

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES ADMINISTRATION  
Olympia, Washington

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TITLE: FUNCTIONAL ASSESSMENTS AND POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT PLANS 5.21

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<p>Authority: <a href="#">42 C.F.R. 441.301(c)(4)</a>  <a href="#">Title 71A RCW</a>  <a href="#">Chapter 71A.26 RCW</a>  <a href="#">Chapter 388-101 WAC</a>    <a href="#">Chapter 388-101D WAC</a>    <a href="#">Chapter 388-825 WAC</a>  <a href="#">Chapter 388-845 WAC</a>  <a href="#">Chapter 388-850 WAC</a></p>	<p><i>Home and Community-Based Settings</i>  <i>Developmental Disabilities</i>  <i>Client Rights</i>  <i>Certified Community Residential Services and Supports</i>  <i>Requirements for Providers of Residential Services and Supports</i>  <i>Developmental Disabilities Services</i>  <i>Home and Community Based Waiver Services</i>  <i>County Plan for Developmental Disabilities</i></p>
<p>Reference: <a href="#">DDA Policy 5.14</a>  <a href="#">DDA Policy 5.15</a>  <a href="#">DDA Policy 5.16</a>  <a href="#">DDA Policy 5.17</a>  <a href="#">DDA Policy 9.02</a></p>	<p><i>Positive Behavior Support Principles</i>  <i>Restrictive Procedures: Community</i>  <i>Psychotropic Medications</i>  <i>Physical Intervention Techniques</i>  <i>Administration of Psychotropic Medications</i></p>

## **BACKGROUND**

The Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) transforms lives by providing supports and fostering partnerships empowering people to live the lives they want. DDA uses person-centered planning principles that emphasize respect for all clients, partnering with the client, their family, and their providers. Person-centered planning emphasizes the client’s strengths and identifies areas in need of supports. It encourages growth in skills that enable each client to live in their community, achieve their goals, participate in the workforce, and contribute to the community.

DDA wants clients it serves to experience positive life benefits described in the [DDA Guiding Values](#). These benefits include:

- Inclusion;

- Status and contribution;
- Relationships;
- Power and choice;
- Health and safety; and
- Competence.

None of these values stands alone or is more important than the others. Each overlaps, affects, and informs each other. As a values system they support and facilitate individualized person-centered plan development respecting the client, preserving the client's rights, and guarding the client's dignity.

### **PURPOSE**

This policy establishes when a functional assessment (FA) and positive behavior support plan (PBSP) are required and outlines the required elements of an FA and a PBSP.

### **SCOPE**

This policy applies to the following DDA-contracted or certified providers:

- Supported living
- Group homes
- Group training homes
- Companion homes
- State-operated living alternatives for adults
- Stabilization, assessment, and intervention facility
- Crisis diversion bed and support services

### **DEFINITIONS**

**Adaptive behavior** means social, emotional, and practical skills that enable people to care for themselves and others and adapt to change in ways that enable the person to function as independently as possible given their age and stage of development.

**Antecedent** means an internal state, environmental event, or action that occurs before a behavior.

**Behavior** means an action that can be observed and counted.

**Consequence** means the outcome or result of a behavior.

**Data analysis** means processing raw data into a graphic or table form.

**Data collection** is a systematic process of gathering information from a variety of sources on specific observable behaviors to inform decisions around a client's treatment, learning, growth, and goal attainment.

**Duration** means the length of time a behavior lasts.

**Frequency** means how often a behavior occurs.

**Function** means what a client gains, avoids, or satisfies by using a behavior.

**Functional assessment** or **functional behavioral assessment** means observing a client, reviewing information about the client, and collecting data about the client to:

- Determine relationships between antecedents and behaviors;
- Identify reinforcing consequences; and
- Form a hypothesis about why a behavior continues to be used.

**Hypothesis** is a prediction that a certain outcome is likely to result from specific conditions.

**Person-centered planning** means whole-life planning driven by the client with help from family, friends, and professionals that the client chooses to include.

**Positive behavior support** as outlined in [DDA Policy 5.14](#), *Positive Behavior Support Principles*, guides assessment, planning, and service provision.

**Positive behavior support plan** means a plan designed to:

- Strengthen or improve a client's existing adaptive behaviors and skills;
- Expand the client's existing adaptive behaviors and skills to new tasks or settings;
- Teach the client new, adaptive behaviors and skills;
- Provide supports to the client;
- Modify, reduce, and eliminate situations in the environment known to reinforce, setup, or cause target behaviors; and
- Reduce or eliminate the use of target behaviors.

**Quality of life** means the client's perception of their satisfaction with their lifestyle, living situation, relationships, activities of work and leisure, as well as progress toward their goals.

**Replacement behavior** is an adaptive behavior or skill that meets the same need or serves the same function as a target behavior.

**Strategy** means a plan of action used to achieve a specific result.

**Support** means methods used to teach, expand, and increase a client's use of adaptive behaviors and skills as well as changes and accommodations made to the environment and support system to increase opportunities to use adaptive behaviors and skills.

**Summary statement** is a sentence that clearly states what the client is trying to avoid, gain, or satisfy when the target behavior is used.

**Target behavior** means a behavior identified by the provider that needs to be modified or replaced.

**Teaching and training supports** instruct staff how to set up a learning environment, introduce the skill or lesson, teach the skill or lesson, and document the results of the lesson.

### POLICY

- A. FAs and PBSPs must be developed consistent with [DDA Policy 5.14](#), *Positive Behavior Support Principles*.
- B. According to positive behavior support best practices, a PBSP should:
  - 1. Recognize the client and people involved in the client's life as valuable resources;
  - 2. Improve the client's quality of life while respecting the client, the client's rights, and guarding the client's dignity;
  - 3. Accomplish change in the environment and routines supporting the client in the least restrictive and least intrusive manner possible; and
  - 4. Make target behaviors unnecessary by:
    - a. Eliminating or reducing events that trigger target behavior;
    - b. Eliminating or reducing reinforcement for each target behavior;
    - c. Teaching new, and increasing the use of existing, adaptive behaviors and skills that satisfy the same function of the target behavior;
    - d. Reinforcing adaptive behaviors and skills; and

- e. Partnering with the client and others involved in the client's life in improving the client's quality of life and reducing the need to use target behaviors.

## PROCEDURES

### A. Determining When an FA and a PBSP are Required

1. If a client has behavioral support needs, the provider must assess and document those needs. In many cases those needs can be addressed in a general plan, such as an IISP or provider's support plan. Companion home providers must request assistance in obtaining an FA and PBSP if it is determined that the person-centered service plan does not adequately address behavioral needs.
2. The table below describes when an FA and PBSP are required based on service setting. An FA is required to assess and define target behaviors and a PBSP is required to describe the behavioral supports the client requires.

Service Setting	An FA and PBSP is required:
Supported Living SOLA for adults SAIF Group Training Home Group Home	<p>A. If the client's PCSP requires extensive behavior supports to prevent:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Emotional outbursts;</li> <li>2. Suicide attempts;</li> <li>3. Sexual aggression;</li> <li>4. Self-injury;</li> <li>5. Property destruction; or</li> <li>6. Assaults or injuries to others.</li> </ol> <p>B. If a psychotropic medication is prescribed on a PRN basis to change or alter the client's target behavior.</p> <p>C. Before using any restrictive procedures requiring a FA and PBSP or an exception to policy under <a href="#">DDA Policy 5.15</a>, <i>Restrictive Procedures: Community</i>.</p> <p>D. Before using a planned physical restraint under <a href="#">DDA Policy 5.17</a>, <i>Physical Interventions</i>.</p> <p>E. If a physical restraint is used on an emergency basis three times in six months. In addition to completing the FA and PBSP, within 45</p>

Service Setting	An FA and PBSP is required:
	days the provider must determine if an exception to policy is required.
Crisis Diversion Services	<p>If treatment needs require reduction of target behaviors, a draft FA and PBSP must be completed within 48 hours.</p> <p>Note: For a client receiving crisis diversion bed services, the client's treatment plan must be completed within 48 hours of admission under <a href="#">WAC 388-101D-0530</a>.</p>

## B. FA and PBSP Timelines

1. For a new client entering community residential services who has been determined as requiring an FA and a PBSP:
  - a. An initial FA and PBSP must be in place and staff must be trained how to keep the client and others safe before the client enters service.
  - b. The new provider may use the existing plan from a previous provider as a draft PBSP. Before the new client enters service, the provider must review the plan, modify the plan for their agency, and train staff on the draft plan.
2. If DDA requests a provider accept a new client into service on an expedited timeline and the client requires but does not have an FA and a PBSP, the provider must:
  - a. No more than seven days after the client enters service, provide direction to staff on how to keep the client and others safe when the target behavior involves threats or acts of physical violence, property destruction, abuse, or self-harm;
  - b. Review existing data, if any, and conduct interviews to draft the FA;
  - c. Begin data collection no more than seven days after the client enters service;
  - d. Complete the FA no more than 45 calendar days after the client enters service; and
  - e. Complete the PBSP and train staff to implement it no more than 60 calendar days after the client enters service.

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3. If a provider identifies a new target behavior for a client, the provider must:
    - a. No more than seven calendar days after the new target behavior is identified, provide direction to staff on how to keep the client and others safe when the target behavior involves threats or acts of physical violence, property destruction, abuse, or self-harm;
    - b. Begin data collection and the FA development or revision process no more than seven calendar days after identifying the new target behavior;
    - c. Update or complete the FA no more than 45 calendar days after identifying the new target behavior; and
    - d. Train staff to implement the updated or completed PBSP no more than 60 calendar days after identifying the new target behavior.
  4. If a physical restraint or restrictive procedure requiring a PBSP or an exception to policy is used on an emergency basis three times in six months, the provider must:
    - a. Provide written direction and training to staff within seven calendar days on how to keep the client and others safe if the target behavior involves threats or acts of physical violence, property destruction, abuse, or self-harm;
    - b. Begin data collection and the FA process no more than seven calendar days after identifying the new target behavior;
    - c. Update or complete the final FA no more than 45 calendar days after identifying the new target behavior; and
    - d. Complete and train staff to implement the final PBSP no more than 60 calendar days after identifying the target behavior.

### C. **Functional Assessment**

1. An FA is based on data collection designed to assess:
  - a. The overall quality of a client's life;
  - b. Factors or events that increase the likelihood of target behaviors, adaptive behaviors, and skills, specifically:

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- i. When and where target behaviors occur most frequently; and
      - ii. When and where adaptive behaviors and skills occur most frequently.
    - c. The presence of diagnosed medical, mental illness or neurological dysfunction that may contribute to target behaviors;
    - d. Environmental responses that reinforce target and adaptive behaviors and skills; and
    - e. The possible function or purpose of each target behavior.
  2. The FA must:
    - a. Be written before the PBSP is developed;
    - b. Accurately reflect the client's history and current status by documenting information, or referencing information contained in other documents, that addresses:
      - i. The client's likes and dislikes;
      - ii. The client's living arrangement;
      - iii. The client's work environment;
      - iv. The client's strengths, functional limitations, and supports needed;
      - v. Strategies and techniques that are known to be effective when the client is at baseline;
      - vi. Relevant medical conditions and their impact on the client's behavioral profile;
      - vii. The client's current psychiatric conditions and their impact on the client's functioning; and
      - viii. Significant events in the client's life and their impact on the client's behavioral profile.
    - c. Define the target behaviors to be replaced, which may include:



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- i. Factors or events that increase the likelihood target behaviors will be used (based on its functionality); and
  - ii. When and where target behaviors occur most frequently;
- d. Complete an assessment and analysis of each target behavior including:
- i. Defining the target behavior in observable terms;
  - ii. The target behavior's rate (frequency), length of time (duration), and impact (intensity);
  - iii. Events in the environment that reinforce the target behavior after it is used (function);
  - iv. Assessment of the client's desired outcome (function) achieved by using the target behavior; and
  - v. Analysis of the possible functions the target behavior serves the client.
- e. Write a summary statement that clearly states what the client is trying to avoid, gain, or satisfy when the target behavior is used. A complete summary statement:
- i. Defines the target behavior in observable terms;
  - ii. Describes things or events that set up and trigger the use of the target behavior;
  - iii. Outlines what happens in the environment after the target behavior is used that reinforce use of the target behavior; and
  - iv. Identifies what the client achieves by using the target behavior.

Example summary statement:

*When [antecedent trigger] occurs, this [behavior] is likely to occur so that the client can get or avoid [this consequence]. This behavior is more likely to occur when [these setting events and conditions] are present.*

**D. Positive Behavior Support Plan**

1. The PBSP must:
  - a. Be based on the FA;
  - b. Be accurate and consistent with the FA;
  - c. Describe strategies and supports to be used to prevent the use of target behaviors;
  - d. Outline strategies for responding to target behaviors when they escalate in intensity, duration, or impact;
  - e. Define a specific replacement behavior matching the target behavior's function;
  - f. Provide instructions and strategies to teach and support replacement behaviors; and
  - g. Define benchmarks to evaluate the effectiveness of the PBSP based on:
    - i. The reduction of target behaviors;
    - ii. The increased use of replacement behaviors; and
    - iii. A data collection system outlining:
      - A) What will be counted;
      - B) When it will be counted;
      - C) Who will count or collect data; and
      - D) Where the data will be documented.
2. The [Developer Manual](#) contains guidelines for writing effective FAs and PBSPs.
3. DDA psychologists, psychology associates, and other designated SOCR personnel must use the [DDA FA and PBSP Template](#) when authoring plans to be used in SOCR programs. FAs and PBSPs must contain all required sections and content and meet all policy requirements.
4. Contracted providers may use the [DDA FA and PBSP Template](#). Alternatively, they may use their own format as long as the documents contain the required sections and content and otherwise meet all policy requirements.

**E. Plan Review and Revision**

1. The provider must monitor the data collected and use that data to make the decision to make changes to the FA and PBSP or continue their use without changes. The provider must review the PBSP every twelve months, or when data indicates a review is necessary.
2. The provider must have a written policy for monitoring data that addresses:
  - a. Who will analyze the data;
  - b. How often the data will be analyzed;
  - c. How the data will be represented;
  - d. When to elevate data analysis for a higher level of review within the provider organization; and
  - e. When to request assistance from DDA.
3. If the data analysis indicates replacement behaviors are not increasing or target behaviors are not decreasing after a reasonable period, but no longer than six months, the FA and PBSP must be reviewed and revisions implemented as needed.
4. Effective data collection:
  - a. Tracks data for all target and replacement behaviors defined in the FA;  
*Note: This does not require tracking of de-escalation techniques or the absence of the behavior.*
  - b. Measures the defined target and replacement behaviors;
  - c. Collects data frequently enough to demonstrate trends;
  - d. Detects changes indicating the plan's effectiveness in decreasing target behaviors and increasing replacement behaviors;
  - e. Allows for development of appropriate skill modifications, achieving the same function as the target behavior; and
  - f. May include:

- i. Record reviews;
    - ii. Interviews;
    - iii. Direct observation;
    - iv. Scatter plot forms;
    - v. Frequency counts;
    - vi. Interval data counts (whole, part, or partial interval); and
    - vii. Antecedent-behavior-consequence (A-B-C) data collection.
5. Effective data analysis processes raw data into:
  - a. Tables or charts to indicate:
    - i. Trends;
    - ii. Growth;
    - iii. Relative change; or
    - iv. Relative visual correlation of target and replacement behaviors.
  - b. Summary statistics to estimate:
    - i. Baseline rates (frequency), length of time (duration), or intensities of behavior;
    - ii. How behavior fluctuates; or
    - iii. Project trends.
6. All PBSPs using restrictive procedures must collect data on the use of the restrictive procedure. The data collection system must be sufficient to document:
  - a. Setting conditions;
  - b. Triggering event;
  - c. Behavior indicating the need for protection;
  - d. Protective actions taken, including less restrictive alternatives tried before using the restrictive procedure; and
  - e. The client's response to less restrictive alternatives used prior to the use of a restricted procedure;
  - f. The client's response during and after the use of the restrictive procedure.

7. The provider or plan writer must:
  - a. Review the FA and PBSP with the client and representative; and
  - b. Have the client and legal representative consent to the PBSP by documenting their signature.
8. The provider or plan writer must send completed copies of FAs and PBSPs to the client's case resource manager for review and inclusion in the client's record.
  - a. If the case resource manager has questions or concerns about a client's FA or PBSP, they should discuss these with the provider.
  - b. No approval by the case resource manager is required.

**F. Distribution of FAs and PBSPs**

1. A copy of the client's current PBSP must be available in electronic or hardcopy form in the client's home for employees to access.
2. The residential provider must send a copy of the client's PBSP to the employment or day program provider if the client receives these services. The employment or day program provider must implement the PBSP as written if appropriate for the employment or day program setting and communicate with the residential provider or state-operated nursing facility regarding any modifications the employment or day program provider intends to use in the employment or day program setting.
3. If the employment or day program develops an FA and a PBSP for a client, the employment or day program provider must inform the residential provider or state-operated nursing facility. The employment or day program provider must send the final FA and PBSP to the case resource manager and the client's residential provider or state-operated nursing facility.

**EXCEPTIONS**

Any exception to this policy must have the prior written approval of the deputy assistant secretary or designee.

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5.21

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**SUPERSESION**

DDA Policy 5.21, *Functional Assessments and Positive Behavior Support Plans*  
Issued July 1, 2021

Approved:



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Deputy Assistant Secretary  
Developmental Disabilities Administration

Date: July 1, 2023