

Consumer-Directed Attendant Support Services: An Overview for Health First Colorado Members

Definitions

Consumer-Directed Attendant Support Services (CDASS): An option for eligible Health First Colorado members to direct their in-home health care services and hire their qualifying attendants.

Member: The person who receives services and directs their in-home health care services. They are the legal employer of attendants.

Authorized Representative (AR): An individual who manages CDASS on the member's behalf if the member cannot. Often, they also are the legal employer.

Attendant: The person paid to provide services for the member.

Financial Management Services (FMS): The FMS contractor handles payroll, taxes, and attendant hiring.

Consumer Direct for Colorado (CDCO): The contractor that provides CDASS orientation, coaching, and resources to support members, case managers, and other stakeholders in understanding CDASS. It is also called Consumer Direct or Consumer Direct Care Network Colorado.

The Basics

What is Self-Direction? Self-direction helps people of all ages and disabilities maintain their independence when they receive long-term care supports and services at home. When people self-direct, they decide how and when they receive services and who will provide them. Every state in the country has a self-direction program. Colorado is ranked 5th best in the nation for program qualityⁱ and 1st for quality of life for people living with disabilitiesⁱⁱ.

What is CDASS? Consumer-Directed Attendant Support Services, CDASS for short, is an option for some Health First Colorado members who want the freedom and power to make decisions about their care. It is often called a self-directed service delivery option. In CDASS, members receive services in the categories of homemaking, personal care, and/or health maintenance (skilled care). The member, or their authorized representative, is the legal employer of attendants. They get to select, train, and terminate attendants, set wages, approve time sheets, and more.

Scan the QR code to watch a short video about [CDASS](#).



How is CDASS different from In-Home-Support-Services? CDASS is like In-Home Support Services (IHSS), except it allows a member or their authorized representative to be the legal employer of attendants when directing care. They complete various employer tasks; however, in CDASS, Financial Management Services contractors provide some fiscal services like payroll.

How does CDASS benefit a member? People in the CDASS program benefit by receiving the care they want, staying in their homes or communities, and paying their loved ones for the care they may already provide.

What is an Authorized Representative? If a member cannot direct their care, they will appoint an authorized representative, often called an "AR." An AR must meet specific criteria, such as being at least 18 years old and knowing the member for at least two years. They will complete employer responsibilities like approving time sheets and managing attendants.

What is an Attendant? An attendant is the member's caregiver, and they provide services the way the member desires. The member/AR recruits and hires their selected attendants using the member's FMS to complete background checks. The member/AR trains attendants on how to complete tasks and addresses performance issues.

Top Three CDASS Myths

Myth #1 - It takes a year for a member to enroll in CDASS.

On average, CDASS enrollment takes four weeks when all key players complete their steps promptly. Enrollment is a team effort. When everyone uses the available resources and stays in good communication, members can begin CDASS quickly. When unexpected issues arise, key players in CDASS help resolve them as soon as possible.

Myth #2 - The FMS contractor is the actual employer of CDASS attendants.

FMS contractors are never the employers of CDASS attendants. They use the Fiscal/Employer Agent model for their services, meaning CDASS members/ARs are legally the boss. FMS provide key supports to ease the employer's burden but do not decide how attendants are managed.

Myth #3 - CDASS is too complicated.

CDASS members have both greater freedom and responsibility. Being an employer is not always easy. With the right coaching and support, members/ARs are empowered to complete their employer responsibilities and direct services. Remember, the FMS supports CDASS employers but does not interfere with how the member directs attendants and services.

Enrollment Process and Key Players

There are several key players in CDASS: The member, authorized representative, attendant, case manager, Consumer Direct for Colorado, Financial Management Services contractor, and the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing. Each has a specific role and responsibilities. Together, they ensure that the member receives the highest quality and most reliable services.

There are eight steps for a member to enroll in CDASS:

1. Enroll in Health First Colorado
2. Meet with the case manager
3. Attend orientation
4. Complete required paperwork
5. Approved paperwork sent to the FMS
6. Complete FMS enrollment paperwork
7. FMS receives service authorization information
8. Services begin

One-on-one guidance is available through Information and Assistance Services. Information and Assistance (I&A) services give members extra help. An I&A coordinator provides services that match the member's needs and preferences on a schedule determined by the member. I&A supports the case manager's work.

How to Get Started

Health First Colorado Members who choose CDASS complete orientation with Consumer Direct.

There are several different ways to attend orientation:

- ☐ Virtual Group ☐ Virtual One-On-One ☐ In-Person One-On-One
- ☐ Self-Paced Learning Using a Training Manual ☐ Self-Paced Learning Online

Are you a person interested in CDASS? Use this section to keep track of the right people who will help you get started. First, call the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing to enroll in Health First Colorado or to connect with your Case Management Agency.

Department of Health Care Policy and Financing Contact Center: 303-866-2993

My Case Management Agency: _____

My Case Manager: _____

Phone: _____ **Email:** _____

Who to Contact While Enrolled in CDASS

Once in the CDASS program, knowing who to contact when help is needed is essential.
The lists below include some common situations and who is the best person to contact.

Contact a CDASS employer for:

- Questions about attendant schedules.
- Requests for sick leave.
- Information about attendant rates of pay.
- Attendant training.

Contact an FMS for:

- Hiring and firing attendants.
- Timesheet system training.
- Payroll issues or questions.
- W-2s and taxes.

Contact an attendant for:

- Information to complete their hiring.
- Details if they live with the CDASS member.
- Scheduling backup care if the primary attendant cannot work.

Contact Consumer Direct for:

- General questions about CDASS.
- An Information and Assistance referral.
- Requests for additional support.

Contact a Case Manager for:

- Changes in the member's condition.
- To report the member's hospitalization.
- Questions about the CDASS budget.
- Approval to spend over the monthly budget.

Contact HCPF for:

- Questions related to CDASS policies.
- FMS or Consumer Direct service concerns.
- Unresolved case management complaints.
- Concerns about fraud and abuse.

Resources to Learn More

Online Resources

- The Department of Health Care Policy and Financing website: hcpf.colorado.gov
- CDASS webpage: hcpf.colorado.gov/consumer-directed-attendant-support-services
- Consumer Direct for Colorado videos: consumerdirectco.com/video

Agencies to Call/Email

- Consumer Direct for Colorado: infocdco@consumerdirectcare.com, 1-844-381-4433
- Participant-Directed Programs Unitⁱⁱⁱ: hcpf_pdp@state.co.us, 303-866-5638

ⁱ [Innovation and Opportunity: A State Scorecard on Long-Term Services and Supports](#)

ⁱⁱ [AAA, The Best and Worst U.S. States for People With Disabilities](#)

ⁱⁱⁱ Participant-Directed Programs is a unit within HCPF. It creates CDASS policies and oversees Consumer Direct and the FMS contractors.