



Things Families and People with Disabilities Should Know About the updated SSA Rule [OAC ssa rule](#)

And other notable changes July, 2026



Intro...

Ohio is updating the rule that describes the responsibilities of Service and Support Administrators (SSAs) [5123-4-02 SSA Rule – Service and Support Administration](#)

Many of these practices have already been in development, included in DODD guidance, or implemented by county boards over the past several years. The new rule, effective July 1, 2026, puts many of these expectations more clearly and formally into rule. While many of the basic responsibilities of an SSA are staying the same, there are some changes and newly formalized requirements that people with disabilities and families may notice.



1. Expect more in-person contact with your SSA

The new rule puts more emphasis on **in-person assessment and monitoring**.

For people enrolled in a Medicaid waiver:

- The annual reassessment will generally be **in person**. A virtual reassessment may occur when the person/guardian and SSA agree that extenuating circumstances require it.
- Your SSA must make an **in-person visit where you live at least every six months**.
- Your SSA must also make an **in-person visit where you receive adult day or employment services at least once every 12 months**.

What this means for you: You may see your SSA in your home and other places where you receive services more often than you have in the past.

2. SSA monitoring will be more focused on how things are actually going.



The previous rule required an ongoing review process that included a face-to-face visit **at least annually**.

The new rule increases the minimum to at least **one time every 6 months in the persons home** and at least **one time in the persons 'adult day service program' per year**. Your ISP will identify the **type and frequency of monitoring** that is appropriate for you. Monitoring can include in-person visits as well as phone calls, emails, and other contacts.

Your SSA may increase monitoring when something significant is happening—for example, a crisis, significant medical or behavioral needs, an interruption in services, a recent move from an ICF to the community, a new HPC provider, or concerns about a provider. You or your guardian can also request additional monitoring.

What this means for you: Monitoring isn't just about checking a box. Your SSA should be looking at whether your services are being provided as planned, whether they are meeting your needs, and whether there are health, safety, quality, or community-integration concerns.

3. SSAs can make unscheduled visits—but there are protections for family homes.

The new rule specifically allows SSAs to make **unscheduled visits to places where a person receives services**.

However when that setting is a **family home**. The unscheduled visit to a family home may occur only when:

- Multiple documented attempts to contact the family have been unsuccessful **and** there are documented, substantiated concerns about the person's health or welfare; or
- The person or guardian requests the visit.

An SSA can ask to enter the family home but **cannot enter without permission**. If entry is denied and serious health or welfare concerns remain, the SSA can refer the concern to the appropriate protective authorities.

What this means for you: The new rule does **not** give SSAs unrestricted authority to unexpectedly enter a family home. There are specific circumstances for unscheduled family-home visits, and permission is still required to enter.



4. Your annual assessment should focus on you and what has changed.

The annual reassessment can focus on areas that **have changed or where you or your guardian have an interest or concern.**

The assessment looks broadly at your life, including:

- Communication
- Advocacy, choices, and decision-making
- Safety, supervision, and emotional well-being
- Friends, relationships, and social life
- School, employment, and finances
- Home and community life
- Medical, dental, nutrition, and wellness needs

The new rule also says that during the initial assessment, **the person with the disability, when able, should be the primary person answering the questions.**

What this means for you: Your SSA should be listening directly to you and focusing the assessment on your current life, strengths, needs, concerns, and goals.

5. Your ISP should be based on your assessed needs—not just available waiver services.

The assessment comes first. The ISP should then reflect what was learned about the person's needs, strengths, risks, preferences, and desired outcomes.

The SSA is also responsible for authorizing services based on the person's **assessed needs and preferred ways of meeting those needs**.

What this means for you: Planning should start with:

“What does this person need, what matters to them, and what are they trying to accomplish?”

Then the team can consider the right combination of supports—including natural supports, community resources, technology, and paid services.



6. Your plan may look different, but person-centered planning is not starting over.

Ohio is moving away from the **OhioISP computer system** and transitioning to DODD's new **Person-Centered Planning Templates**. The new SSA rule requires county boards to use the department's person-centered planning templates to conduct assessments and develop ISPs for people enrolled in HCBS waivers.

What this means for you: Your assessment and ISP may **look a little different (sometime late 2026 or Early 2027)**, but the planning process is not starting over.

The templates continue to help your SSA understand your strengths, needs, goals, risks, preferences, and supports. **You should continue to be at the center of the planning process and help decide what is included in your plan.**



In Conclusion...

The biggest changes families are likely to notice are **more in-person contact with SSAs, more purposeful monitoring where services are actually provided, clearer expectations for home visits, and a new format for the assessment and ISP.**

The overall goal remains the same: **the person with the disability should be at the center of planning, and services and supports should be based on that person's assessed needs, choices, health and safety, and the life they want to live.**



Other changes coming...

Developmental Disabilities Profile transitioning to InterRAI Assessment...

You may have a new assessment called interRAI. It does not replace your annual person-centered planning process, but information from it can help your SSA identify needs that should be discussed in your plan.

Some rules are changing to add wording in about interRAI vs. Developmental Disabilities Profile.

Tentative Dates of Transition...

Starting in July 2027 the interRAI Assessment will inform a 'support level' for IO waivers. By July 2028 the interRAI will inform 'support levels' for SELF and Level One waivers.

Where do I find out more about Upcoming Rules?



Ohio DODD Rules Under Development...

<https://dodd.ohio.gov/forms-and-rules/rules-under-development>

Sign up for emails about Rule Changes here...

<https://dodd.ohio.gov/your-family/all-family-resources/Subscribe>

Email Lists

Abuser Registry, alerts about registry updates

Director's Corner, updates from DODD Director Kim Hauck

Disability Connection - News for People with Developmental Disabilities

DODD Pipeline, department news and resources

DSP Connection, news for direct support professionals

Family Connection, news for families

Health and Welfare Alerts, required reading for providers

Memo Monday, DODD guidance and training

Rules Notifications

Tech First Update