



Developmental Disabilities Administration

Developmental Disabilities Administration Organization-Wide Positive Behavior Support (PBS) Application

SUMMARY OF OPPORTUNITY

The Maryland Department of Health's Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) is offering an opportunity for organizations to engage in a multi-year partnership to support the adoption and implementation of a Positive Behavior Support (PBS) framework. Through this opportunity, organizations will receive training, technical assistance, and evaluation support to promote the use of positive behavior support across the organization and to integrate priorities using a multi-tiered decision-making framework. The DDA, in collaboration with the Institute of Community Integration at the University of Minnesota, Sheppard Pratt, and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, will provide training, technical assistance and evaluation support to participating organizations. ***Through this application process, the DDA seeks organizations interested in investing in the organization-wide implementation of Positive Behavior Support, promoting efficiency within the organization, and enhancing the quality of life for people supported, as well as for staff.***

APPLICATION PROCESS: The full application is attached as Appendix A. Organizations interested in participating must submit a fully completed application no later than **11:59 p.m. on July 1, 2025**. Only fully completed applications will be reviewed. Teams will be notified of their selection by email or phone call by **August 15, 2025**.

SELECTION PROCESS: The Developmental Disabilities Administration's PBS state leadership team will review all fully completed applications and select up to eight organizations to participate. Applications will be evaluated based on each organization's demonstrated commitment to implementing Positive Behavior Support, strength of leadership support and need. Organizations selected for training and technical assistance must provide evidence in the application of:

- Active administrative support and involvement.
- Participation of the core team in training.
- Independent participation in organization-wide meetings, in addition to attending training days.
- Completion of key activities and data collection for teams implementing positive supports.

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QUESTIONS: Questions about this application or the technical assistance to be provided can be directed to:

Terrence Proctor, Statewide Coordinator of Clinical Services, Developmental Disabilities Administration, 410-961-2293, terrence.proctor1@maryland.gov

Dr. Meg DePasquale, Director of Clinical Services, Developmental Disabilities Administration, 443-468-0191, meg.depasquale@maryland.gov

APPLICATION SUBMISSION: The application should be submitted by email to Terrence Proctor, Statewide Coordinator of Clinical Services, Developmental Disabilities Administration, terrence.proctor1@maryland.gov by **11:59 p.m. on July 1, 2025.**

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INTRODUCTION

The Maryland Department of Health's Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) is committed to behavioral supports utilizing a Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) framework. PBS emphasizes the use of non-restrictive procedures and commitment to reducing physical restraint.

Key elements of PBS include:

- Organizational strategies that promote long-term change for all individuals supported.
- Evidence-based strategies from the field of applied behavior analysis, integrated with other priority approaches, such as person-centered, trauma-informed and culturally responsive strategies.
- Strategies implemented at both the organizational level and individual level of support.
- Organizational management techniques (e.g., training, coaching) used to train and support staff in implementing strategies with fidelity.
- Organization-wide and individual data used to develop action plans.
- Proactive strategies aimed at improving a person's quality of life.
- Recommendations for Positive Behavior Support plans based on a functional behavior assessment, using person-centered strategies to improve quality of life.
- Elements of systems of care and family support that promote lasting change.

In 2018, the DDA partnered with the Institute of Community Integration (ICI) at the University of Minnesota and Sheppard Pratt (SP) to develop a statewide model to support organizations in adopting an organization-wide approach to Positive Behavior Support. The first PBS cohort was trained in the spring of 2019. Although the COVID-19 pandemic caused a pause in cohort activities, we are excited to invite a second cohort at this time. Since the initial work in 2019, the University of Maryland Eastern Shore has joined the DDA PBS partnership.

Positive Behavior Support

Positive Behavior Support (PBS) refers to a set of strategies used by organization-wide teams to improve quality of life and prevent challenging behavior. Interventions include modifying everyday situations and settings to naturally reduce the likelihood of challenging behavior. These interventions involve encouraging and teaching key social, cultural and communication skills to everyone involved (e.g., direct support staff, family members, peers, employers) to create a positive environment. PBS offers a continuum of interventions that increase in intensity.

- **Universal or Primary Stage (Tier 1):** Strategies implemented with everyone within a social setting to establish a positive environment that encourages self-determination and choice.
- **Secondary Stage (Tier 2):** Strategies used for early identification of challenges that may escalate over time.
- **Tertiary Stage (Tier 3):** Involves Individualized Positive Behavior Support plans.

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DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Organizations participating in this opportunity will receive training, technical assistance and evaluation support from the DDA PBS partnership. It is important for organizations to view this opportunity as a long-term commitment. As such, the DDA PBS partnership requests organizations commit to at least a three-year investment in this work. Training, technical assistance, evaluation support and all project activities are offered at **no cost** to participating organizations. Training, technical assistance and evaluation support will be coordinated by staff at the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports/PBS Training and Technical Assistance Center at Sheppard Pratt, in collaboration with the Developmental Disabilities Administration and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. Curricula and support will be provided to organizational leadership, teams and key PBS personnel within each organization.

The first year of training includes a readiness webinar for organization leaders to prepare for the team training event. Following the webinar, the organization leadership team will attend a three-day team training event addressing universal (Tier 1) activities that will help organizations focus on prevention and promotion while building a strong foundation for secondary (Tier 2) and tertiary (Tier 3) support. Strategies included in the first year of training focus on support for all people living and working within a setting. Examples include promoting choice, independence and autonomy; creating a positive environment; and preventing challenging behavior. During this phase of implementation, positive feedback is used to recognize people who practice, prompt and model effective social and communication strategies (e.g., prompting communication, offering choices, modeling strategies to manage frustration).

People with disabilities, staff members, family and community members work together to identify important person-guided values and the positive social behaviors that make these values a reality for everyone in the organization. Technical assistance will focus on facilitating teams through the process of assessing current Positive Behavior Support strengths and creating an action plan that addresses the most important goals achievable within the year. Teams will establish a reasonable pace for action planning and choose activities for the year that best address their organization's needs. After the team training, teams will receive ongoing telepresence coaching support (e.g., attending a team meeting and providing feedback, meeting with select members of the team to address specific questions, reviewing documents and/or data) from members of the DDA PBS partnership.

Once a year, members of the DDA PBS partnership will visit each organization to review implementation and provide feedback for action planning. Additionally, a few individuals involved in individual support planning within the organization will receive extra training on Tier 3 PBS intensive supports.

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Subsequent years will focus on secondary (Tier 2) and tertiary (Tier 3) supports. These efforts will emphasize early identification and intervention strategies to improve the lives of people needing additional support (e.g., Tier 2). Subsequent years will also include further training and technical assistance for specific staff to support intensive, individualized Positive Behavior Support plans for people requiring more assistance.

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READINESS AND LEVEL OF COMMITMENT

To apply for this opportunity, organizations must commit to the following. See Appendix B for readiness guidelines.

Training, technical assistance, evaluation support and all project activities are offered at **no cost** to participating organizations. However, organizations choosing to participate are responsible for the commitment of staff time and agency travel costs.

Leadership support: Organizations must be able to document that their leadership prioritizes efforts toward organization-wide PBS, actively participates in the organization-wide team, and commits to providing the necessary staffing time to engage in all training and technical assistance activities. See Appendix C for information on roles.

Organization-wide team: Organizations must commit to having a team engage in training and technical assistance activities with the DDA PBS Partnership and to an ongoing team-driven process to ensure the sustainability of these efforts over time. Teams are expected to participate in all training and technical assistance activities and meet regularly between these activities. See Appendix C for information on roles.

PBS Point of Contact (PoCs): Organizations must identify the primary contact for communication between the DDA PBS partnership and the organization regarding PBS-related correspondence. Additionally, the PBS PoC is required to participate in all training and technical assistance activities, attend all team meetings, and attend three webinars throughout the year for PBS PoCs within the state of Maryland. See Appendix C for information on roles.

Training and technical assistance activities: Organization leadership must commit to involving the necessary staff in all training and technical assistance activities. A summary of time commitments and training event dates can be found in Appendices D and E.

Data-sharing commitment: As part of this project, The DDA will collect data to better support organizations, train future organizations, and evaluate and disseminate the project as a whole to the state of Maryland and academic audiences. Organizations must agree to collect and allow data to be collected on implementation fidelity and related evaluation data. These data will be reported in a **de-identified nature** to evaluate the progress of the project as a whole to the state and may be disseminated in a **de-identified nature** to academic outlets and other outlets as needed.

Evaluation tools include:

- De-identified organization self-evaluation of fidelity.
- De-identified onsite fidelity tool (collected during virtual or on-site visits with the DDA PBS partnership).

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Potential data sources (these will be discussed during team training) may include the following:

- De-identified incident reporting.
- De-identified cultural awareness and competence and strategies.
- De-identified worker's compensation claim rates.
- De-identified staff turnover, vacancy and retention rates.
- De-identified quality of life data.

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APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

A committee comprised of the Developmental Disabilities Administration PBS partnership leadership team will review all fully completed applications.

Up to 50 points will be awarded to each individual agency application based on whether the following criteria have been met:

1. Executive leadership has signed off in approval of a completed application: **5 points.**
2. Clear demonstration of organization leadership commitment to positive behavior support and understanding of long-term investment in this effort (at least three years): **15 points.**
3. Organization capability/capacity to fulfill the project structure and intention: **20 points.**
4. Existing data collection and review process within the organization: **5 points.**
5. Participation of families and people who receive services. **5 points.**

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APPENDIX A

Application for Technical Assistance and Training: Organization-Wide Implementation of Positive Behavior Support

Part 1

Note: this application has two parts, both of which must be submitted.

For each question, you may use as much space as you wish.

Organization Name: _____

Contact Person: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please provide a brief description of your organization in 500 words or less. Please list or describe the services you provide. _____

Number of people your organization supports: _____

What specific populations does your organization serve? Please provide detail about age, needs and diagnostic categories.

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Why are you applying for this training and technical assistance? Please provide a description of your organization's aims in getting involved with the DDA PBS Cohort model for organization-wide PBS.

PBS requires leadership buy-in and involvement, and a long-term commitment to change. Describe the leaders involved in supporting the involvement of your organization in this work. Discuss how these leaders support the long-term commitment to prioritize involvement in PBS training, technical assistance, and implementation, and how they will be involved with this work.

Does your agency already implement PBS? (Y or N) _____

If yes, how are you implementing PBS:

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Please list the other types of support you provide within your organization (e.g., Person-Centered Practices, Trauma-Informed Care, Motivational Interviewing, Dialectical Behavior Therapy).

How do you currently support staff in learning and implementing new strategies while maintaining consistency of implementation over time?

Please provide numbers for the following information:

Number of Direct Support Professionals: _____

Number of Administrators: _____

Number of Managers: _____

Number of Behavior Support Specialists: _____

Number of other staff (please specify): _____

Did representatives from your organization attend the May 15, 2025 and/or June 20, 2025 statewide webinar: *Organization-Wide Positive Behavior Supports (PBS): What It Is and How To Get Involved!*

- ☐ Attended both sessions ☐ Attended May 15 ☐ Attended June 20
- ☐ Viewed recording of both sessions ☐ Viewed recording of May 15
- ☐ Viewed recording of June 20 ☐ Did not attend or view a recording

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Part 2

Please provide the names and information of the people you are recommending for the different roles in this training and technical assistance project. Note that a description of these roles and the training available are included in Appendix C.

I. List one to two PBS Point(s) of Contact for your organization (minimum of one PBS Point of Contact)

PBS Point of Contact Name: _____

Role in Organization: _____

Email: _____

PBS Point of Contact Name: _____

Role in Organization: _____

Email: _____

II. Document the administrators and management level professionals (up to five) who will participate in the three full-day organization-wide team training and will meet within your organization between training to complete the Positive Behavior Support organization-wide planning process. We encourage teams to include leadership involved with evaluation.

1. Administrator/Management Name: _____

Role in Organization: _____

Email: _____

2. Administrator/Management Name: _____

Role in Organization: _____

Email: _____

3. Administrator/Management Name: _____

Role in Organization: _____

Email: _____

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4. Administrator/Management Name: _____
Role in Organization: _____
Email: _____

5. Administrator/Management Name: _____
Role in Organization: _____
Email: _____

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III. Other Team Members. List any other people who will participate in the organization-wide planning. We encourage teams to include direct support professionals.

Team Member Name: _____

Role in Organization: _____

Email: _____

Team Member Name: _____

Role in Organization: _____

Email: _____

Team Member Name: _____

Role in Organization: _____

Email: _____

Team Member Name: _____

Role in Organization: _____

Email: _____

Team Member Name: _____

Role in Organization: _____

Email: _____

Team Member Name: _____

Role in Organization: _____

Email: _____

If you have additional members, please list their names, roles in the organization and email addresses.

PLEASE SEND THIS APPLICATION by email to:

Terrence Proctor, Statewide Coordinator of Clinical Services, Developmental Disabilities Administration,
terrence.proctor1@maryland.gov by **11:59 p.m. on July 1, 2025.**

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APPENDIX B

DDA Readiness Checklist For Organization-Wide Positive Behavior Support

Organization/County Participating: _____ County/Region: _____

_____ Date: _____

		Items to Review, Complete, and Update
☐	YES ☐ NO	1. Commitment to policy development related to Positive Behavior Support practices with time allocation for staff development and team-based planning.
☐	YES ☐ NO	2. A team is identified with broad representation, and roles assigned to members (administrator, management, staff members, etc.) and commitment to including a broader group in the meeting process (people supported, family members, community partners, etc.). List team member names and roles on the second page of the Readiness Document.
☐	YES ☐ NO	3. The CEO/Executive/Head Administrator is an active participant on the Team and agrees to attend all training days. The Administrator's signature on this document below indicates agreement. See Appendix D: Summary of Time Commitments.
☐	YES ☐ NO	4. CEO/Executive/Head Administrator commits (or re-commits) to organization-wide implementation as a 3-5 year process that may require ongoing training and/or revisions to the Strategic Plan and PBS Action Plan. Please provide the Administrator's signature(s) on this document below.
☐	YES ☐ NO	5. Team commits to meet at least once a month during the year to analyze and problem-solve organization-wide evaluation information. <i>See Appendix D: Summary of Time Commitments.</i>
☐	YES ☐ NO	6. The team will evaluate ongoing interest and buy-in of implementing PBS with staff, people living/working in a setting and administration.
☐	YES ☐ NO	7. Organization has allocated/secured funding to support ongoing staff development and cohort training.
☐	YES ☐ NO	8. Individual(s) (1-2) identified as a PBS Point of Contact. This person(s) will serve as a primary contact and communication path between the DDA and the organization on correspondence related to PBS, and will engage in training and technical assistance activities. <i>See Appendix D: Summary of Time Commitments.</i> List confirmed PBS Point(s) of Contact (PoCs) on the section below.

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☐ YES ☐ NO	9. The organization commits to engaging in internal training and coaching/technical assistance activities to support staff skill development and maintenance as the organization implements PBS. Administrator signature(s) on this document below indicates agreement.
☐ YES ☐ NO	10. The organization will work with the DDA PBS Partnership to identify data that are already collected to use for self-assessment and will work to gather additional information in a manner that works for the organization.

Successful implementation requires strong administrative support, commitment and involvement. In recognition of the time, effort and motivation required to effect positive systems change, my signature below signifies my agreement and recommitment to the above fulfilled expectations for continued implementation.

CEO/Executive/Head Administrator's Signature:

Date: _____

PBS Point of Contact Name	Role in Organization

Item 2: Team Members

Item 8: PBS Point of Contact (at least one PoC)

Team Member's Name	Role in Organization

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APPENDIX C

Additional Information on Roles

Positive Behavior Support Organization-Wide Team: Representatives from a range of leadership and implementation roles within the organization meet to coordinate organization-wide Positive Behavior Support efforts, in alignment with other priorities including, but not limited to, person-centered support, trauma-informed supports, Mandt® and cultural responsiveness. This team meets regularly (e.g., monthly) to review information and data to guide action planning using a public health model that includes three stages: universal or primary, secondary stage for early identification of individuals at risk, and tertiary stage strategies to provide individualized interventions and supports.

Positive behavior support practices needed by the organization are identified, and a plan for implementing training and technical assistance is established. Teams use evaluation data to assess effectiveness and review fidelity of implementation data. Some organizations will implement more than one type of Positive Behavior Support practice to meet the needs of the people receiving supports. For many organizations, this is an existing team. For some organizations, a new team or a subcommittee of a larger team is identified for this work.

PBS Point of Contact (PoC): Each organization-wide team identifies a person who will be considered a main point of contact for training and technical assistance. The PBS PoC for each organization attends all team and coaches training, as well as webinars with PoC from other organizations as part of a community of practice. Points of Contact support their teams by encouraging team members, prompting the need for meetings, and working with external coaches to ensure data are collected for organization-wide decision making.

PBS Facilitators: During the first year of the project, one to two people in each organization will be identified by the organization as individuals who can develop the expertise needed to train and support PBS within their organization, and build expertise (or build upon expertise) in Positive Behavior Support plans. These individuals should either have existing experience in individual positive support planning or be designated for that role within the organization and will also be able to support Universal/Tier 1 PBS efforts.

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APPENDIX D

Summary of Time Commitments

Role	Expectations	Training Time Commitment (Hours) per person
Organization Leadership	1 readiness webinar (1.5 hrs.) to prepare for team training 3 full-day PBS team training events* - Team meetings within the organization between training days and after training is completed	Estimated 25.5 <i>Plus regular team meetings</i>
Team Members	3 full-day PBS team training events* - Team meetings within the organization between training days and after training is completed	Estimated 24 <i>Plus regular team meetings</i>
PBS Points of Contact	1 readiness webinar (1.5 hrs.) to prepare for team training 3 full-day PBS team training events* 3 Points of Contact webinars (2 hrs. each) - Team meetings within the organization between training days and after training is completed	Estimated 31.5 <i>Plus regular team meetings</i>
PBS Facilitators	3 full-day PBS team training events* 5 full-day PBS Facilitator training events (virtual) - Team meetings within the organization between training days and after training is completed	Estimated 64 <i>Plus regular team meetings</i>

Note: Each organization-wide team will be meeting regularly between the activities listed in this appendix to work on an action plan created during trainings. Time dedicated to these additional activities vary by organization and are not included in the table above.

**The cost of travel time and expenses to send staff to trainings are covered by the organization.*

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APPENDIX E

2025-2026 Cohort 2 Event Dates

Event	Date	Location	Person's Involved
Team Readiness Webinar	September 10	Webinar	Point of Contact(s) and Administration
Team Training on Universal/Tier 1 Organization-Wide PBS	October 7, November 11, December 16 & January 28	In-Person Location TBD	Leadership Team
Ongoing Technical Assistance (up to 9 hours by July 1, 2026) from DDA PBS Partners	TBD by Organization Team	Virtual or in person	TBD by the organization team and DDA PBS partners
On-Site Visit from the DDA PBS partnership	TBD by Organization	Identified by the Organization	Leadership Team and others as identified by the Team
PBS PoC Community of Practice	January, March and May specific dates TBD by November with input from Cohort Teams	Webinar	PBS PoCs from each Cohort Organization
PBS Facilitators Trainings	January 15, February 12, March 12, April 9, May 14	Webinar	PBS Facilitator(s) for each Cohort Organization
DDA PBS Gathering	TBD	In-Person Location TBD	PBS Leadership Team Members

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