# Pennsylvania Office of Developmental Programs

Quality Assessment & Improvement (QA&I) < Individual Interview Questions Tool

### Overview of the QA&I Process

The mission of the Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) is to support Pennsylvanians with developmental disabilities to achieve greater independence, choice, and opportunity in their lives.

ODP's vision is to continuously improve an effective system of accessible services and supports that are flexible, innovative and person-centered.

The QA&I Process is a way for ODP to evaluate our current system and identify ways to improve it for all individuals to have a life that meets the Everyday Lives Values in Action principles. Individual interviews are an integral part of QA&I to identify ways to improve services and supports for all individuals.

## Completion Tips and Successful Interview Strategies

The following guidelines are intended to help the Interviewer complete this tool successfully.

- 1. The interview can occur in-person at a location determined by the individual, by phone, or by video.
- 2. Interviews should focus on the individual's overall experience in the past 12 months and not be specific to one service or support.
- 3. Interviews should be conversational and as relaxed as possible questions do not need to be scripted. There are no right or wrong answers.
- 4. It is acceptable for there to be a person designated to answer questions on behalf of the individual. This proxy respondent should be listed in the appropriate space of the first section of the interview tool.
- 5. The individual's response should be prioritized over that of a proxy, guardian, family member, team member, etc. If someone other than the individual or the proxy respondent answers the question, use the appropriate comment box to indicate who answered the question.
- 6. The individual may choose to cancel or reschedule the interview because their preferred communication method is not available, and they do not wish to identify a proxy respondent.
- 7. The majority of questions include a scale of response options from Always to Never. Interviewers should use the following guidance when selecting the appropriate response option:
  - a. Select 'Always' when the circumstance occurs at all times or occasions. There is no variability and it is 100% of the time.
  - b. Select 'Almost Every Time' when the circumstance occurs nearly every time, but no less than 80% of the time.
  - c. Select 'Sometimes' when the circumstance occurs occasionally or from time to time. There is a moderate degree of variability and can occur anywhere from 20% to 80% of the time.
  - d. Select 'Almost Never' when the circumstance hardly ever occurs. There is a high degree of variability and occurs less than 20% of the time.
  - e. Select 'Never' when the circumstance does not occur at all.
  - f. Answers using the response option "Don't know" should be used when the individual did not know the answer to the question.
  - g. Answers using the response option "No response or unclear response. Describe:" should include specification about which one occurred (e.g., there was no response, the response was unclear).

- 8. The comment section should be used minimally and only to record:
  - a. The reason or background information when the answer given is 'almost never' or 'never.'
  - b. Deviations in who responds to the question if not the individual or the designated proxy respondent.
  - c. Information when the question guidance specifies additional detail to capture regarding the question.
- 9. Any identification of health and safety issues should be immediately reported per ODP regulations and/or IM4Q policy.
- 10. Interviewers should document dissatisfaction, issues and/or concerns by individuals in the comment field under the question that initiated the report of dissatisfaction, issue and/or concern. AEs and ODP should address dissatisfaction, issues, or concerns with the SCO and Provider. Identified issues and resolution are to be documented in the individual's service notes by the SCO.
- 11. It is best practice that all answers are recorded during the interview and then entered and submitted via QuestionPro within seven (7) days of the interview. The same QuestionPro link can be used for each interview.
  - a. The interviewer should follow the established QA&I protocol regarding data entry into QuestionPro when the individual cannot be contacted for an interview or declines to participate in an interview.

Name & MCI # of Individual	Date of Interview	Name of Interviewer	Name of Person Entering Interview
Location of the interview*	Who w	as present at the interview?	The following individual was identified as the proxy respondent:
Home** (this includes Residential Habilitation)	🗌 Individual		Full Name:
U Work	Family, list:		
School	Staff, list:		Relation to the Individual/Role for the Individual:
Video (e.g., FaceTime, Zoom)	Other, list:		
Other place, describe:			
Provider site/address (if applicable):			
(*Note: This question can be completed prior to the interview based on the scheduled location of the interview.) (**Note: Check 'home' if the interview is held where the individual lives.)			(Note: Use the Comment box when there are any deviations in the person who answers the question if not the individual or the identified proxy respondent.)

# Interview Questions, Guidance, and Answer Format

#	Question	Who is asked the question?	Guidance to assist the interviewer with question purpose and interpretation in order to obtain the information in lieu of simply asking the question.	Response and Comment
1.	Is your favorite or needed way to communicate used as people are supporting you and throughout your day (including a communication device)?	Individual	The intent of this question is to determine if the individual's favorite or needed mode of communication is routinely used as a part of their services and supports. If the favorite or needed method is not being used, the interviewer will ask questions to explore why including the availability of the favorite or needed mode of communication. The comment box should be used to capture information about non-use and reason.	Pick the one answer that most closely represents the given         response:         Always         Almost every time         Sometimes         Almost never         Never         Don't know         No response, or unclear response. Describe:
2.	Do the people that support you understand you when you try to communicate (express) something?	Individual	The intent of this question is to determine if the individual's supporters understand when they try to communicate (express) something.	Pick the one answer that most closely represents the given         response:         Always         Almost every time         Sometimes         Almost never         Never         Don't know         No response, or unclear response. Describe:
3.	When the people who support you communicate with you, do you understand them?	Individual	The intent of this question is to determine if the individual understands the person who supports them when they communicate with the person.	Pick the one answer that most closely represents the given         response:         Always         Almost every time         Sometimes         Almost never         Never         Don't know         No response, or unclear response. Describe:

#	Question	Who is asked the question?	Guidance to assist the interviewer with question purpose and interpretation in order to obtain the information in lieu of simply asking the question.	Response and Comment
4.	Who chose your housemates?	Individual	*For individuals who receive residential support (residing in a home or apartment owned, rented, leased, or operated by a provider). This question does not apply to individuals who live with their families. The intent of this question is to determine the amount of choice the individual has in determining with whom they share a home.	Pick the one answer that most closely represents the given response:         I chose on my own housemates         I chose my housemates with support         My family chose my housemates         I don't know who chose my housemates         Don't know         No response, or unclear response. Describe:         N/A because the individual does not receive residential support         Comment:
5.	Can you spend time with friends or visitors in your home when you want, even in private if you want?	Individual	The intent of this question is to determine if the individual has freedom of visitation in their home. The interviewer will ask if the individual can have friends or visitors in their home at any time or if scheduling is necessary. Visitors should have access to all appropriate areas when visiting and should not be denied entry to common areas or the individual's bedroom, so long as the individual is okay with bedroom access. Providers should not screen the individual's visitors. The comment section should also capture information about any type of restrictions to visitation freedoms, whether it be related to rules established in the home or limitations based on health and safety concerns for the individual.	Pick the one answer that most closely represents the given         response:         Always         Almost every time         Sometimes         Almost never         Never         Don't know         No response, or unclear response. Describe:
6.	Do others ask permission before entering your bedroom?	Individual	The intent of this question is to ensure that the individual has the right of privacy to their personal space.	Pick the one answer that most closely represents the given         response:         Always         Almost every time         Sometimes         Almost never         Never         Don't know         No response, or unclear response. Describe:

#	Question	Who is asked the question?	Guidance to assist the interviewer with question purpose and interpretation in order to obtain the information in lieu of simply asking the question.	Response and Comment
				Comment:
7.	If you are interested in working, do you receive support to get and keep a job?	Individual	This question is for individuals who have indicated an interest in employment or who are competitively employed. Employment refers to competitive integrated employment. The interviewer should ask if the individual is interested in employment and gain information about what the individual's job interests are. For those who already have a job, the interviewer should seek information about the sufficiency of supports to maintain employment or consider new employment if the individual wants to make a change.	Pick the one answer that most closely represents the given         response:         Always         Almost every time         Sometimes         Almost never         Never         N/A, Individual is not interested in working         Don't know         No response, or unclear response. Describe:
8.	When you go outside your home to do things like play sports or have a meal at a restaurant, who do you go with?	Individual	The intent of this question is to determine if the individual has connection to friends/unpaid supports, as well as paid supports, that they are able to interact with as desired. The interviewer should find out whether the individual goes out with friends, family, paid staff, alone or does not go out into the community at all. The interviewer should record <u>ALL</u> applicable answers.	Pick ALL given responses that apply:         The individual goes out alone.         The individual goes out with friends.         The individual goes out with family (including Life Sharing).         The individual goes out with staff.         The individual does not go out into the community.         Don't know, no response, or unclear response. Describe:
9.	Do you do things with friends, such as go to the movies, hang out, watch TV, go out to eat or play sports?	Individual	The intent of this question is to find out if there are friendships beyond relationships with staff and family.	Pick the one answer that most closely represents the given         response:         Always         Almost every time         Sometimes         Almost never         Never         Don't know         No response, or unclear. Describe:

#	Question	Who is asked the question?	Guidance to assist the interviewer with question purpose and interpretation in order to obtain the information in lieu of simply asking the question.	Response and Comment
10.	Do you contact your family, friends, and others whenever you want in private (this could be through a phone call, social media, email, or sending and receiving mail)?	Individual	The intent of this question is to determine if the individual has the right to unrestricted access to send and receive mail and other forms of communications, unopened and unread by others, including the right to share contact information with whom the individual chooses as well as unrestricted and private access to telecommunications.	Pick the one answer that most closely represents the given         response:         Always         Almost every time         Sometimes         Almost never         Never         Don't know         No response, or unclear response. Describe:
11.	Do you choose what you do, where you go, and when you do things?	Individual	The intent of this question is to determine if the individual has choice, control, and freedom. Questions can be asked separately to achieve an overall answer about choice and control. Use the Comment box to note if there were any restrictions to choice during a time of regulatory suspension (i.e., public health emergency, natural disaster, or emergency). The comment section should also capture information about any type of restrictions to choice, control and freedom, whether it be related to rules established in the home or limitations based on health and safety concerns for the individual.	Pick the one answer that most closely represents the given         response:         Always         Almost every time         Sometimes         Almost never         Never         Don't know         No response, or unclear response. Describe:
12.	Do you get to do the things you like for fun and relaxation as much as you want?	Individual	The intent of this question is to determine if the individual is able to participate in their favorite activities as much as they like.	Pick the one answer that most closely represents the given         response:         Always         Almost every time         Sometimes         Almost never         Never

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				<ul> <li>Don't know</li> <li>No response, or unclear. Describe:</li> <li></li></ul>
13.	Do you get support to do your favorite activities?	Individual	The intent of this question is to determine if the individual feels that they receive the necessary supports to participate in their favorite activities.	Pick the one answer that most closely represents the given         response:         Always         Almost every time         Sometimes         Almost never         Never         Don't know         No response, or unclear. Describe:         Comment:
14.	Do you have time or space to be alone if you need or want it?	Individual	The intent of this question is to determine if the individual can have privacy if they so choose. The question is not intended to capture issues related to supervision and the capability of being alone. The interviewer should be aware of creating tension in a family situation by asking this question and skip the question if appropriate or necessary. The interviewer should use the comment box to indicate reasons why an individual cannot or should not be alone.	Pick the one answer that most closely represents the given         response:         Always         Almost every time         Sometimes         Almost never         Never         Don't know         No response, or unclear response. Describe:         Question skipped.         Comment:
15.	Do you pick what food you would like to eat?	Individual	The intent of this question is to determine if the individual has the right to access food at any time. For example, are there rules regarding when you can go into the kitchen? The interviewer should be aware that an individual may have a diagnosis(es) which can impact food choice and control.	Pick the one answer that most closely represents the given         response:         Always         Almost every time         Sometimes         Almost never         Never         Don't know

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				<ul> <li>No response, or unclear response. Describe:</li> <li>Comment:</li> </ul>
16.	Do you pick when and where you eat your food?	Individual	The intent of this question is to determine if the individual has the right to eat the food where they choose. For example, are there rules about eating in your room, living room, etc. that were not made by you? The interviewer should be aware that an individual may have a diagnosis(es) which can impact food choice and control.	Pick the one answer that most closely represents the given         response:         Always         Almost every time         Sometimes         Almost never         Never         Don't know         No response, or unclear response. Describe:
17.	Do you choose what you do with your money?	Individual	The intent of this question is to determine the individual's choice in managing their money. The interviewer should ask the individual if they have a choice in using their money. The interviewer should also determine if there is choice in spending when the individual receives money from the rep payee. The interviewer should be aware of creating tension in a family situation by asking this question and skip the question if appropriate or necessary. The interviewer should use the comment box to indicate as much information as possible about choice of spending money if the question cannot be asked/discussed directly.	Pick the one answer that most closely represents the given         response:         Always         Almost every time         Sometimes         Almost never         Never         Don't know         No response, or unclear response. Describe:         Question skipped.         Comment:
18.	Do others ask permission if they want to borrow or use your stuff?	Individual	The intent of this question is to determine if the individual has control over their own belongings and others respect the use of those belongings. The interviewer should ask this question from different perspectives about staff, family, friends, etc.	Pick the one answer that most closely represents the given         response:         Always         Almost every time         Sometimes         Almost never         Never         Don't know

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				<ul> <li>No response, or unclear response. Describe:</li> <li></li> <li>Comment:</li> </ul>
19.	Do you get help from your Supports Coordinator when you need it?	Individual	The intent of this question is to determine if the individual's Supports Coordinator is regularly and actively involved to ensure the individual gets all the support the person needs.	Pick the one answer that most closely represents the given         response:         Always         Almost every time         Sometimes         Almost never         Never         Don't know         No response or unclear response. Describe:
20.	Do you help decide the assistance you receive?	Individual	The intent of this question is to determine if the individual took part in making decisions about their services and supports, which are paid or unpaid.	Pick the one answer that most closely represents the given         response:         Always         Almost every time         Sometimes         Almost never         Never         Don't know         No response, or unclear response. Describe:
21.	Do you get help from staff and others when you need it?	Individual	The intent of this question is to determine if the individual is receiving supports when needed. This is an opportunity to determine if staff are timely or if there are unmet needs not addressed via the ISP, and if the individual is supported in contacting their Supports Coordinator regarding any needed changes. It may also indicate if the individual is listened to and understood if the individual has requested help.	Pick the one answer that most closely represents the given         response:         Always         Almost every time         Sometimes         Almost never         Never         Don't know         No response, or unclear response. Describe:

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				Comment:
22.	Does the assistance you receive meet your needs?	Individual	The intent of this question is to gain an overall sense of whether the individual's services and supports – paid or unpaid – have been meeting their needs over the past year. The interviewer should use information gained throughout the interview about supports the individual receives.	Pick the one answer that most closely represents the given         response:         Always         Almost every time         Sometimes         Almost never         Never         Don't know         No response, or unclear response. Describe:         Comment:
23.	Do you have someone you trust who will help you when you have a problem or concern?	Individual	The intent of this question is to determine if the individual has someone in their support circle to express problems or concerns that will help the individual to resolve the issue.	Pick the one answer that most closely represents the given         response:         Always         Almost every time         Sometimes         Almost never         Never         Don't know         No response, or unclear response. Describe:         Comment:
24.	Are the people who assist you nice to you and do they listen to you and show you respect?	Individual	The intent of this question is to determine if the individual feels that staff and others who support them treat them with dignity and respect. The intent of this question also is to determine if the individual feels heard by people who support them, that they are listened to when they express their ideas, preferences, and needs. Respect is defined as accepting someone for who they are and creates a feeling of trust and safety in the relationship. The interviewer should be aware that this could be a difficult question for the individual to answer if people who	Pick the one answer that most closely represents the given         response:         Always         Almost every time         Sometimes         Almost never         Never         Don't know         No response, or unclear response. Describe:

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			assist them are present. The interviewer should ask staff and/or family to leave the room so that this question can be asked to the individual alone.	
			COMMENT NEEDED – The interviewer should include information regarding if staff or family were present or if the individual was alone when the question was asked.	
25.	Do the people who assist you consider and respect your [family] culture, heritage, and history/background?	Individual	The intent of this question is to determine if the individual's cultural and background are respected by staff and are incorporated into all aspects of their services and supports. Culture is defined as the ways of life including arts, beliefs, and customs that are passed down through a person's family. They can include how an individual interacts with others, dresses, practices their faith, conducts rituals, and their system of belief.	Pick the one answer that most closely represents the given         response:         Always         Almost every time         Sometimes         Almost never         Never         Don't know         No response, or unclear response. Describe:
				Comment:
26.	Do the people who assist you consider and respect how you see and express yourself, including your sexuality?	Individual	The intent of this question is to determine if the individual enjoys the right to express themselves as human beings with regard to their gender identity and sexuality, that staff respect the person's self-expression, and the individual's identity is considered in all aspects of their services and supports. <b>Gender identity</b> refers to an individual's understanding and experience of their own gender. Everyone has a gender identity; for some people, it corresponds with the gender assigned at birth, and for some others, it does not. Gender identities are expansive and do not need to be confined within one collectively agreed-upon term. There is no one authority that dictates the boundaries of gender, except the individual concerned. <b>Gender expression</b> refers to the ways in which an individual chooses to present their gender to the world around them. This can include clothing, mannerisms, pronouns, names, etc. However, it is important to note that while things like names, clothing, and others can be an intentional part of an	Pick the one answer that most closely represents the given         response:         Always         Almost every time         Sometimes         Almost never         Never         Don't know         No response, or unclear response. Describe:         Comment:

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			<ul> <li>individual's gender expression, these things also do not necessarily need to have a gender attached to them. This is to say that an individual's gender identity can sometimes inform an individual's gender expression, but an individual's perceived gender expression does not dictate their gender identity.</li> <li>Sexuality is about an individual's sexual feelings, thoughts, attractions and behaviors towards other people. Someone can find other people physically, sexually, or emotionally attractive. All those things are a part of an individual's sexuality. Sexuality is diverse and personal; it is an important part of who an individual is.</li> </ul>	
27.	Do you and/or your family or those closest to you receive information on how to better support you?	Individual/ Family	<ul> <li>The intent of this question is to determine if the individual and their family have been provided with a variety of different information, options and supports so that they have the capacity to provide needed assistance when necessary over time. Do they feel supported and recognized as a key part of their family member's life? Supports to the family should be flexible, comprehensive, coordinated and include such things as the following: <ul> <li>Information, Education and Training on best practices</li> <li>Connecting and networking with other families</li> <li>Services and supports specific to the individual's needs.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Pick the one answer that most closely represents the given         response:         Always         Almost every time         Sometimes         Almost never         Never         Don't know         No response, or unclear response. Describe:
28.	Do you and/or your family or those closest to you get support to better manage your services and learn about new service options?	Individual/ Family	The intent of this question is to determine if individuals and their families have obtained support and assistance to navigate across service systems such as school, medical, ID supports, and community supports as well as through transitions within their lifespan. Families need supports and services that are seamless, individualized for each family and utilize the disability system and generic supports. Navigation supports should integrate all three of the family support strategies listed in the above question.	Pick the one answer that most closely represents the given         response:         Always         Almost every time         Sometimes         Almost never         Never         Don't know         No response, or unclear response. Describe:

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29.	Please add any additional information regarding the individual interview.			