

Support Coordinator Guidance: Plan Revisions for Participants in Cohorts 1 – 4

Updated June 4, 2025

(Red arrows in left margin indicate new or revised content since previous version)

This guidance applies to the 2025 transition of the Division of Developmental Disabilities' (DDD) Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent (VF/EA) Self-Directed Services Model from Public Partnerships LLC (PPL) as the fiscal intermediary (FI), to Acumen Fiscal Agent (Acumen).

Terms to Know for this Guidance

- **'Recently had'** – for the purpose of this FI transition, *recently had* refers to any time since January 1, 2024 (this is the period from which cohorts were assigned)
- **New PPL Enrollee for Vendor Services** – a person who is adding a vendor service and enrolling with PPL for the first time (has *never had* any vendor service or an SDE with PPL as the FI)
- **New Referral for SDE Services with PPL** – a person who is seeking to hire an SDE for the first time with PPL as the FI (they may or may not have already enrolled with PPL previously for a vendor service)
- **PPL Participant** – a person who is enrolled with PPL and currently has or recently had a vendor service and/or an SDE with PPL as the FI

This transition is occurring in phases, in groups of individuals called cohorts.

- **Cohorts 1 – 4** consist of individuals who currently have (or recently had) **vendor-services-only** with PPL as the fiscal intermediary (FI), and who **do not** have any Self-Directed Employees (SDE).
- **Cohort 5** consists of individuals who currently have (or recently had) one or more SDEs with PPL as the FI (with or without vendor services through PPL).

What if an individual is in Cohorts 1 – 4 but **does not have** a service in their current plan with PPL as the FI?

If an individual is in Cohorts 1 – 4 but **does not have** any service with PPL as the FI in their current plan, **that individual does not need to complete Acumen enrollment.**

To avoid having the individual receive further Acumen communications, the Support Coordinator (SC) should contact Acumen as soon as possible at enrollment-nj@acumen2.net or **848-400-5903** and let them know they can remove the individual from [Cohort #] because the individual does not have a PPL vendor service in their current plan. Also, let them know the SC has advised the individual they do not need to complete Acumen enrollment.

How Support Coordinators Can Support a Smooth Transition

During any contact with an individual/family in Cohorts 1 – 4, Support Coordinators should check on the individual's Acumen enrollment status and urge them to complete it as soon as possible if they have not already. Individuals in any of the five cohorts (or their authorized representative), can contact Acumen at any time to ask questions and/or update/provide their email address.

Acumen and DDD are advising every individual (or their authorized representative) in Cohorts 1 – 4 to complete their Acumen enrollment as soon as possible (and preferably well before June 30) to avoid delays due to unforeseen issues.

(Acumen has outreached vendors separately and vendors are continuing to enroll with Acumen on an ongoing basis.)

Plan Revision Timeline for Cohorts 1 – 4

NOTE: For individuals in Cohorts 1 – 4, DDD recommends SCs not add any new services with PPL as the FI after they have revised and approved the plan per the timeline below. (See pages 4-5 for exceptions/emergent needs)

Cohorts 1 – 4 Acumen Enrollment Window	Cohort	Plan-Revision Approval End Date (last date a revised plan can be approved for corresponding Go-Live Date)	Last date an SC can add a new vendor service with PPL as FI	Service end date for all current PPL vendor service(s)	Acumen Go-Live Date (service start date for new vendor service(s) with Acumen as FI)
Open Now through June 30	1	May 23	June 1	June 7	June 8
	2	June 6	June 12	June 18	June 19
	3	June 20	June 30	July 6	July 7
	4	July 7	July 10	July 16	July 17

When Can an SC Begin Revising Plans for Cohorts 1 – 4?

Support Coordinators may begin revising and approving Cohort 1 – 4 plans any time following prescribed cohort dates in the above timeline. (See *How to Transition an Existing PPL Vendor Service to Acumen*, page 2).

IMPORTANT (for individuals in Cohorts 1 – 4)

- **SCs do not need to wait** for notification from Acumen that the individual/authorized representative and/or their vendor(s) have completed their Acumen enrollment to revise and approve the individual's plan.
- **However**, until **both** the individual/authorized representative **and** the vendor complete their Acumen enrollment, **the vendor will not be able to submit an invoice to Acumen and be paid**.

NOTE: Guidance specific to plan revisions for individuals in Cohort 5 (PPL Participants with one or more SDEs, with or without vendor services) will be available soon. Please check back.

How to Transition an Existing PPL Vendor Service to Acumen

For individuals in Cohorts 1 – 4, SCs need to follow these steps for each vendor service with PPL as FI:

- STEP 1.** SC needs to contact the vendor to confirm they are willing and able to continue to provide the current service with Acumen as the FI (if vendor has not yet enrolled with Acumen, SC should advise them to contact Acumen directly by calling 833-892-0413 or emailing vendor-nj@acumen2.net)
- STEP 2.** SC will update the **service end date** for the existing PPL vendor service to the day before the cohort Go-Live Date (column 5 in the timeline: June 7, June 18, July 6, or July 16)
- STEP 3.** SC will then add the same vendor service as a new service with Acumen as the FI. The **service start date** for the new Acumen vendor service will be the Cohort Go-Live Date (column 6 in the timeline: June 8, June 19, July 7, or July 17)
- STEP 4.** SC will get the revised plan signed and approved **on or before** the cohort Plan-Revision Approval End Date (column 3 in the timeline: May 23, June 6, June 20, or July 7), which auto-generates and transmits a new prior authorization to Acumen for processing
- STEP 5.** SC will provide the vendor with the new **Service Detail Report** (with Acumen as FI)

The vendor will submit invoices to PPL for services delivered on or before the PPL service end date, and will submit invoices to Acumen for services delivered on or after the Acumen service start date.

Related iRecord Guidance

For individuals in Cohorts 1 – 4, DDD-IT has already completed a back-end submission of an FI Referral to Acumen. Therefore, when an SC is revising the individual's plan to transition current vendor services from PPL to Acumen or to develop the new Annual Plan:

- SCs must **not** select "Refer to PPL" from the Send Referral menu option in the iRecord Tools menu. Doing so will prevent the SC from being able to select Acumen as the FI for the transitioning vendor service(s).
- SCs must **not** add a vendor service with PPL as the FI with a service start date that falls on or after the individual's expected Acumen Go-Live Date (see the question just below). Any vendor service with a start date on or after the expected Go-Live Date must be an Acumen service.
- SCs must not send an existing vendor service with PPL as the FI (service already reviewed and approved by DDD) through DDD Service Review, as it may add extra steps and cause a delay in plan approval.

What if the SC Cannot Revise and Approve the Plan by the Plan-Revision Approval End Date?

If the SC is unable to get the plan with the vendor-service changes approved on or before the cohort Plan-Revision Approval End Date, they will need to revise the plan again to correspond **with the timeline and Go-Live Date of the next cohort**. (The individual will essentially 'roll into' the next cohort, although there is no need to notify Acumen or DDD of this.)

Example

SC made the following changes to a Cohort 1 vendor service:

- Changed the service end date for the existing PPL vendor service to June 7 (day before Cohort 1 Go-Live Date)
- Created a new vendor service with Acumen as the FI, with a service start date of June 8 (Cohort 1 Go-Live Date)
- The guardian was not able to sign/approve the revised plan by May 23 (Cohort 1 Plan-Revision Approval End Date)

SC will now need to revise the Cohort 1 plan again, as follows:

- Change the service end date of the existing PPL vendor service from June 7 to June 18 (day before Cohort 2 Go-Live Date)
- Change the service start date for the newly created Acumen vendor service from June 8 to June 19 (Cohort 2 Go-Live Date)
- Get the revised plan signed and approved before June 6 (Cohort 2 Plan-Revision Approval End Date), which will auto-generate and transmit the prior authorization to Acumen for processing
- Provide the vendor with the updated Service Detail Report

What if Acumen receives and processes a new PA for a transitioning vendor service but the individual/authorized representative and/or vendor have not yet completed their Acumen enrollment?

For PPL Participants with Vendor Service(s) Only

Once the newly created vendor service with Acumen as the FI is approved (thereby generating the prior authorization), the vendor will deliver the service as usual, per the new Service Detail Report.

The vendor will submit invoices to PPL for services delivered on or before the PPL service end date, and will submit invoices to Acumen for services delivered on or after the Acumen service start date.

However, until **both** the individual/authorized representative **and** the vendor complete their Acumen enrollment, **the vendor will not be able to submit an invoice and be paid through Acumen**.

Hard-Stop/Hard-Start Dates for Support Coordinators

May 16, 2025:	Last date an SC can submit a New Referral for SDE services with PPL for any individual in Cohorts 1 – 4
June 13, 2025:	Last date an SC can submit any New Referral for SDE Services with PPL and/or add any New PPL Enrollee for Vendor Only Service(s): (PPL will stop accepting all brand new PPL Participants – both SDE and Vendor-Only – beginning June 14)
June 20, 2025:	First date an SC can add a vendor service with Acumen as the FI for an individual who was never a PPL Participant for any service (vendor or SDE) (For individuals in Cohorts 1 – 4, SCs can begin adding new vendor services with Acumen as FI on or after the Go-Live Date of an approved plan)
September 15, 2025:	First date an SC can either: a) Submit a New Referral for SDE Services to Acumen, and/or b) Add new SDEs and/or vendor services with Acumen as FI for individuals in Cohort 5 (<i>can only be added after individual/authorized representative and employer of record have completed their Acumen enrollment and SC has received billable rate(s) from Acumen for former PPL SDE services</i>)

An Individual Needs Direct Support Services after June 13

The Direct Support Options below apply to all individuals, **with the exception of** individuals that are in Cohort 5 and individuals submitted as a New Referral for SDE Services with PPL *after cohorts were assigned and before June 13*.

Direct Support Options

If an individual needs direct support services after June 13 and before September 15, there are two options available:

- Hire a Medicaid/DDD-approved provider agency to deploy an agency-employed Direct Support Professional (DSP) to provide services, **OR**
- Enroll in the Agency with Choice (AWC) Self-Directed Services Model, with Easterseals NJ as the fiscal intermediary, and hire a Self-Directed Employee (in which case any vendor services the individual has through PPL will need to transition to Easterseals NJ).

NOTE: Regardless of which option an individual pursues, they will be able to transition to the VF/EA model with Acumen as the fiscal intermediary any time after September 15, 2025. *(As always, when transitioning between self-directed employee models, the individual will need to re-enroll with the new FI and their new SDE(s) will need to complete fingerprinting and background checks for the new FI.)*

Exceptions

For individuals in Cohort 5, and for individuals that were submitted by an SC as a New Referral for SDE Services with PPL *after cohort assignments were made and before June 13*: SCs may continue to add SDEs currently being enrolled/on-boarded with PPL **until notified otherwise**.

(NOTE: as always, at any time and depending on availability in their budget, any individual may choose to hire a provider agency and/or enroll with or transition to the Agency with Choice Self-Directed Services Model with Easterseals NJ as the fiscal intermediary)

An Individual Needs a New Vendor Service

For Individuals in Cohorts 1 – 4

(Please review *Related iRecord Guidance*, page 3)

If an individual in Cohorts 1 – 4, with a plan approved on or before a cohort Plan-Revision Approval End Date using the corresponding cohort Go-Live Date, needs a new vendor service to start after plan approval and before cohort Go-Live Date, the SC will do the following:

STEP 1. SC will add the new vendor service with PPL as the FI, with a **service start date** that is on or before the corresponding “last date” listed in column 4 of the timeline (June 1, June 12, June 30, or July 10) and a **service end date** that is the “end date” listed in column 5 of the timeline (June 7, June 18, July 6, or July 16)

STEP 2. SC will provide the vendor with the new **Service Detail Report** (with PPL as FI)

STEP 3. SC will inform the individual/family and vendor that the vendor **must deliver the authorized service units (with PPL as FI) on or before the service end date** or the service units will not be eligible for reimbursement through any FI.

If the individual needs to receive services from the new vendor beyond the Go-Live Date in the approved plan, the SC will need to add the new vendor service with Acumen as the FI and a service start date that is *on or after the cohort Go-Live Date*. The vendor will need to enroll with both PPL and Acumen.

For Individuals in Cohort 5 and Others

For individuals in Cohort 5 and individuals submitted as a New Referral for SDE Services with PPL *after cohort assignments were made and before June 13* who need vendor services, SCs can add a new vendor service with PPL as the FI **until SCs are notified otherwise**.

For individuals that never enrolled with PPL for any service (vendor or SDE) and need vendor services after June 13, their SC may add a new vendor service with Acumen as the FI on or after June 20.

Brand New Vendor Service – Service Review Required but Green Litmus Appears

In cases where an SC enters a brand new vendor service with PPL (following the above guidance) OR a brand new vendor service with Acumen that requires DDD service review, but the service inadvertently bypasses this step and turns the litmus indicator green, the SC must do the following:

- Upload applicable request form(s) to iRecord for the brand new vendor service (for example, Goods and Services Request Form, AT/EM/VM Purchase Request Form)
- Send an email to alert the Service Approval Helpdesk: DDD.ServiceApprovalHelpDesk@dhs.nj.gov
- In the email, enter subject line FI Transition Service Review and include the following items:
 - DDD ID number
 - Plan/Outcome/Service number of brand new vendor service

The DDD Service Approval Helpdesk will review the uploaded Request Form and indicate approved or denied status by both entering a Note in iRecord and responding to the alert email.