Supported decision-making agreement guide and planning worksheet

A free guide and worksheet from Special Learning for provider staff and the adults they support. The statute linked for each state sets that state's requirements. Where a state sets a form, use that state's official form.

How to use it

1. Find your state in the state tables and open its statute. Read what it says an agreement is, how it is signed and what a supporter may do.
2. Check whether your state sets an official form. If it does, use that form for the agreement. Use the worksheet to plan it.
3. Start with the person: how they communicate best, and what they want to decide for themselves.
4. Choose the decision areas in Part 2, and what kind of help the person wants in each.
5. The person names their supporters and says what each will and will not do.
6. Write how the person wants to be supported, and what happens if they say no or disagree.
7. Decide who may see what, a review date, how to change or end the agreement, and who gets a copy.
8. Sign the way your state's statute says, using its form if it sets one. Keep copies where the person says.

SDM, guardianship and power of attorney

	Supported decision-making	Guardianship	Power of attorney
Who decides	The person. Supporters help the person understand, weigh and communicate.	A guardian, appointed by a court, makes decisions on behalf of the person in the areas the court sets.	The person's chosen agent decides within what the document authorizes.
How it starts	The person chooses supporters. Where a state has an agreement statute, the person signs a written agreement the way that statute describes.	A court process in which a court finds the person incapacitated under state law.	The person signs a legal document that names an agent.
Where it comes from	Informal arrangements, or in some states a statute for SDM agreements.	State guardianship law.	State power of attorney law.
What the person keeps	Their right to make decisions for themselves.	Varies by state and by what the court orders.	The person chooses what the document covers and when it applies.

Where this comes from: ACL, Alternatives to Guardianship. SDM as the ACL describes it. See the web page for the exact text.

What a DSP does, and does not do

Does: Treat the person as the decision-maker. Know what the agreement is, and is not. Ask the person who may see what. Give information the way the person asked. Put the person's words in the plan. Help the person use the agreement. Bring concerns to your agency.

Does not: Decide for the person. Sign for the person, or complete a form on their behalf. Assume you are a supporter. Treat an agreement as a guardianship. Share the person's information beyond what they agreed to.

A DSP's role is set by the person's plan, your agency and your state. Ask your supervisor how your agency handles agreements, and where the plan says how the person wants to be supported, follow that.

Your state's statute

The table below links the statute text for each jurisdiction, with its citation and the section we read. The statute linked for each state sets that state's requirements. Where a state sets a form, use that state's official form.

State	Statute	Where to read it
Alabama	Ala. Code § 26-1B-1 et seq. (Colby Act; Act 2023-134, SB55) §§ 26-1B-1 to 26-1B-10 (enrolled bill Sections 1-10)	https://www.legislature.state.al.us/pdf/SearchableInstruments/2023RS/SB55-enr.pdf
Arizona	A.R.S. 14-5721 to 14-5722 §§ 14-5721 to 14-5722	https://www.azleg.gov/ars/14/05722.htm
California	Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code, div. 11.5 §§ 21000 to 21008	https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displayText.xhtml?lawCode=WIC&division=11.5.&title=&part=&chapter=&article=
Colorado	C.R.S. 15-14-801 to 806 (Title 15, Article 14, Part 8) §§ 15-14-801 to 15-14-806	https://leg.colorado.gov/sites/default/files/images/olls/crs2024-title-15.pdf
Delaware	16 Del. C. ch. 94A §§ 9401A to 9410A	https://delcode.delaware.gov/title16/c094A/index.html
District of Columbia	D.C. Code ch. 21B, tit. 7 §§ 7-2131 to 7-2134	https://code.dccouncil.gov/us/dc/council/code/sections/7-2132
Florida	Fla. Stat. § 709.2209 § 709.2209	http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0700-0799/0709/Sections/0709.2209.html
Hawaii	Haw. Rev. Stat. ch. 349F (L. 2025, c. 284 / HB 320) §§ 349F-1 to 349F-5	https://data.capitol.hawaii.gov/hrscurrent/Vol07_Ch0346-0398/HRS0349F/HRS_0349F-.htm
Illinois	755 ILCS 9 (Supported Decision-Making Agreement Act) 755 ILCS 9/1 to 9/105 (as posted)	https://www.ilga.gov/Legislation/ILCS/Articles?ActID=4215&ChapterID=60
Louisiana	La. R.S. 13:4261.101 to 13:4261.302 (Chapter 24-A, Supported Decisionmaking Agreement Act, "Dustin Gary Act") R.S. 13:4261.101 to 4261.302	https://legis.la.gov/legis/Law.aspx?d=1187154
Maryland	Md. Code, Est. & Trusts, Title 18 §§ 18-101 to 18-109	https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Laws/StatuteText?article=get&section=18-101&enactments=false
Nevada	NRS ch. 162C NRS 162C.010 to 162C.330	https://www.leg.state.nv.us/nrs/nrs-162c.html
New Mexico	N.M. Stat. Ann. ch. 24, art. 7D (Supported Decision-Making Act); Laws 2025, SB 535, Secs. 9-22 Secs. 9 to 22 of SB 535 (codified as §§ 24-7D-1 et seq.)	https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/25%20Regular/final/SB0535.pdf
New York	N.Y. Mental Hygiene Law art. 82 (added by L. 2022, ch. 481; S.7107-B / A.8586-B) §§ 82.01 to 82.15	https://legislation.nysenate.gov/pdf/bills/2021/S7107B
North Dakota	N.D.C.C. ch. 30.1-36 §§ 30.1-36-01 to 30.1-36-08	https://ndlegis.gov/cencode/t30-1c36.pdf
Rhode Island	R.I. Gen. Laws ch. 42-66.13 §§ 42-66.13-1 to 42-66.13-10	https://webserver.rilegislature.gov/Statutes/TITLE42/42-66.13/INDEX.htm
Texas	Tex. Est. Code ch. 1357 §§ 1357.001 to 1357.102	https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/ES/htm/ES.1357.htm
Utah	Utah Code Title 75, ch. 5, part 7 §§ 75-5-701 to 75-5-709	https://le.utah.gov/xcode/Title75/Chapter5/75-5-P7.html
Virginia	Va. Code § 37.2-314.3 § 37.2-314.3	https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title37.2/chapter3/section37.2-314.3/
Washington	RCW ch. 11.130, Article 7 (supported decision-making agreements) RCW 11.130.700 to 11.130.755	https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=11.130&full=true

Not all states have a statute, and laws change. The page has the quoted text for each statute and each state's form, where it sets one: https://special-learning.com/for-organizations/behavioral-health/supported-decision-making-agreement-guide/?utm_source=moltbot-astra&utm_medium=download&utm_campaign=supported-decision-making-agreement-guide

Worksheet, Part 1: about me, and Part 2: what I want to decide

Fill this in with people you choose. The words are the person's. This plans the agreement; where your state sets a form, use that state's official form for the agreement.

Part 1: about the person	Write it here
Name, and the name I like to be called The person's own name for themselves.	
How I communicate best Spoken words, pictures, writing, a device, a person who knows me. How long I need to answer.	
Where I live and who supports me day to day The home or program, and the people there.	
Date, and who helped me fill this in The person fills this in with someone they choose.	

Part 2: decision area	Example	Understand	Think it through	Tell others	Carry it out
Where I live and who I live with	Moving, roommates, rules at home	☐	☐	☐	☐
My health care	Doctor visits, medicines, tests, what treatment I want	☐	☐	☐	☐
Money and bills	Bank, benefits, paying for things, big purchases	☐	☐	☐	☐
Work, school or a day program	Applying, changing jobs, what I learn	☐	☐	☐	☐
Friends, family and relationships	Who I see, who I live near, dating	☐	☐	☐	☐
Services and my support team	Which agency, which staff, what goes in my plan	☐	☐	☐	☐
Legal papers and mail	Forms to sign, notices, court or agency letters	☐	☐	☐	☐
My phone, computer and online accounts	Who sets up and sees what	☐	☐	☐	☐
Everyday choices	Food, clothes, how I spend my time	☐	☐	☐	☐
Something else I name	Anything the person wants to add	☐	☐	☐	☐

Mark the kind of help I want in each area: Understand the information; Think through my choices and what could happen; Say what I decided to other people; Carry out my decision.

Worksheet, Part 3: my supporters

Supporter 1

Supporter's name and how I know them Someone the person chose.	
Contact details Phone, email, address.	
Decision areas this supporter helps with From Part 2. A supporter may help with one area or many.	
What my supporter will do For example: explain things in plain words, go with me to appointments, help me collect information, help me tell others what I decided.	
What my supporter will not do Make my decision for me. Add anything else the person wants.	
What my supporter may see What information, from whom, and for which decision.	

Supporter 2

Supporter's name and how I know them Someone the person chose.	
Contact details Phone, email, address.	
Decision areas this supporter helps with From Part 2. A supporter may help with one area or many.	
What my supporter will do For example: explain things in plain words, go with me to appointments, help me collect information, help me tell others what I decided.	
What my supporter will not do Make my decision for me. Add anything else the person wants.	
What my supporter may see What information, from whom, and for which decision.	

Use another copy of this page for more supporters.

Worksheet, Part 4: how I want to be supported, and Part 5: what supporters may see

Part 4: how I want to be supported	Write it here
How I want information given Plain words, pictures, a written list, a person I know present, a recording.	
When and where I like to talk about decisions Time of day, place, how much time.	
If I say no or I am not sure What my supporters do. For example: wait, ask me again another day, show me another way.	
If my supporter and I disagree Who else I want to talk with. The decision stays mine.	
If I need a decision made quickly Who I want called, and how I want my wishes shared.	

Part 5: supporter	What they may see	For which decision

Worksheet, Part 6: change or end the agreement, and Part 7: signing

Part 6: change or end	Write it here
How long this lasts, and when we look at it again A date to review it with my supporters.	
How I change it Add, remove or change a supporter or a decision area, and how to put it in writing.	
How I end it The person can say they want to end it. Write who to tell and how, and what your state's statute says about ending an agreement.	
If a supporter cannot continue Who I want to ask next, and who tells the people who have a copy.	
Who gets a copy The person, each supporter, and others the person names, such as a doctor or my support team.	

Part 7: signing	Write it here
Signatures Sign the way your state's statute says. Many statutes name who signs, how many witnesses or whether a notary is needed; see the state table. Where a state sets a form, use that state's official form.	
My state's statute and form Write the statute and the form name or web address here.	

The person (or how they show agreement)	Supporter	Date

Example worksheet: Dana (invented)

Dana (invented), 29, lives in a supported apartment with two roommates. She uses spoken language and likes to think out loud with someone she trusts. She works part time at a garden center. Dana wants help with two kinds of decisions: her health care and a possible job change. Invented to show the layout, with invented people and details. It is not a plan for any real person.

Item	What we wrote
Name	Dana
How I communicate best	I talk it through out loud. I need a day to think before I decide something big.
Decision areas	My health care. Work: whether to change jobs.
Help I want	Health care: understand the information, and have someone with me at appointments. Work: think through my choices.
Supporter 1	My sister Lena. Health care. She will explain things in plain words, come to appointments if I ask, and help me write down my questions.
Supporter 2	Jo, my friend from the garden center. Work. Jo will talk through the choices with me and wait while I decide.
What my supporters will not do	Decide for me, or sign for me.
If I say no or I am not sure	Wait. Ask me again after a day. Show me a list or a picture.
What my supporters may see	Lena: my appointment notes. Jo: the job posting and my schedule. Nothing about my money.
Review	We look at it again in six months, on a date I put on my phone. I can change or end it any time by telling Lena and Jo, and my support team.
How my staff help	They know the agreement exists and where my copy is. They offer information in a list, and give me a day. They do not decide for me.

Checklist, sources and one next step

Before the agreement is signed

☐ The person chose their supporters, in their own words.

☐ Each supporter and decision area is named.

☐ The person has said what kind of help they want in each area.

☐ The agreement says what each supporter will not do.

☐ It says who may see what information.

☐ There is a review date, and a way to change or end it.

☐ It is signed the way the state's statute says, on the state's form where one is set.

☐ The person and each supporter have a copy.

☐ Staff who support the person know the agreement exists, where it is, and what their role is.

Where each part comes from

Sources read November 16, 2026. The worksheet prompts, the DSP-role wording and the worked example are Special Learning's own planning aid. The statute linked for each state sets that state's requirements. Where a state sets a form, use that state's official form.

ACL, Alternatives to Guardianship. https://acl.gov/programs/empowering-advocacy/alternatives-guardianship

ACL, Supported Decision Making Program. https://acl.gov/programs/consumer-control/supported-decision-making-program

NADSP Code of Ethics. https://nadsp.org/the-nadsp-code-of-ethics/

Ala. Code § 26-1B-1 et seq. (Colby Act; Act 2023-134, SB55). https://www.legislature.state.al.us/pdf/SearchableInstruments/2023RS/SB55-enr.pdf

A.R.S. 14-5721 to 14-5722. https://www.azleg.gov/ars/14/05722.htm

Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code, div. 11.5. https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displayText.xhtml?lawCode=WIC&division=11.5.&title=&part=&chapter=&article=

C.R.S. 15-14-801 to 806 (Title 15, Article 14, Part 8). https://leg.colorado.gov/sites/default/files/images/olls/crs2024-title-15.pdf

16 Del. C. ch. 94A. https://delcode.delaware.gov/title16/c094A/index.html

D.C. Code ch. 21B, tit. 7. https://code.dccouncil.gov/us/dc/council/code/sections/7-2132

Fla. Stat. § 709.2209. http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0700-0799/0709/Sections/0709.2209.html

Haw. Rev. Stat. ch. 349F (L. 2025, c. 284 / HB 320). https://data.capitol.hawaii.gov/hrscurrent/Vol07_Ch0346-0398/HRS0349F/HRS_0349F-.htm

755 ILCS 9 (Supported Decision-Making Agreement Act). https://www.ilga.gov/Legislation/ILCS/Articles?ActID=4215&ChapterID=60

La. R.S. 13:4261.101 to 13:4261.302 (Chapter 24-A, Supported Decisionmaking Agreement Act, "Dustin Gary Act"). https://legis.la.gov/legis/Law.aspx?d=1187154

Md. Code, Est. & Trusts, Title 18. https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Laws/StatuteText?article=get&section=18-101&enactments=false

NRS ch. 162C. https://www.leg.state.nv.us/nrs/nrs-162c.html

N.M. Stat. Ann. ch. 24, art. 7D (Supported Decision-Making Act); Laws 2025, SB 535, Secs. 9-22. https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/25%20Regular/final/SB0535.pdf

N.Y. Mental Hygiene Law art. 82 (added by L. 2022, ch. 481; S.7107-B / A.8586-B). https://legislation.nysenate.gov/pdf/bills/2021/S7107B

N.D.C.C. ch. 30.1-36. https://ndlegis.gov/cencode/t30-1c36.pdf

R.I. Gen. Laws ch. 42-66.13. https://webserver.rilegislature.gov/Statutes/TITLE42/42-66.13/INDEX.htm

Tex. Est. Code ch. 1357. https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/ES/htm/ES.1357.htm

Utah Code Title 75, ch. 5, part 7. https://le.utah.gov/xcode/Title75/Chapter5/75-5-P7.html

Va. Code § 37.2-314.3. https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title37.2/chapter3/section37.2-314.3/

RCW ch. 11.130, Article 7 (supported decision-making agreements). https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=11.130&full=true

One next step

If your staff support autistic people, the Level 1 ABA Online Training Course for groups introduces autism and behavior-support foundations, including errorless teaching and prompting. $99 per learner · One-time purchase · Each learner has 12 weeks of access from the day they activate their code · Free 7-day trial of the first 2 sessions.

Related free tools: Dignity of risk worksheet · Human rights committee review packet · Preference and choice record · One-page profile template · NADSP Code of Ethics onboarding guide