or circumstance. You may initiate changes or changes may occur under the guidance of a Person-Centered Counselor and communicated to and approved by VA staff through the Veteran Directed Care (VDC) provider.

Annual Plan and Budget Review

In the first year you are in the VDC program, after six months you will be reassessed to make sure that your spending plan is meeting your needs. After that, you will be reassessed every year to keep your spending plan up to date and renew your eligibility. You can also review the plan and budget more often, if needed. When you review your plan and budget, you may want to make changes, especially if your needs have changed. Contact your Person-Centered Counselor and follow the guidelines described in the How to Change My Approved Plan and Budget section for making changes to your approved plan and budget.

Health and Safety

The VA medical center [VAMC NAME] wants to make sure that you are receiving the services and supports you need to live successfully at home and in the community. Officials from the VDC program and [VA MEDICAL CENTER] will look at the program to make sure program policies and directives are being followed and that VDC participants are receiving the services and supports they need.

If you suspect abuse, neglect, or exploitation by anyone associated with VDC, please call **Adult Protective Services** at [enter phone number].

What if VDC Isn't Working for Me?

If you decide that VDC is not working for you, you can disenroll and return to services through other VA programs. Contact your Person-Centered Counselor to arrange a plan for this if you want to disenroll.

You will also be required to leave the program if you:

- Are not performing your role as an employer successfully and cannot locate a representative to act on your behalf
- Have misused your funds
- Are not able to maintain your health or stay safe

If any of these things are happening, your Person-Centered Counselor will make every effort to talk to you about them and give you a chance to correct any problems. If that does not work, however, your VDC Program Coordinator will tell you by mail and, if possible, directly by telephone or face-to-face that you are being required to leave the program. Your Person-Centered Counselor will work with you and the VA to arrange for you to transition to other services.

Grievance Policy and Procedures

If you disagree with an action affecting your services or disenrollment from the VDC program, you may file a grievance. A formal grievance of disenrollment or service delivery must be sent by mail to [AGENCY ADDRESS] or called into the Program Supervisor at [AGENCY NUMBER]. The grievance must be received by the VDC program on or before 21 days following the action being grieved. You must include the reason for the grievance and any information supporting your position.

Upon receipt of the grievance, the Program Supervisor will review the grievance, consider the decision, and contact you to discuss the situation. If a resolution cannot be reached with the Program Supervisor, the issue will be forwarded to the VA medical center VDC manager for final resolution.

If you have any questions about the process, please contact your Person-Centered Counselor, the Program Supervisor, or [AGENCY PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION]