



Flexible Residential Support Model

Per DDA: Regarding the use of Flexible Residential Support services/Flex Rate:

As it relates to persons supported in Residential Habilitation and Supported Living levels of need 2-4, the provider may be reimbursed for periods of unsupervised time by requesting the Flexible Residential Support Rate on behalf of the person. People using the Flexible Residential Support Rate will decide what times of the day and/or week they want direct supports, and which times they want to use alternative tools to meet their support needs in the home and/or community (e.g., Enabling Technology, remote supports, natural supports, etc.).

In addition, where applicable all requirements for the individual's safety in the absence of a staff person must be met. The approval of this rate does not change the Level of Need designated for the individual, but adjusts the reimbursement rate based on the following criteria:

Before implementing changes in the staffing model and requesting less than 24hr support, the following should occur:

1. A review by the Circle of Support of the person's actual support needs, desire and capacity to spend time and/or participate in activities without paid support-either independently, using natural supports, or with Enabling Technology, the potential risks or concerns, and how such concerns can be mitigated.
2. A plan for how staffing models will be adjusted based on the individualized assessment, including an emergency backup plan for immediate staff response as needed and how the provider will monitor the impact of any changes in the staffing models to quickly identify and address potential concerns; and
3. If the plan includes the use of Enabling Technology, a Technology Assessment and an Enabling Technology Plan. DDA has an Enabling Technology Champion in every region. These resources can assist you and those you support in your efforts to consider alternative support models and provide valuable guidance regarding assessments and person-centered plan development.

Flexible Residential Support Model Staffing Plan Guidance: When developing a staffing plan for each home in which the flexible residential support model is being utilized it may need to look different from the traditional staffing plan that includes specific hours of the day and specific days of the week a person's home will be staffed. A staffing plan for flexible residential support may need to be more activity based rather than time based. The flexible support model staffing plan should be broader and allow for flexibility in how the person spends their day.



At a minimum it should include the following:

a. A description of how the home will be staffed and how the person will spend time and/or participate in activities without paid support-either independently, using natural supports, with Enabling Technology, or other alternative supports.

b. During times of supervision, ensure sufficient staff to meet the staffing requirements as described in this Level of Need Descriptions document.

c. A provider working directly with the person supported and their Circle of Support (COS) must develop an emergency response plan detailing emergency communication methods and response procedures for requested on-site assistance.

d. The staffing plan and emergency response plan must be submitted to the plan reviewer with the request for service authorization (the staffing plan and emergency response plan can be combined).

Flexible Residential Support Model Level Descriptions-What it looks like:

- **Level Two (Flexible Residential Support Model)** Level Two staff support and supervision when using the flex rate model requires at least one (1) staff person to be on site or available whenever an individual is present in the home. Periods of unsupervised time during awake hours may be permitted by indication in the revised staffing plan. Unsupervised time can occur during awake or overnight hours with emergency response procedures in place.
- **Level Three (Flex Residential Support Model)** Level Three staff support and supervision when using the flex rate model requires at least one (1) staff person to be on site or available whenever an individual is present in the home. Periods of unsupervised time during awake hours may be permitted by indication in the revised staffing plan. Unsupervised time can occur during awake or overnight hours with emergency response procedures in place.
- **Level Four (Flexible Residential Support Model)** Level Four staff support and supervision when using the flex rate model requires at least one (1) staff person must be on site or available whenever an individual is present in the home, and additional staff support must be available and provided, as needed, for activities for which two (2) staff are necessary and via emergency response as indicated in the emergency staffing plan. Overnight staffing will not be required to stay awake during these emergency allowances but must still be onsite.

**(Resource: chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/disability-and-aging/documents/provider-information/guidance-and-policy/level_descriptions-res_hab_sup_liv_med_res_spec_adj-
dda.pdf)*

"I am living my best life!"

WHAT IS THE FLEX MODEL?

The Flexible Residential Support Model—or “Flex Model” for short—is a type of residential service that people can receive in their home. People using the Flex Model decide when they want staff helping them in their home, and when they want to use other kinds of support—like Enabling Technology, remote support, or friends or neighbors.

WHO IS THE FLEX MODEL FOR?

People can use the Flex Model if they have Supported Living or Residential Habilitation services (Level of Need 2, 3, or 4) in one of DDA’s waiver programs. Your Independent Support Coordinator (ISC) can help you understand what type of residential service and Level of Need you have.

HOW CAN THE FLEX MODEL HELP ME?

The Flex Model can help people increase their independence and have more flexibility with when staff are in their homes. The Flex Model is all about giving people the freedom to decide exactly how they want their support to look.

DO I HAVE TO USE ENABLING TECHNOLOGY WITH THE FLEX MODEL?

No, you do not have to use Enabling Technology with the Flex Model. However, many people benefit from Enabling Technology and DDA can help you learn more about it if you want.

CAN I CHANGE MY MIND AFTER I START USING THE FLEX MODEL?

Yes, you can change your mind at any point and go back to receiving traditional Supported Living or Residential Habilitation Services.

HOW DO I LEARN MORE ABOUT THE FLEX MODEL?

People can talk to their ISC about the Flex Model. Members of the Circle of Support can contact DDA with any questions: jeremy.norden-paul@tn.gov

"I wish we had tried this before, but I know with my past problems it was hard for people to believe I could do it. I hope more people get to try it."

"Before technology I was never alone in my house. I could not open the door, turn on my lights, control my TV, or have privacy in the bathroom or bedroom. Now technology allows all these things."

"I feel like an adult because I can be home alone and I can do what I want. I also enjoy spending time with staff, being able to plan my day and them helping me get out and enjoy myself. ... I am living my best life ever. I have a job, a boyfriend, lots of friends and a really busy life. I am an adult!"

"Having enabling technology makes me feel good. I want to be normal and live like everyone else. I feel that with the technology I can eventually live with less staff support."