



Developmental Disability Services

We've developed a set of frequently asked questions (FAQ) and answers for prospective residential provider who are exploring applying to operate a 24 hour IDD group home in Deschutes County.

Q: Would you say there is a need for additional group homes to be developed in Central Oregon?

A: Currently, there is a need to increase the choices we can offer people locally who indicate they are looking for care in a group home setting locally. I can't speak for our neighboring counties in Central Oregon, but for Deschutes there is a need.

Q: What kind of trends are you seeing in the form of residential provider development in your county?

A: We have several providers new to the region who are in the process of searching for properties or have already acquired a property who are waiting to apply to have a site licensed. We have a number of long-standing local provider organizations who have already established homes here and are actively looking to expand in the upcoming year.

Q: So what about the need for additional providers who want to serve your community? Would you say there is a market or a need for additional providers?

A: It is difficult to say how much is enough. We currently do not have enough local choices to offer to the clients who are wanting to be served locally. However, it does no one any good to have multiples homes sitting totally empty. Thinking about the experience we've had over the years, we feel there is a need to develop between 3-6 new 3+bed homes over the next 2-3 years. As mentioned above, some of this expansion is already in process.

Q: What kind of support needs are you looking for?

A: We need providers skilled in supporting adults or children with significant behavioral challenges and who may have co-occurring mental health conditions. Providers are also needed to support individuals who are looking to grow their independent living skills and possibly live on their own someday. These individuals often have lower support needs and lower service payments.

Q: What about support for people who have significant medical or ongoing direct nursing support?

A: While people with those needs do arise, it's much less frequent. We would probably have a tough time sending enough referrals to a home specializing only in medical supports.

Q: What do the enrollment numbers in Deschutes look like and how many of those are in group homes, and how many current homes are operating?

A: The total IDD enrollment for Deschutes CDDP is currently at 1055. There are 26 licensed IDD 24-Hr adult homes operated by 7 provider agencies. These homes are serving 93 individuals. At any given moment there may be 1-2 vacancies across those homes. In addition, there are typically a handful of Adult Foster Homes who are actively seeking to admit individuals at any given time.

Q: How many clients do you have on your waiting list who are looking for residential placement?

A: We don't have "waiting lists," though our Designated Referral Contacts (DRCs) maintain a list of people who are actively wanting to be referred to residential opportunities within our community. The number of folks on that "active referral" list ranges between 6-20 people at a time. There are some folks who want to be referred to homes outside of Deschutes County, but that's a small number. Some of these active referrals are on the list for an extended time as they are very selective regarding where and with whom they want to live. Some of the active referrals are on the list for an extended time because they have lower service payments.

Q: How long would it take to fill up a 3-bed home if I got it licensed next month?

A: That's impossible to answer because it's a matter of matching referrals with a provider's skills as well as the process of assessing how well a referral would match

with the profiles of other residents in the home. However, we feel you'd be receiving a steady flow of referrals for consideration each week. Ultimately, it is up to the choice of the individual and their family whether to move into an offered residential placement. Generally speaking, a new provider usually ends up taking their first client within a few months of getting their license. We encourage not entering more than one individual at the same time.

Q: What barriers other than lack of local capacity are there in getting your client's residential needs met?

A: Sometimes is just hard to find a good match of setting with other residents. Sometimes a person's assessed rate does not appear to support their apparently high support needs. Other times the person or their family is just very particular about choosing the right setting, or perhaps they are a little uncertain about their readiness to make the transition between care settings.

Q: What are the biggest challenges to a provider who wants to open a home in Deschutes County?

A: Housing costs and availability of suitable properties. The median housing costs in Deschutes range from the highest in Bend and Sisters and a bit lower in Redmond. Housing acquisition and cost are definitely a thing for a prospective provider to research thoroughly. Related to the cost of housing is acquiring Direct Care Professionals (DSPs) again, partially because it's expensive for your staff to live here. The cost of living is maybe less in the smaller Central Oregon communities, though the number of referrals we have for those regions is also less. We do not have any guidance or input around acquiring or renting real estate. We encourage you to check the Oregon Administrative Rules and consult with ODDS licensing to ensure a property will meet requirements.

Q: What would be the biggest differences for us operating a home in Deschutes County versus in Portland-metro or other parts of the Willamette Valley for instance?

A: There are lots of differences that may or may not matter to you depending on your preferences. We encourage you to visit Bend, Redmond, and the surrounding smaller communities as well as research them online.

1. Climate: Many people who relocate from Willamette Valley have a hard time getting used to the "high desert" climate which is very dry in comparison. And

we tend to get a lot more ice and snow than in the valley. We also have more sunshine throughout the year, and less rain.

2. Diversity: There is not the same level of cultural diversity in Deschutes as the more metropolitan communities of Oregon.
3. Population density: Nowhere near as dense as Portland-Metro, but not as rural as the most rural communities in Oregon.
4. CDDP relationship: We pride ourselves in the professional relationships we form with our business partners.

Q: What about the timelines to get a home licensed? How long could that take?

A: That will really be up to the speed at which the State of Oregon (ODDS Licensing) can process your application. We anticipate that as the moratorium that went into effect in June, 2025 lifts in December, 2025; there will be a huge number of applications that ODDS will have to prioritize processing across Oregon. They are setting priorities as to how to handle this load with limited personnel resources. We have let ODDS Licensing know that our community has a need to add homes to meet our clients' needs. They are committed to working with us as a priority area.

We welcome growth in our community and are excited for the individuals we support to have more local options! Just as supporting clients is your main focus, that is also our top priority. We want your organization to be successful if you move here, though we cannot guarantee any timeframe for filling your home with good-fit residents. Best of luck in your efforts to expand your organization and support more individuals!