

Individual Preference

Community Living British Columbia (CLBC) works with many different service providers to arrange for services for people who are eligible* for funded supports. We pay individuals, private companies and non-profit societies to provide approved residential, community inclusion and family support services. These services offer eligible individuals a place to live, opportunities to learn new skills or make new friends or support to find a job. They also support families caring for a loved one.

The process of finding the right service provider for an individual and then negotiating what they will provide and how much CLBC will pay them, is called procurement and contracting.

How does procurement and contracting work?

CLBC is required by government to follow certain rules about procurement and contracting. The rules are to make sure the process is fair to everyone who is eligible for funded supports, and to potential service providers.

For example, CLBC has to ensure that people with similar disability-related needs receive similar levels of funding. Service providers also need to have clear information about contract opportunities and processes. And CLBC has to make sure that contracted services provide good value for the public funds being spent.

We also work hard to make the process person-centred. Our goal is to ensure that contracted services are the best possible match for the disability-related needs of each individual and that we are responsive to each person's unique goals, dreams, and choices. One of the ways we do this is by honouring individual preference whenever possible.

What is individual preference?

Individual preference is a way for an individual and/or their family to take an active role in choosing the service provider that best meets their needs. It is limited by the procurement and contracting rules, and by the level of support and funding approved for that individual.



Who might be interested in individual preference?

Individual preference works for people who are comfortable getting involved in what can be a bit of a complicated process, but don't want the responsibility of contracting for services themselves. Individual preference is not for everyone. People who want more direct control over their services, or the services for a family member, might find that other options like individualized funding or a person-centred society (also called a microboard) would work better.



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* A CLBC eligible adult is a person who is 19 years of age or older and who meets the eligibility criteria described in the Eligibility for CLBC Supports and Services Policy.

When does individual preference come into play?

Individual preference happens after what we call the resource allocation process. The following steps must be complete before discussing individual preference:

- CLBC has confirmed that the individual is eligible for CLBC-funded services
- The individual and/or family has submitted a request for service
- The process of determining the individual's disability-related need is complete
- CLBC has approved a certain type and level of service or funding

How does it work?

There are two different ways that individual preference can happen:

Option 1: Known Preference

This applies when the individual and/or family already knows which service provider they want to provide their service. CLBC works with the individual and/or family to learn more about the preferred service provider and at least two others, and make an informed choice. When it is successful, the contract is done through a direct award – meaning there is no open competitive process.

Option 2: No Known Preference

This applies when the individual and/or family don't have a preferred service provider in mind. It is a two-step process. The first step allows the individual and/or family to learn about possible service providers. If they find one they prefer, it works the same as Option 1. If they still don't have a preferred service provider, the second step is a competitive process. CLBC works with the individual and/or family to understand what they are looking for, and find an approved service provider that is a good match.

Who makes the final decision?

CLBC makes the final decision about who will provide services. We work hard to make sure the decision reflects the individual preference expressed by an individual and/or family. However, there are some cases where CLBC may not contract with the selected service provider. For example, when a service provider does not meet our standards for the delivery of quality services or is not willing to stay within the approved level of funding for the services. In these cases, CLBC may choose an alternate service provider.

Who do I talk to about individual preference?

The CLBC facilitator is the main contact for individuals and families. The facilitator can provide detailed information about how individual preference works, and support individuals and families through the process. For service providers who may be affected by individual preference, the main contact is the CLBC quality service analyst or senior contract co-ordinator.

Contacting CLBC

To find the contact information for your local CLBC office, please visit www.communitylivingbc.ca and go to Your Community > Local CLBC Offices.

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