

# A Guide to Individual Preference

*More choice for individuals and families*



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COMMUNITY LIVING  
BRITISH COLUMBIA

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Some people want to have more of a say in who provides CLBC-funded services for themselves or a family member.

CLBC welcomes your participation – we call this Individual Preference. This guide describes how it works.

It is designed to supplement the more general Information for Individuals and Families on Individual Preference.

A CLBC facilitator can explain this process further, and help guide and support you through it.

## **What is Individual Preference about?**

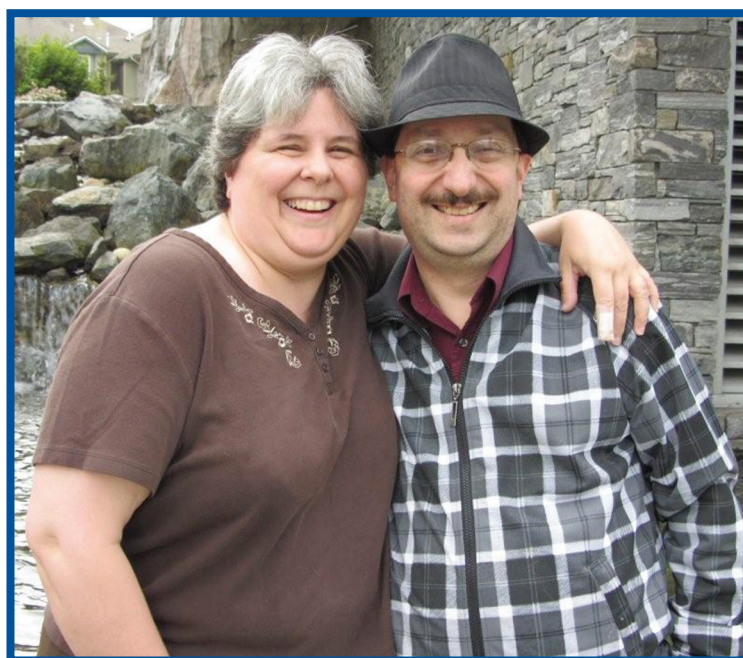
Once you have been approved for a certain level and type of CLBC-funded services, Individual Preference is a way for you to have a say about which person or agency provides that service.

It is part of what CLBC calls the procurement and contracting process.

## **Is Individual Preference for me?**

Individual Preference is something you should consider if you want more of a say in who provides CLBC-funded services to you and if you are comfortable with the principles listed on page two.

Individual Preference is about selecting a service provider to deliver services. If you are looking for more direct control over how your services are delivered on a day-to-day basis, you may want to talk to your facilitator about additional options such as Individualized Funding, or setting up a person-centred society (sometimes called a Microboard™).



The procurement and contracting process has certain principles that affect and play a role in how Individual Preference works:

- Services are responsive to the needs and choices of each individual and family.
- People with similar disability-related needs receive similar levels of funding.
- Service providers are willing and able to provide services effectively and safely.
- Service providers have access to clear information about contract opportunities, processes and results.
- The process is not affected by real or perceived conflict of interest.
- Personal information of eligible individuals and service providers is kept confidential.
- CLBC receives value for public funding it spends – things such as quality, reliability, continuity and cost are all considered in decisions about how services are provided.
- Where it is reasonable and practical, there is a competitive process - allowing different service providers to respond to contract opportunities.
- The process follows applicable laws and regulations and the highest ethical standards.





## How does Individual Preference work?

Because each individual and family is unique, the Individual Preference process may differ from situation to situation. However, there are typically five steps to the process that your CLBC facilitator can guide and support you through:

### STEP ONE: Resource Allocation

CLBC confirms you are eligible for CLBC-funded services, works with you to determine your needs and implements supports when funding is approved and available. The Individual Preference process begins when CLBC confirms funding is available.

### STEP TWO: Identify Qualified Service Providers

CLBC will ask you to consider three possible service providers so you can make a more informed decision about which one you prefer. If you already have a service provider in mind, CLBC will ensure they have the proper qualifications and refer two additional service providers for you to also consider.

If your preferred service provider is not already a CLBC-approved service provider, there may be some additional things that need to be done before we can confirm that we can contract with your preferred service provider. Your facilitator will explain them to you.

If you do not have a service provider in mind, then we will give three service provider names, if available. The service providers we suggest to you will be in the same area and will already be qualified to provide CLBC-funded services.



## **STEP THREE: Meet Service Providers**



Your CLBC facilitator can help you arrange meetings with the service providers that you are considering to learn more about them, talk with the staff and ask questions important to you.

You can also talk with people who already use their services. Your CLBC facilitator can set up these meetings and go with you if you want. He or she can also help you figure out questions to ask, and then review the information with you. This process is about finding out as much as you can about each service provider in relation to the support needs and preferences of the person who will be using the services.

At the back of this guide are some questions you might want to ask and think about when speaking with or visiting possible service providers.

## **STEP FOUR: State Your Preference**



Let your CLBC facilitator know which service provider you prefer – if any. If you are still not sure which service provider you prefer, your CLBC facilitator will assist you to explore appropriate options.

## **STEP FIVE: Arrange Services**



Once you have identified your preferred service provider, CLBC will work with them to arrange services and create a service delivery contract that ensures quality standards and reasonable costs.

## What if negotiations with my preferred service provider are not successful?

CLBC will inform you of the result of this negotiation. Most often, the negotiations are successful and service planning will then begin with your selected service provider. In some cases however, CLBC is not able to negotiate a contract. Should that occur, we will explain why and then discuss what other options may be available.

### Definitions

In this guide and your discussions with CLBC staff and service providers, you may run across some technical words. Here are what some of them mean. Feel free to ask your CLBC facilitator if you need more clarification.

**Direct Award:** Negotiation and award of a contract without a competitive process. This is what usually happens when an individual and/or family has a clear preference for a particular service provider, and that service provider meets basic requirements to contract with CLBC.

**Individualized Funding:** Money is allocated by CLBC to an individual or their agent (eg. family member) to enable them to arrange and pay for individualized supports and/or services to meet the individual's disability-related needs. This option is an alternative to, or in addition to, accessing contracted services.

**Person-centred Society (sometimes called a Microboard™):** A small non-profit society created to address an individual's unique planning and support needs.

**Pre-Qualified Service Provider or Vendor:** Service provider that has already been approved as meeting basic requirements to contract with CLBC.

# Sample Questions - A Resource for Individuals and Families

You may want some ideas about what to look for and ask about when you are visiting or talking with potential service providers about services for yourself or a family member. We have prepared this list to help you. This is not a complete list of questions, so feel free to develop your own set of questions.

You do not have to go through the whole list with a service provider. It is more to help you think about and identify what is most important to you or your family member. It might be a good idea to take notes or ask someone to take notes for you. The questions are organized based on the eight key areas of the quality of life framework that CLBC is using to help ensure that individuals who access services funded by our organization are living good lives in welcoming communities:

## Personal Development

1. How will you help my son learn about things he is interested in?
2. How will you help my daughter become more independent?
3. How will you support my brother to do the things he enjoys and that are important to him?

## Self-Determination

1. How will you support my sister to make her own choices (what to wear, what to eat, what to do in her free time, etc.)?
2. How much choice will my son have about what he does and who he spends his time with?
3. How much control will I have over who works with me?

## Interpersonal Relationships

1. How will you support my brother to maintain his relationships with his family, extended family and friends?
2. How will you support me to meet new people? Including those who do not have a disability?
3. Who can my daughter go to if she needs help with something?

## Social Inclusion

1. How will you support my daughter to join clubs and groups that reflect her interests?
2. How will you support my brother to contribute to his community and help others?
3. How will you help me stay involved with the activities, organizations, and clubs that are already an important part of my life?

## Rights

1. How will you ensure that I have privacy?
2. What can my daughter do if she doesn't like the way someone is treating her?
3. How will you help my brother understand his rights?
4. What can my sister do if she feels someone is not asking for her opinion about things that matter to her or if someone has made a decision she does not like?

## Emotional Well-Being

1. What will you do to make sure that my son feels safe?
2. How will you support my daughter to be around people that make her feel good about herself?
3. How will you let my son know that he is doing a good job?

## Physical Well-Being

1. How will you ensure that my sister is getting the medical attention that she needs (seeing a doctor, seeing a dentist, seeing specialists, etc.) and that the people who support her know about her needs?
2. Will I have the opportunity to make choices about how active I want to be?
3. How will you support my daughter to be as healthy as possible?

## Material Well-Being

1. How will you support my brother to pay for things that are important to him?
2. How much control will my sister have over how her money is spent?
3. How will you support me as a parent to support my son in managing his money?
4. What will you do to make sure that my son's possessions are safe and available for him to use?

## Examples of How to Personalize these Sample Questions:

1. How can you help me to connect with my Aboriginal ancestry?
2. How will you support my brother to connect, maintain and strengthen his Aboriginal identity?
3. How will you help my son stay involved with traditional activities and events which are already an important part of his life?

For more information on CLBC Quality of Life initiatives, visit:  
[www.communitylivingbc.ca/include-me](http://www.communitylivingbc.ca/include-me)



## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT - HOME SHARING

Here are some things to think about if you are looking at a home sharing arrangement for yourself or your family member. You might want to ask these kinds of questions when you are meeting with a potential home sharing agency or provider:

1. How will you support my transition to home sharing to proceed on my time line?
2. How will you support my family member and our extended family to be involved?
3. Will I have the freedom to choose when I want to get up in the morning or what time I want to go to bed?
4. Will I get to choose my home sharing provider? How are people providing home sharing screened? How do I know they have the skills and experience to support my family member?
5. What will support look like? For example, will my family member have a room within the family home or will they have a separate suite?
6. What is the role of the home sharing provider and how do I remain included in my family member's life? Do I have to give notice before I drop by or do I have to arrange any visits in advance?
7. Will I have my own room and have access to all areas of the home?
8. Who ensures that my family member continues to receive quality care? Who can I speak to if I have concerns about the quality of care being provided?
9. How would you support me in a way of life that respects my Aboriginal practice, custom and tradition?

## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT - STAFFED HOME

Here are some things to think about if you are looking at a staffed home arrangement for yourself or your family member. You might want to ask about these types of things when you go on a tour of the staffed home or meet with the agency that operates it:

1. Whose home is it? Does the home have a comfortable, lived-in appearance or does it look impersonal, like a hotel room? Who does the decorating? Staff or people who live in the home? Do you see personal effects such as trophies, diplomas, or family photos on display in the common living areas?
2. Would my family member have the ability to bring and use personal belongings into the home?
3. Would I have the ability to bring and use personal Aboriginal belongings into the home and display them outside of my bedroom?
4. Does the home have the equipment that my family member will need? For example, can a person in a wheelchair reach door handles and drawer knobs and everyday tools such as pots and pans?
5. Does everyone follow the same schedule (mealtimes, bedtimes, etc.) or are there opportunities for me to establish routines that fit my needs and preferences?
6. If my family member needs support with personal care, how will new staff be introduced and oriented? What about support with behaviour or medical needs?
7. How are common areas set up and how do I access them?
8. Is it run more like a business than a home? Signs to watch for include rules posted on walls as if this was a public building, prime space taken up for office equipment, and unreasonable restrictions on the free movement of those who live in the home.
9. How does my family member respond to the environment? How do I myself feel when spending time in the home? Was there a good first impression with potential roommates?
10. Will the service provider/agency allow several visits for me and my extended family to decide whether this is a good place for me to live?

## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT - COMMUNITY INCLUSION

Here are some things to think about if you are looking at a community inclusion service for yourself or your family member. You might want to ask about these types of things when you go on a tour or meet with the agency that operates it:

1. Is the place of service a comfortable space? Is it bright, cheerful, and welcoming? Do the participants you meet seem happy and well-supported?
2. Does the service provider have experience supporting individuals with needs that are similar to those of my family member?
3. How much time is actually spent in community and what does this look like? Do people go out together in large groups or are daily/weekly schedules customized to meet the needs/preferences of individual participants?
4. How much control will I have over the kinds of activities I participate in?
5. Is there a focus on increasing independence and exploring employment opportunities?
6. What happens if I am not able (for whatever reason ... illness, anxiety, etc.) to participate in an activity that has been planned?
7. Most importantly, how does my family member respond to the environment? How do I myself feel when spending time in the space?
8. Will the service provider/agency allow several visits for us to decide if this is a fit for me?

## Links to Consider

These links provide more information related to the questions above:

- CLBC Individual Preference Resources:  
[www.communitylivingbc.ca/about-us/policies/individual-and-family-preference-in-procurement](http://www.communitylivingbc.ca/about-us/policies/individual-and-family-preference-in-procurement)
- Central Alberta Family Networks: Only the Best Will Do  
[www.seniors.alberta.ca/PDD/Central/Docs/Only the Best Will Do.pdf](http://www.seniors.alberta.ca/PDD/Central/Docs/Only_the_Best_Will_Do.pdf)

# Contacting CLBC

To find the contact information for your local CLBC office, please visit [www.communitylivingbc.ca](http://www.communitylivingbc.ca) and click the “Contact Us” option at the top of the page.

You can also contact CLBC toll free at 1-877-660-2522.

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## If you have any questions or would like more information:



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