People with I/DD and their families who have been anxiously waiting to hear about changes to the Community First Choice (CFC) program should be getting letters from DSS within the next week.

It is important to note that according to DSS, all current service plans will remain in place without interruption of services until and unless an individual's needs change or DSS determines, based on the criteria below, that revisions are necessary.

**Answers to Questions About Changes to CFC**

**Why is the CFC program changing?**
The federal government has issued guidance clarifying that the CFC benefit may only be used for service hours that directly tie back to activities of daily living (ADLs), instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs) and health related tasks. ([Community First Choice State Plan Option Technical Guide](https://example.com))

**What are the changes to CFC?**
1. The CFC benefit now has 2 parts:
   - The first part of the benefit covers needs such as meal preparation, shopping, money management, etc. It also covers any need you may have such as cueing or supervision related to ADLs. (ADLs include things like bathing, dressing, transferring, toileting, and eating...)
   - The second part of the benefit is for 'hands-on' assistance for ADLs not requiring cueing or supervision.

2. There will now be one Universal Assessment tool used to assess each individual's level of need (LON) for CFC benefits. DSS plans to reassess all CFC participants over 4 months to ensure compliance with the new federal guidelines.

**How does DSS plan to implement these changes?**
1. Starting on January 8, 2018, DSS plans to reassess all CFC participants using the new Universal Assessment tool to determine compliance with federal guidelines and to determine if changes in service plans are necessary.

2. The reassessment process will begin with applicants who have submitted a service plan, but who have not yet hired staff.

3. At the same time, all CFC participants who are active in the program will be reassessed as...
What to Expect and How to Prepare for Your Reassessment Visit

1. You will be contacted by your Universal Care Manager (UCM) to schedule a time for your reassessment.

2. Your UCM will complete your assessment and discuss how CFC can cover your unmet needs. If your funding is different as a result of the assessment, your UCM can help you complete a new budget during the visit.

3. IMPORTANT: You can expedite this process by having your support team at the reassessment visit so that all paperwork can be completed at that visit. If you choose not to do this, keep in mind that the revised budget must be returned to the UCM within 14 days of the reassessment visit or you will not receive your funding.

How will these changes impact you or your loved one with I/DD who is currently participating in the CFC program?

1. According to DSS, all current service plans will remain in place without interruption of services until and unless an individual's needs change or the DSS determines, based on the new Universal Assessment tool, that revisions are necessary.

2. DSS will no longer accept an individual's DDS LON score to determine their level of CFC funding. All CFC participants will need to be reassessed using the new Universal Level of Need tool. This may or may not impact your LON score for CFC but it will not change your LON score for DDS funding.

3. DSS expects that changes in what is covered under CFC will impact budgets.

Is DSS continuing to take new applications for CFC?

Yes! As DSS works through the reassessments, new applications will be on hold, but if you need CFC you can and should apply for this program as soon as possible. We have a much stronger argument for keeping the program alive if people who need it are using it to live in the community.

What is the future of the CFC funding?

Unfortunately, CFC funding is still at risk. During the 2017 legislative session there were several budget proposals which would have entirely eliminated CFC. The state is continuing to look at options that would reduce spending and slow the growth of CFC, but the future of this important program is still uncertain. It is critical that people with I/DD and their families who rely on CFC plan to work with The Arc and our allies to ensure this program survives in the 2018 legislative session. If you would like to add your voice to the fight to save CFC, then send your name, email address, phone number and the town you will live in
More Questions?
1. Read the Questions and Answers about the new Community First Choice Option released by DSS.

2. Call DSS at 1-888-992-8637.

3. Contact the DDS helpline in your region or email DDS at DDS.CFC@ct.gov to submit your questions. DDS will share them with DSS but will not be able to answer questions about specific cases directly at this time.

4. Contact Shannon Jacovino at The Arc of Connecticut at sjacovino@thearcct.org. We will be compiling a list of questions to submit to DSS.

For more information contact Shannon Jacovino, Director of Advocacy & Public Policy at sjacovino@thearcct.org