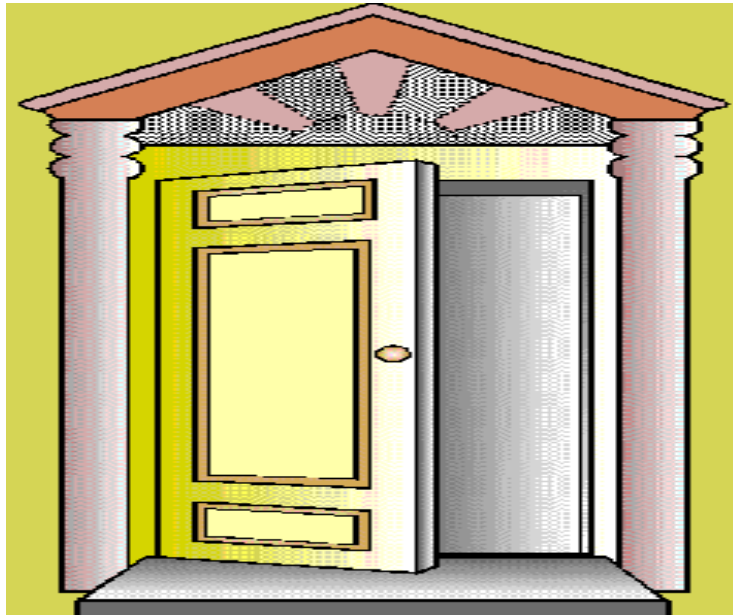


Living Options for Adults

A Guide for Kern Regional Center Clients



**Community Services Department
Kern Regional Center (KRC)
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Introduction

The purpose of this pamphlet is to supply you with some basic information on the types of living options available for adults who are **KRC** clients. Words that are **highlighted** are defined in the Glossary at the end of this pamphlet. In addition to the information about the types of living options, we have included some suggestions for questions that you might want to ask as you look at different places that you might live. We hope you find this information helpful. If you have any suggestions to make the information better, please let us know.

Person-Centered Individual Program Planning

All the services and supports you need and want are included in your **person-centered program plan**. You may have heard it called the **I.P.P (Individual Program Plan)**. You and your **KRC** Service Coordinator make the plan based on your choices and what you need. You will have a planning team meeting at least once every three years and more often if you want. The planning team can also include other people who you want to be there, like your family and people who provide you services. Everyone will work together to develop a plan that is just about you and what you need and want. Your plan will be reviewed with you several times a year and be changed as your choices and service needs change. For more information, please review the pamphlet **More Than A Meeting: A Pocket Guide to the Person-Centered Individual Program Plan**.

Living Options for Adults

Adults with developmental disabilities live in many kinds of places. Some live with their parents. Some live by themselves or with their husband or wife. Some live with friends. Some live on their own or have people coming to their home to help them. Some live with a paid friend. Some live in a residential care home. Some live in a health facility. Where you live depends on what works best for you.

The purpose of this guide is to help you decide what is the best choice for you now. Your family may help you and so can your service coordinator. Each type of living option will be described. You will get some tips to help you make a decision. You will learn how to get started.

Living With Your Parents

Many adults live with their parents or a brother or sister. If you live with your family, your service coordinator can assist you to find a job, school, or day activity. Other services to help you learn skills such as riding the bus, budgeting or other daily living skills may be available. Your service coordinator can also help you to locate recreation. If you have special health needs, the regional center may be able to arrange for nursing care. What you need and want will be included in your **person centered plan** or **I.P.P.**

If you live at home with your family, you probably are eligible for **SSI** benefits and use that to pay your share. You may also have wages. If you need special services, Medi-Cal or private insurance may pay for these, or you may be eligible for **In-Home Support Services (IHSS)**. IHSS is money from the State that is used to hire someone to provide help to people with disabilities. KRC may also pay for some services that are not available from other resources. Your service coordinator can assist you in locating these resources.

Living on Your Own and Supported Living

Some people choose to live on their own. That means you own or rent the house or apartment you live in and you decide who lives with you. Some people can live on their own without much help. Other people need some help. Some people need a lot of help or support. It is up to you to decide what kind of supports you need and want. These will be included in your **person-centered plan**.

Your family or friends may provide some of the support you need. Some of the support you need may be provided by people you meet in the community. You may also receive personal care assistance through **In-Home Support Services (IHSS)**. KRC may also fund for other services and supports purchased from a **Supported Living Agency** or other **vendor**.

If you choose this option, you will be expected to pay for your own rent, utilities and food using your SSI and wages. You are expected to provide furniture and other items you will need for your home. You may be able to get your family to help or you may have to save money until you can afford this. You will have to find a place that you can afford or you may need to find a roommate to share expenses.

There are lots of decisions to be made! Your service coordinator and your family and friends can assist you. If you have decided on receiving supported living services, the agency you select can also help you decide on the best plan.

Living In A Family Home Agency Home

Some people may decide that they don't want to live on their own but would rather live in a family. KRC funds a **Family Home Agency** that will work with you to find a family for you. They will try to match your needs and likes with a family who can provide them. The Family Home Agency provides training to the family and provides the supports you need to be successful. Each home is "certified" by the Family Home Agency. KRC monitors the Family Home Agency to be sure they are providing the services required of them.

Each family has no more than two people with developmental disabilities living in the home. You will do all the things the family does. You will probably go to work or day activities as well as living in the home.

Your SSI will cover your basic expenses in the home such as rent, utilities and food. KRC pays the Family Home Agency for their services. You will receive **P&I (Personal and Incidental)** money each month to cover the cost of clothing, recreation and other personal expenses.

Living In A Licensed Community Care Home (CCF)

Some people decide they would like to live in a place with other people and where there is always someone there to help them. Community care homes are licensed by **Community Care Licensing** to provide 24-hour care and supervision to people who live in the home. You may have heard them called group homes or CCF. In most cases, the homes that serve people with developmental disabilities have also been approved by the regional center and are **vendors**.

The majority of all licensed care homes are suited to accommodate up to four (4) residents which include private bedrooms. The majority of the homes are also licensed and equipped for residents who are considered **non-ambulatory**. Staff is there all day and night. Meals are provided as well as assistance and training in self-care and any other skills as specified in your **person-centered plan**. You will also go on community outings with the other residents. You probably will also be working or going to a day program.

There are a lot of different kinds of homes with different kinds of services. Your service coordinator will give you the opportunity to look at a variety of homes to see which one you like best. Be sure to talk to people there and ask a lot of questions. Some suggested questions are included in this booklet.

Your **SSI** will cover your basic expenses in the home for your room and food. KRC pays the community care home for additional services. You will receive **P&I (Personal and Incidental)** money each month to cover the cost of clothing, recreation and other personal expenses.

Living in A Home That Provides Special Health Services (ICF/DD-H&N)

Some people may choose to live in this kind of home if they need nursing care or have complex needs that may require coordinated, ongoing services from professionals such as nutritionists, physical therapists, doctors and nurses. These homes are licensed by the **Department of Health Services**. You must be found eligible by Medi-Cal to receive services from these facilities. These homes are required to follow state and federal regulations.

In Kern County, each of these homes serves six people. You will be sharing a bedroom. Each person living in the home has a plan and receives services and training necessary to assist the person in becoming as independent as possible. You will participate in community activities. You probably will also participate in some kind of daytime activity. Staff members are on duty 24 hours a day.

Medi-Cal covers the cost of services in these homes. In addition, you will receive a small amount of P&I money for personal expenses.

It's All About Quality

Ensuring Quality Services

Many people are involved in making sure people living in the community receive good care. Homes are evaluated in an informal way by neighbors, family members, day programs and schools, and others in the community. Licensing agencies also evaluate homes on a regular basis and also investigate complaints.

Service Coordinators frequently see clients and talk to the providers. Service Coordinators also review **P&I** in homes to make sure the money is properly spent and accounted for. Staff from the Community Services Department also makes visits to the homes to ensure services are being delivered. The Community Services Department also evaluates Supported Living Service Providers and Adult Family Home Agencies and their individual Family Home Providers. The Community Services Department also will investigate any complaints about services.

KRC also provides training to providers and help so they can improve their services. We want clients to receive good services and to be happy with them. That is one of our goals.

Reporting Problems

Sometimes no matter how hard people try, there are problems. If you are not happy with the services you are receiving, you need to let someone know. You can talk to the people who are providing the service and let them know what is not going well. Maybe you can solve the problem on your own! If that does not work, you can talk to your family or friends and ask for their help. You can talk to your service coordinator. Your service coordinator will talk with the provider or will ask someone else at KRC to work with the provider to improve services. The important thing is let someone know you are not satisfied.

A Special Word to Families

KRC respects the right of families to participate with their adult children in identifying the best possible services available. You are an invaluable part of the process because you know your family member best. You are part of the circle of support needed to help keep your family member safe, healthy, happy and learning new skills. If you have questions or concerns, please share them with the KRC service coordinator or ask to speak to someone in the Community Services Department. You can reach KRC using any of the numbers listed in the Glossary.

Questions To Ask

Choosing A Care Home

If you are going to be living in a community care home or home, or a home providing specialized services (health, other needs), you will have the chance to visit the home before you move there. You should have a chance to visit several homes and living arrangements so you can choose which one you like best. Be sure to look around and ask questions. Here are some suggestions from Roy Rocha, Client Representative at KRC.

Ask the provider:

- What are the rules here? Ask to have them explained to you.
- What are my rights here?
- What am I expected to do on my own and what will be provided to me?
- What kind of things do you teach people how to do?
- What kind of activities do you have? What do you do on weekends?
- Do you provide transportation or is the bus nearby?

Look at the home and community:

- Can I choose where I live?
- Is the house in good shape? Does it look clean and smell good?
- Is the furniture nice and comfortable?
- Is the yard nice?
- Do you feel safe in the neighborhood?
- Are there places to go nearby?
- Do people living there have their own things around them?
- Ask to see the room you will be staying in.

Talk to other people living there:

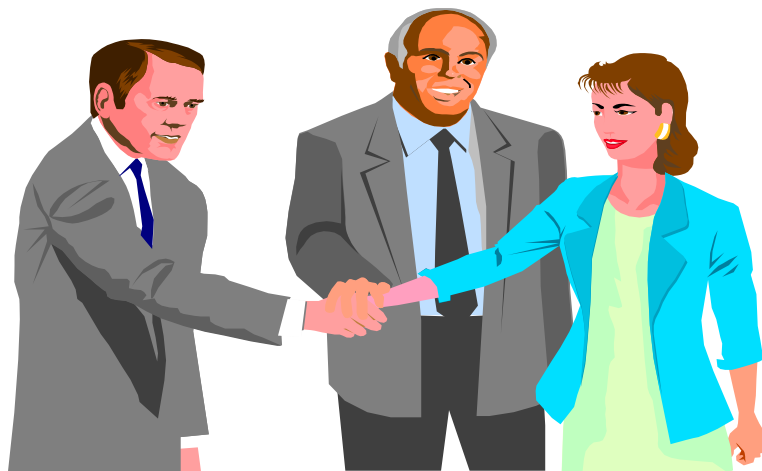
- Do they like living here?
- Do they feel safe here?
- Do people living in the neighborhood get along with the people living in the home?
- What are the rules here? Ask to have them explained to you.
- Do people living in the home get along with each other?
- Does staff treat the clients well?
- Is the food good here? Do you have any say in what you eat?
- Try to meet your roommate. Do you get along?

Questions To Ask

Choosing a Supported Living Vendor

If you have decided to live in a place of your own and need some services and supports, you will have the opportunity to talk to the vendor and find out about their services. Moving out on your own can seem a little scary so be sure to ask a lot of questions. Here are some questions Roy Rocha, Client Representative at KRC, suggest you ask:

- Can you help me find a safe place to live?
- Tell them what services you need and want and ask how they will be able to help.
- Ask how your new place will be different from where you are living now.
- What kinds of rules are there for you, if any?
- How will the change affect your day program, or work?
- Are you going to have a roommate? If you want a roommate, can they help you find one?
- Are there emergency numbers to call if you need help?
- How will you participate in social or leisure activities?
- Who is going to help with groceries, food, cooking?
- Ask to talk to someone who is getting the services and ask them how they like them.



Questions To Ask

Choosing an Adult Family Home

- Can you help me find a Family who is the best match for me?
- Can I meet possible matches before I decide?
- How many people live in the home?
- Can you help me find a safe place to live?
- Tell them what services you need and want and ask how they will be able to help.
- Ask how your new place will be different from where you are living now.
- What kinds of rules are there for you, if any?
- How will the change affect your day program, or work?
- What responsibilities will my Family Home Provider have in assisting and supporting me?
- What responsibilities will my Adult Family Home Agency have in assisting and supporting me?
- How will you participate in social or leisure activities?
- Ask to talk to someone who is getting the services and ask them how they like them.

Your Rights

People with developmental disabilities have the same rights and responsibilities guaranteed to all other people living in the United States and California. In addition, people with developmental disabilities have specific rights under the law. We have listed these rights in language easier to understand than the law.

All people with developmental disabilities in California have the following rights:

- The right to services and supports designed to help you become as independent and productive as possible.
- The right to dignity, privacy and humane care provided in the community.
- The right to a public education.
- The right to prompt medical care and treatment.
- The right to religious freedom and practice.
- The right to interact with other people and participate in community activities.
- The right to physical exercise and recreational opportunities.
- The right to be free from harm including unnecessary physical restraint, isolation, excessive medication, abuse or restraint.
- The right to be free from dangerous procedures.
- The right to advocacy services.
- The right to be free from discrimination by any program which accepts public funds.
- The right to access courts.
- The right to make choices in your own life including:
 - where and with whom you live
 - your relationships with people
 - the way you spend your time
 - making plans for your future
 - program planning.

In addition, people with developmental disabilities who live in a community care home or home that provides special health services have the following rights:

- To wear your own clothes, keep your own personal possessions, and have a reasonable sum of your own money for small purchases.
- To have private storage space.
- To see visitors daily.
- To make and receive telephone calls.
- To receive unopened mail and to have stamps and paper available to write letters.
- To refuse behavior modification techniques which cause pain or trauma.
- To refuse shock therapy or brain surgery designed to change your behavior.
- To make choices in your daily routine, choice of friends, activities and program planning.

If you receive supported living services, you have the right to make decisions that effect your life. Your rights include:

- Choosing where and with whom to live.
- Controlling the look of you home.
- Choosing who provides you services.
- Participating in your IPP so the services you receive are those you want and need.
- Receiving the kinds of services you want and need for as long as you need and want them.
- Informing KRC about how satisfied you are with the services you receive.

Source: W& I Code 4502 and 4503 and Title 17 CCR Section 50510 and 58620.

Glossary

Community Care Home (Facility) (CCF) is a home licensed by the Department of Social Services, State of California to provide 24-hour non-medical care and supervision to a specified number of residents.

Community Care Licensing is the branch of the Department of Social Services, State of California which licenses and monitors community care facilities. Our local licensing office is in Fresno. The complaint number is 1-559-243-8080.

Department of Public Health is the State of California Agency that licenses and evaluates health facilities including ICF/DD-H & N. The local office is in Bakersfield. The number is (661) 336-0543.

Family Home Agency means a private, not-for-profit agency that is vendored to do all of the following: 1) recruit, approve, train, and monitor family home providers; 2) provide services and supports to family home providers, and 3) assist consumers in moving into or relocating from family homes.

IHSS (In-Home Support Services) is money from the State of California for you to use to hire someone to come to your home to provide you with assistance. The Department of Human Services does an assessment of your needs and determines how many hours of service per month you may receive.

ICF/DD-H & N (Intermediate Care Facility for the Developmentally Disabled- Habilitative and Nursing) are homes which provide 24 hour care for eligible clients. They are licensed and monitored by the Department of Health Services and provide care in accordance with federal and state regulations.

Individual Program Plan (I.P.P.) or Person Centered Plan is a written plan developed by the regional center and the individual with a developmental disability who is a regional center client. The plan specifies the type and amount of services and supports the individual needs and wants. The planning team can include parents, friends and providers of services and supports. The plan is reviewed as needed but at least every three years.

Kern Regional Center (KRC) is one of 21 nonprofit agencies in the State of California that provide case management and other services to Californians with a developmental disability. KRC provides services in Kern, Inyo and Mono counties. The main office number is 661-327-8531 or 1-800-479-9899. You may also visit us on the Internet at <http://www.kernrc.org>.

Medi-Cal is health coverage provided by the State of California for people who receive SSI.

Non-Ambulatory means a resident who is unable to leave the building unassisted under emergency conditions.

Person Centered Plan or Individual Program Plan (I.P.P.) is a written plan developed by the regional center and the individual with a developmental disability who is a regional center client. The plan specifies the type and amount of services and supports the individual needs and wants. The planning team can include parents, friends and providers of services and supports. The plan is reviewed, as needed, but at least every three years.

P & I (Personal and Incidental) Funds is that money which people who receive SSI and live in licensed community homes receive each month. The money is to be spent on personal expenses such as clothing and entertainment.

SSI or Supplemental Security Income is a payment made by the federal government and the State of California to provide for the living costs of people who have disabilities.

Supported Living Agency is a vendor who is providing supported living services to regional center clients in accordance with Title 17 and a contract with KRC.

Vendor means an entity that has completed the process specified in Title 17 regulations and is approved to receive payment for services given to KRC clients.