**How do I become an Independent Provider?**

An Independent Provider (IP) can play a key part in the services provided to individuals with disabilities. An independent provider is a self-employed person who directly provides services to people with developmental disabilities. They cannot employ someone else to provide services on their behalf.

**What are the qualifications to become an Independent Provider?**

Independent providers must be at least 18 years old, have a valid Social Security number, and one of the following forms of identification:

* State of Ohio identification,
* valid driver license,
* or other government-issued photo identification.

Independent providers must have a high school diploma or GED and be able to read, write, and understand English at a level sufficient to comply with all requirements set forth in administrative rules governing the services provided. Independent providers must also hold a valid American Red Cross or equivalent certification in first aid and CPR, including an in-person skills assessment. Independent providers are not employees of the State of Ohio or employees of the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities or the local County Board of DD.

**What are the steps to becoming an Independent Provider?**

Before you apply - Before submitting an application for certification as an independent provider, applicants must have successfully completed:

* Department-provided web-based orientation for independent providers, available in DODD MyLearning,
* and eight hours of training in accordance with standards established by the department that addresses the following topics:
* an overview of serving people with developmental disabilities, including implementation of individual service plans.
* an independent provider's role and responsibilities regarding services, including person-centered planning, community integration, self-determination, and self-advocacy.
* universal precautions for infection control, including handwashing and the disposal of bodily waste.
* the rights of people set forth in sections 5123.62 to 5123.64 of the Ohio Revised Code;
 and the requirements of [OAC 5123-17-02](https://dodd.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/dodd/forms-and-rules/rules-in-effect/5123-17-02), better known as the MUI Rule, including Health and Welfare Alerts issued by the department.

Additional training requirements may apply for some services.

Within 60 days of first providing services, an independent provider must successfully complete training in accordance with service documentation and billing standards established by DODD. These courses are available online at no-cost through [DODD MyLearning](https://mylearning.dodd.ohio.gov/).

**How do I complete the process to become an Independent Provider?**

It is important to have all the required documents together before applying to become an Independent Provider. Not having the necessary documents will delay the review of your application and could result in you having to reapply and pay the fee again.

Step 1 – **Start with a background check.** You must have these sent directly to DODD from the Ohio Attorney General’s office. Visit any certified agency that provides background checks to have this completed. Have the results sent directly to: Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities, 30 E. Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215. Background checks can be completed at the local Sherriff office in your county. It can take up to 45 days for the results to be received by DODD.

Step 2 – **Create an Account** – You will need to create an account in the DODD system. Visit <https://ohid.ohio.gov> to complete this step and gain access to Provider Services Management (PSM). In PSM, this is where you will create and submit the application to become a certified DODD waiver provider. You will need to obtain a supplier ID as well. Visit <http://ohiopays.ohio.gov> to register and complete this process. You will need your bank account information and will fill out an online W-9 form.

You will also need to obtain an National Provider Identifier (NPI) number by visiting <https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov/#/>.

It is recommended that you start this process at the beginning, as it can take 30 to 45 days or longer for you to receive the information needed from OhioPays and NPI.

Step 3 – **Complete Required Training** – Certificates of completion must be submitted as part of the application. It is recommended to complete these training prior to submitting your application online to help expediate the process. The required trainings include:

* Eight-hour Provider Training (Initial) (available at DODD MyLearning at no cost)
* Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) training. This is required for homemaker/personal care (HPC) or waiver nursing services. When taking this training, use 9999999 as your Medicaid number if you have not received your Medicaid number at that time. Training is available at <https://www.sandatalearn.com>.
* Completed first aid and CPR training. This must be a hands on, in person class with American Red Cross, American Heart Association or ASHI to meet the requirement. Online classes will not meet this requirement.

Step 4 – **Complete Application Packet** – The application packet includes the online application and requires the following documents:

* Social Security Card
* Birth certificate
* High school diploma or GED
* Driver license or state ID
* Certificate or transcripts for completed training
* Proof of OhioPays and NPI verification
* Background check (which is submitted to DODD from the Attorney General’s office)
* Valid vehicle insurance card (if applying to provide HPC transportation)
* Official Driver’s abstract (if applying to provide HPC transportation. Must be within 14 days of application submission). Obtain at your local BMV or online at <https://bmvonline.dps.ohio.gov>.

Step 5 – **Submit application and Submission Fee** – At this point, you must pay the non-refundable application fee ($125), electronically sign the application and submit your application. It is best for efficiency to upload required documentation. While you can mail or fax the information to DODD, it is best to upload all your documents at the time of the application submission. Once the application is completed, DODD will review and respond within 30 days of the application. After 30 days, applications with missing documentation will be closed and a new application and fee will be required. Please note that DODD is waiving the initial application fee for an extended period of time. The application will guide you if you need to pay the application fee.

Step 6 – **Application Review** – DODD will review a complete application packet within 30 to 45 days of submission date. If additional documents are needed, DODD will contact the applicant to obtain the documents.

Step 7 – **Final Approval Letter­** – DODD will send an approval letter via email that will list your DODD contract number, Medicaid provider number, certification effective date and expiration date.

**Helpful Hints**

* Have all of your training and documents ready prior to opening and submitting your application.
* Consistency is key. Always use your full name on each document. Make sure all of your documents and certificates have the same name. If there is a legal name change and your documents do not match, provide the court documents showing the change (marriage license, divorce, legal name change, etc.).
* Choose services carefully. Make sure you mark all services that you may want to provide when applying. Keep in mind that some services may require additional documents that will be requested by DODD.
* Check your work. Make sure there are no mistakes on your applications or documents. Make sure all signatures and dates are completed in each area required. Make sure the uploads are legible and easy to read. Name the document file the same as the document that is scanned and submitted.
* Contact your County Board for assistance with the application process or help reviewing your documents to ensure accuracy prior to submission. This is a complimentary service that is available to you.