Provider Readiness Checklist

A Quick Guide to Preparing for Program Launch or Expansion

New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)

Use this checklist as a planning roadmap - not as a substitute for current DDD, Medicaid, licensing, certification, HCBS, building, fire, or local requirements.

Requirements reviewed against NJ guidance available September 23, 2026.

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1. Establish the Business

- ☐ Determine the legal business structure (for example: LLC, corporation, nonprofit, or other recognized entity).
- ☐ Register the business with the State of New Jersey, as applicable.
- ☐ Obtain an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the IRS.
- ☐ Establish the business address, leadership/ownership structure, banking, accounting, payroll, and insurance systems.
- ☐ Existing providers: confirm corporate records, insurance, registrations, and leadership information are current before expanding.

2. Define the Service Model

Identify the exact DDD services the agency intends to provide and review the current service definitions, provider qualifications, staffing expectations, documentation rules, limitations, and billing requirements for each service.

- ☐ Individual Supports
- ☐ Community Based Supports (CBS)
- ☐ Community Inclusion Services
- ☐ Day Habilitation
- ☐ Respite
- ☐ Prevocational Training
- ☐ Supported Employment
- ☐ Other DDD-approved services

Key planning point: The approval pathway is not the same for every service. Day Habilitation and licensed residential settings have additional pre-opening requirements that community-based services do not.

3. Obtain the NPI

- ☐ Apply for a National Provider Identifier (NPI) through NPPES/CMS.
- ☐ Obtain an NPI for each location from which services will be provided, as required by DDD.
- ☐ For community-based services not provided through a specific program site, use the administrative/main location NPI as directed by DDD.

4. Build Core Policies & Procedures

DDD-approved Medicaid waiver providers must develop, maintain, review, and update agency policies and procedures. The exact content should match the services the agency actually provides.

- ☐ Organizational governance and agency operations
- ☐ Personnel, staff qualifications, screening, supervision, and training
- ☐ Admission, suspension, and discharge
- ☐ Incident reporting and investigation
- ☐ Complaints and grievances
- ☐ HIPAA, confidentiality, and record security
- ☐ Emergency preparedness and response
- ☐ Medication administration, when applicable
- ☐ Medicaid fraud, waste, abuse, exclusion, and debarment
- ☐ Human rights
- ☐ Financial management, documentation, and billing
- ☐ Quality management and internal compliance review
- ☐ Behavior support and service-specific procedures, when applicable

Application vs. operations: Do not assume the entire policy manual is automatically submitted with the initial Combined Application. The application and service selected determine the supporting documents that must be submitted. The agency still needs a complete, compliant policy system for operation and audit readiness.

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5. Choose the Correct Approval Path

Use the pathway below to understand what must happen before launch.

PATH A COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES
Examples: CBS, Community Inclusion, in-home/community Individual Supports
No separate DDD residential license or Day Habilitation site certification is required simply because these services are being added. The provider must still complete DDD/Medicaid enrollment, satisfy service-specific qualifications, maintain policies, clear/train staff, and meet documentation, HCBS, incident, billing, and other applicable requirements.

PATH B DAY HABILITATION
Facility-based Day Habilitation
Provisional Day Habilitation Certification comes before the Combined Application for Day Habilitation. Each service location is certified separately. The provider must complete the certification requirements and facility review before operating the program at that site.

PATH C LICENSED RESIDENTIAL
Provider-managed group homes / supervised apartments
The Medicaid service delivered in a licensed residential setting is Individual Supports. The agency must first be approved for Individual Supports and must document at least 24 months of direct-care experience serving people with I/DD before submitting the residential licensing application. Residential development and licensing are separate from basic provider enrollment.

6. Submit the Combined Medicaid/DDD Provider Application

- ☐ Complete the Combined Application to Become a Medicaid/DDD Approved Provider after applicable prerequisites are met.
- ☐ Select each service the agency intends to provide.
- ☐ Complete Medicaid enrollment, ownership/disclosure, tax/payment, and service-specific documents generated or required by the application.
- ☐ For Individual Supports, complete the required Individual Supports Provider Attestation.
- ☐ Retain a complete copy of the original application and every attachment submitted.

7. Day Habilitation - Pre-Opening Readiness

Before applying to provide Day Habilitation, obtain Provisional Day Habilitation Certification. Each location must be certified separately and certification is not transferable to another organization or location.

- ☐ Develop the Service Delivery Plan/program description and intended outcomes
- ☐ Define program capacity, geographic service area, days/hours, and sample activity schedule
- ☐ Create the organizational structure, staff qualifications, and job descriptions
- ☐ Establish background-check and staff-training procedures
- ☐ Develop admission, suspension, discharge, emergency, and transportation procedures
- ☐ Identify and prepare the program location
- ☐ Complete the required facility review for the service location
- ☐ Receive provisional certification before completing the Day Habilitation enrollment pathway
- ☐ Prepare for the full audit before the provisional certification expires

8. Group Home / Licensed Residential Readiness

A provider-managed residence is not opened simply by adding Individual Supports to the agency. Residential licensing and development are additional processes.

- ☐ Become approved by DDD/Medicaid to provide Individual Supports

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☐ Document at least 24 months of direct-care service history with individuals with I/DD, including requested survey/audit history and plans of correction
☐ Engage the appropriate DDD residential development and licensing offices
☐ Consult DDD housing/resource development guidance before acquiring housing
☐ Complete the residential licensing application
☐ Develop residential-specific policies, staffing, emergency/evacuation, medication, health, safety, and operational systems
☐ Prepare the physical residence for licensing review and required inspections
☐ Correct any deficiencies identified during review
☐ Receive the required residential license/approval before operating the setting

Important: DDD/OPIA specifically directs prospective residential providers to follow the residential development process. A house should not be treated as program-ready merely because it is available to lease or purchase.

9. Location & Physical Site Readiness

☐ Confirm zoning and allowable use
☐ Confirm building, fire, occupancy, and local requirements that apply
☐ Verify accessibility and safe emergency egress
☐ Plan participant capacity, privacy, bathrooms, activity areas, staff work space, and secure records
☐ Plan medication storage and food preparation areas when applicable
☐ Review transportation access and parking
☐ Review HCBS Settings Rule requirements
☐ Do not assume a commercially available or residential property automatically meets program requirements

10. Build Operational Infrastructure

☐ Participant referrals, intake, admission, and record setup
☐ ISP review and service authorization verification
☐ Service documentation and progress notes
☐ Incident reporting and internal investigation
☐ Emergency and medical information systems
☐ Medication documentation, when applicable
☐ Staff scheduling and supervision
☐ Transportation systems
☐ Electronic Visit Verification (EVV), when applicable
☐ Medicaid billing and internal claim review
☐ Quality assurance and routine compliance auditing
☐ Complaints, grievances, human rights, HIPAA, and records security

11. Recruit, Clear & Train Staff

☐ Determine the staffing model and supervisory structure
☐ Create service-appropriate job descriptions and verify qualifications
☐ Complete required criminal-history and registry checks
☐ Complete exclusion/debarment checks and drug testing when applicable
☐ Complete DDD-mandated training and CPR/First Aid as required
☐ Train employees on agency policies and emergency procedures
☐ Complete participant-specific training before staff provide services
☐ Maintain personnel files that demonstrate continued compliance

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12. Complete a Pre-Launch Readiness Review

- ☐ Is the agency approved for this exact service?
- ☐ Is the correct service location enrolled and/or approved?
- ☐ Has any required licensing or certification been completed?
- ☐ Are required facility inspections/reviews complete?
- ☐ Are service-specific policies operational?
- ☐ Are all scheduled staff cleared, qualified, and trained?
- ☐ Are intake, documentation, incident, emergency, and billing systems functioning?
- ☐ Are transportation and EVV systems ready, if applicable?
- ☐ Has the agency completed an internal mock compliance review before serving the first participant?

Quick Pathway Guide

Service Type	DDD/Medicaid Approval	Additional Pre-Opening Process
Community Based Supports	Required	No separate Day Hab certification or residential license
Community Inclusion Services	Required	No separate Day Hab certification or residential license
Individual Supports - in-home/community	Required	Individual Supports attestation; no residential license for a non-provider-managed home
Individual Supports - licensed residential setting	Required	Residential development and licensing required
Day Habilitation	Required	Provisional Day Habilitation Certification required before provider application for Day Hab
Other services	Required	Review service-specific prerequisites and qualifications

A provider number is not the finish line. Strong providers prepare their people, policies, physical environment, documentation, billing, emergency systems, and quality controls before the first participant begins services.

Simple Launch Roadmap

NEW PROVIDER	Business formation → EIN → service selection → NPI → service-specific prerequisites → DDD/Medicaid enrollment → licensing/certification if applicable → operational development → staffing → launch
ADD A SERVICE	Review service requirements → complete prerequisites → add/enroll service → update policies and systems → recruit/train staff → launch
ADD A LOCATION	Identify location → NPI/enrollment as applicable → licensing/certification/site review when required → update operations → staff/train → activate location

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Official NJ Resources

Use the links below to verify current requirements before submitting an application, acquiring a site, or launching a service.

- DDD - Apply to Become a Provider
- DDD - Day Habilitation Certification
- DDD - Mandatory Provider Policies & Procedures
- DDD - Provider Compliance Requirements
- DDD - Policy Manuals
- DHS Office of Program Integrity & Accountability - Office of Licensing
- NPPES - Apply for an NPI

Educational Use & Ownership Notice

This checklist is a general educational and organizational resource. Requirements may change and may vary by service, setting, funding source, participant needs, and location. Confirm the most current requirements directly with DDD, Medicaid, OPIA/Office of Licensing, and other applicable authorities before making operational or financial decisions.

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