

Rhode Island Re-Entry Decision-Making Guide: Ready, Set ... Return?

Introduction

Some people don't feel comfortable going back to work, or re-starting the type of Day and Community Services they were receiving before the pandemic just yet, and that's OK. This is your life, and you're the person in charge! No one should force you to do something if you're not ready.

At the same time, pretty much everyone misses some part of their previous routine in one way or another. So if you're thinking about getting back out there, you're not alone. But if you have some questions or concerns about returning, you're also not alone!

We created the *Re-Entry Decision-Making Guide* to help you find some answers. And while there aren't any right or wrong ways to respond, those answers should belong to you. It's great to have people who are willing to share their ideas, offer advice, and work with you to complete this decision-making guide! That doesn't mean you need to accept everything they say. It's OK to disagree.

We hope you'll use this tool with family members, friends, and others who support you to have some meaningful conversations about the risks of going back to work or re-starting your Day Services while the pandemic is still far from over.

If you determine that the benefits outweigh the risks, the information you'll discover by completing the Guide can help you figure out what you'll need, and create a plan so you'll be ready when your employer calls you back, or your Day Services re-open.

If you decide that you're not ready to return just yet, this Guide can help you plan how to get the supports you need, and think about what else you want to do in the meantime.

Finally, if you've been doing something different at home that you prefer over the way you spent your time in the past, that's OK, too. You don't need to go back to the same job, or re-start the same type of Day Services unless you want to. If you're ready for a different day, this Guide can help develop a plan to get there.

How to Use this Guide

We realize this Re-Entry Guide may seem overwhelming at first. No worries! Use the parts that you're comfortable with, and feel free to skip the rest.

Relax and take your time answering the question you see here. There's no rush. Have as many conversations as you need to complete the different sections you select.

Finally, don't expect this Guide to address all of your questions or concerns. It's a great place to start, but don't stop here. Decide how you want to spend your time during the day, and then keep exploring different options, searching for solutions, and pressing on until you get what you need to do those things!

We've divided this tool into several sections to guide your decision-making process about how you want to spend your day.

Section I: The Person in the Center is Who? *That's Right; It's YOU!*

We designed section I to capture a snapshot of how you've spent your time at home during the pandemic. This section will help you think about the activities you've been involved in, how your daily schedule may have changed, and whether you've been able to stay in touch with people.

You can also use Section I to talk about any issues or concerns you have with your Services and Supports, including how often you've received them.

Section II: Back to Work, People

As the name suggests, this section is about employment. We developed it for anyone who was working before the pandemic, but had to stop due to the stay at home orders.

In this section, you'll evaluate the reasons that you want to go back to work, compare them with some of the things which may be different now, and decide whether or not you're OK with them.

While some people are excited to get back out there, others may not feel comfortable or prepared to do that yet, and that's OK. After you've reviewed the on-the-job changes in this section, you may find yourself reconsidering how you want to proceed.

You may have also used your time at home these past few months to re-think your employment goals and explore a different career path. Whatever you decide to do about your job is OK. You can even try something new, realize it's not for you, and change your mind. It's your life and your choice! Use *Get to Work People* to learn about what it may be like on the job if you return, weigh the risks versus the benefits, and develop a plan for what you want to do.

Section III: Daydream Believers

This Section will walk you through what may be different when your Day and Community Services re-open. It will also help you think about the reasons you want to return, and whether or not any of those changes will make you reconsider what you want to do during the day.

If you decide you're not comfortable going back, or you'd prefer doing something else during the day, Section III can help you develop a plan to turn those daydreams into reality.

Section IV: Addendums

This section is kind of like "extra credit" work. We've filled it with some other resources, in a variety of formats. These materials will build on the Decision-Making and Person-Centered Planning skill you learned about in the Re-Entry Guide. Once again, remember you can use the things that are helpful, and skip the rest.

Summary

Overall, this Guide is a Person-Centered Planning tool that will help you find your own answers to these two questions:

(1) How do you want to live your life?

What do you want to do during the day? Is there anything you want to change about how you spent your time, or the Services you received, before the stay at home orders? Who do you want to hang out with? Would you like to learn or do something new? Where do you want to work? What kind of job do you want to do?

(2) What do you need to make that happen?

Do you need Assistive Technology to help you live more independently? For example, do you have a voice-activated device and other “Smart Home” equipment that can do things like turn on the lights, answer the phone, or set the thermostat

Do you need a way to get online? For example, do you have a computer with an internet connection, or a smartphone with a data plan?

Do you need someone to show you how to use the equipment you already have to connect with others and do things like participate in video meetings, take classes, communicate with others, and receive some of your Services virtually from home?

The information and ideas you discover while using this Guide will help you find some of those answers, and use them to create a truly individualized plan which make one thing crystal clear: You heard about that “Person in the Center”, right? Well, that “Person” means YOU.

With that in mind, let’s get started!

Your Activities and Day to Day Routines

This section is about your day to day routine, your Services and Supports since the stay at home orders went into effect, and what you'd like to do moving forward.

What type of activities have been doing? Do you like them?

What's different about your daily routine and how you well have adapted to those changes?

Is there anything you'd like to continue doing once the stay at home orders end? Do you want to make any changes in the type of Services you were receiving before, and the ones you'd like to receive now?

As you think about what you've been doing during the day, consider the following reasons for trying some of those things, and how they may influence what you want to do next

A: This is something I decided to try and I like doing it.

B: I decided to do this because I needed something, and it's the only way I could get it

C: I was bored being stuck at home and I didn't have anything else to do.

D: Someone else told me I need to do this.

E: I'm not sure why I'm doing this.

F: Other: What's your reason for doing something if it isn't on this list?



















Use the questions below to think about what you've been doing during the day, what you want to keep doing, and plan for what you'll need to make that happen.

























We've included same set of questions three times, but you can answer it as few or as many times as you want.

Section I: The Person in the Center is Who?		NAME:		← That's Right, It's YOU!			
1.	Describe one of the things you've been doing during the day. Explain how this compares to what you did before the stay at home orders. Is this a new activity? How has it affected your day to day routine?						
<u>WHY are you doing it?</u> Select 1 answer from this list		<input type="checkbox"/> A: <i>I enjoy it</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> B: <i>I need to</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> C: <i>I was bored</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> D: <i>I was told</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> E: <i>I'm not sure</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> F: <i>Other</i>
<u>Why Else are you doing this?</u> Add any additional reasons you have for doing this that aren't listed above							
<u>How Do You Feel About Continuing?</u> Select 1 of these answers. If you want to say more about this, you can add it below.		<input type="checkbox"/> YES <i>I enjoy doing this and I want to continue</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NOT REALLY <i>I don't want to, but I can't think of anything else to do</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> I'M NOT SURE <i>I need to get more information first</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO <i>I'm ready to stop as soon as possible</i>		
<u>Anything Else?</u> Add any questions, comments or concerns you have about this activity.							
If you want to continue doing this, use the space below to think about what you'll need to make that happen. For example, do you need internet access at home? Do you need support staff who are available according to your new schedule? Do you need some assistive technology to help you become more independent?							

Section I: The Person in the Center is Who?		NAME:		← That's Right, It's YOU!			
2.	Describe one of the things you've been doing during the day. Explain how this compares to what you did before the stay at home orders. Is this a new activity? How has it affected your day to day routine?						
<u>WHY are you doing it?</u> Select 1 answer from this list		<input type="checkbox"/> A: <i>I enjoy it</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> B: <i>I need to</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> C: <i>I was bored</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> D: <i>I was told</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> E: <i>I'm not sure</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> F: <i>Other</i>
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Section II: Back to Work, People (?)			NAME:								
1.	NEW SAFETY REQUIREMENTS										
<p>Businesses will be following COVID-19 safety precautions from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), and have new requirements that their employees will be required to follow.</p> <p>This means you may need to wear a mask the entire time you're at work, and keep 6 feet distance from co-workers or customers, unless your job requires you to get closer.</p> <p>You may also have to do other things like washing your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds at a time, using hand sanitizer, not touching your face or mask, and covering your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze.</p>											
<input type="checkbox"/>		I'm OK with This		<input type="checkbox"/>		I'm NOT SURE About This		<input type="checkbox"/>		I'm NOT OK with This	
2.	CHANGES IN SHIFTS, BREAKTIME, AND OTHER ROUTINES										
<p>Some businesses may stagger the hours and days that their employees work. "Staggering" means your employer may ask you to come in on different days, or work different hours so fewer are there during each shift. They may also stagger break-times, ask people to eat in different areas, and sit with a small group of the same people every day.</p> <p><i>This is important so that everyone can practice social distancing by keeping at least 6 feet apart.</i></p> <p>This means that it may not be as easy to socialize with friends and co-workers as it was before the pandemic. If one of the reasons you want to return to work is because you've missed hanging out with them on the job and during breaks, some of the new social distancing requirements may make it a lot harder to do that now.</p>											
<input type="checkbox"/>		I'm OK with This		<input type="checkbox"/>		I'm NOT SURE About This		<input type="checkbox"/>		I'm NOT OK with This	
3.	SOME FRIENDS AND CO-WORKERS MAY NOT BE THERE WHEN YOU RETURN										
<p>Some of your friends and co-workers may have asked themselves questions like these about return to work and made the decision not to return right now.</p> <p>While spending time with your friends at work will look different now, it's also possible that you won't see all of the people who were there before the pandemic. Be prepared for the fact that some of your co-workers may have decided not to go back yet.</p>											
<input type="checkbox"/>		I'm OK with This		<input type="checkbox"/>		I'm NOT SURE About This		<input type="checkbox"/>		I'm NOT OK with This	

Section II: Back to Work, People (?)			NAME:		
4.	THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE AND JOB MARKET				
<p>Many people were laid-off when the Coronavirus forces business to close. A lot of employees haven't been offered their jobs back yet. The unemployment rate is still very high, which means there aren't as many positions available as before.</p> <p>While your job might not change, it's also possible that the position you had isn't available anymore. Your employer may change your duties or offer you a different position.</p> <p>Some people may even have to start from scratch and begin looking for a new job. The fact that so many people will be looking for work at the same time means that you can expect more competition for a smaller number of available job openings.</p> <p>Just like everyone else who's looking for work, you may find you have fewer choices about the type of work you want to do.</p>					
<input type="checkbox"/>	 I'm OK with This 	<input type="checkbox"/>	 I'm NOT SURE About This 	<input type="checkbox"/>	 I'm NOT OK with This 
5.	YOUR HOURS AND YOUR PAYCHECK				
<p>Many businesses were hit hard when they had to close their doors. As a result, even though they're beginning to reopen, employers may not be able to offer their employees the same number of hours as they did before.</p> <p>This means you may not have the same number of days as before, or you may have shorter shifts. It also means you could be getting a smaller paycheck.</p>					
<input type="checkbox"/>	 I'm OK with This 	<input type="checkbox"/>	 I'm NOT SURE About This 	<input type="checkbox"/>	 I'm NOT OK with This 
6.	PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER				
<p>Enter the number of times you answered OK, NOT SURE, and NOT OK for the changes described in 1-5 in the spaces below. (If you're completing this guide on a computer, it will automatically enter those numbers for you.)</p>					
<input type="text"/>	  Number of things   <u>I'm OK with</u>	<input type="text"/>	  Number of things   <u>I'm NOT SURE About</u>	<input type="text"/>	  Number of things   <u>I'm NOT OK With</u>

Section II: Back to Work, People (?)		NAME:
7.	YOUR <i>READY TO RETURN</i> PLAN	
<p>If you're OK with all of the changes described in 1-5 above and you'd like to go back to work, it's time to make a <i>Ready to Return</i> plan. Use the space below to think about the things you may need to get or do so you can return safely when your job re-opens. For example, if you need to wear a face mask or other protective equipment, where can you get those items and learn how to wear them properly? If the support staff who worked for you before the pandemic aren't available, who will you get to replace them? If the transportation you've taken in the past isn't an option right now, how will you get to different places during the day? If someone you live with has an underlying health conditions that puts them at greater risk, what do you need to do to keep them safe?</p> <p>If you get stuck, check out the <i>Person-Centered Planning Tips</i> in the Addendum for some ideas to help figure things out. Start planning now, so you'll be prepared when it's time to get back on the job.</p>		
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Section II: Back to Work, People (?)		NAME:
8.	PLANNING FOR A DIFFERENT DAY	
<p>If you're NOT SURE or NOT OK about the changes described in questions 1-5 above, does it make you re-consider when, where or what type of job you want to do?</p> <p>Just because you did a certain type of work before, it doesn't mean you need to go back to that job unless you want to, and you feel comfortable returning. In fact, even though you may have everything you need to return safely, you can decide to make a change and try something new.</p> <p>Have you thought about other employment options or a different career path? Would you like to do some job discovery and find out what other opportunities are available? Would you like to go back to school, or take classes to learn other vocational skills?</p> <p>If you're ready something new, use the space below to think about the changes you want to make, and what you'll need to make them happen.</p> <p>Remember, if your current Agency can't provide the services or supports you're looking for, don't change your employment goals, change how you'll reach them! If you get stuck, check out the <i>Person-Centered Planning Tips</i> in the Addendum for some ideas to help figure things out.</p>		
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Section II: Back to Work, People (?)		NAME:
9.	<p>DON'T FORGET PLAN B!</p> <p>While it's true that you can't always get what you want, sometimes you can't get what you need, either, despite what the song says. Living in the middle of a global pandemic could undoubtedly be one of those times. That where <i>Plan B</i> comes in.</p> <p><i>Plan B</i> is your back-up plan. Whether you've decided to go back to work, or try something different during the day, <i>Plan B</i> means thinking about what happens if you can get what you'll need to do either of those things.</p> <p>Maybe you won't be able to find enough support staff. Maybe family members or your doctor will ask you to wait because they don't think it's safe for you or someone you live with yet. Maybe you won't have transportation. Whatever the reason, it's a good idea to know your alternatives in case things don't work out the way you thought they would.</p> <p><i>Plan B</i> won't be forever, so don't change your goals for the future based on current circumstances. Instead, consider what else you'd like to try, and other ways to spend your time until you're able to do the things that matter most to you during the day.</p> <p>Use the space below to think about what to include in your back-up plan to make it Person-Centered, and to make sure everyone who sees it knows the "Person in the Center" is YOU!</p> <p>If you get stuck, check out the <i>Person-Centered Planning Tips</i> in the Addendum for some ideas to help figure things out.</p>	

Section III: Day Dream Believers			Name:								
1.	NEW SAFETY REQUIREMENTS										
<p>Most Agencies and community locations will be following safety precautions from the Center for Disease Control, and will require you to do so as well.</p> <p>This means you may need to wear a mask the entire time you're with your Day Services Provider, and do others things like washing your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds at a time, using hand sanitizer, not touching your face or mask, and covering your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze.</p>											
<input type="checkbox"/>		I'm OK with This		<input type="checkbox"/>		I'm NOT SURE About This		<input type="checkbox"/>		I'm NOT OK with This	
2.	WHO YOU MAY BE WITH DURING THE DAY										
<p>Some of your friends and support staff may have asked themselves these same questions and decided they're not comfortable or ready to return yet.</p> <p>If some people decide not to return yet, it doesn't mean you won't ever see them again! But you might have to wait a while longer if you're looking forward to reconnecting with the people you enjoyed spending your days with before the pandemic. Some of your friends may not be back yet.</p>											
<input type="checkbox"/>		I'm OK with This		<input type="checkbox"/>		I'm NOT SURE About This		<input type="checkbox"/>		I'm NOT OK with This	
3.	CHANGES TO THE HOURS THAT DAY PROGRAMS ARE OPEN										
<p>Some agencies may decide to stagger their hours. "Staggering" means your Agency may be open at different times, or other days, then it was before the pandemic. It also means that fewer people will be in the building during the new hours.</p> <p><i>This is important so that everyone can practice social distancing by keeping at least 6 feet apart.</i></p> <p>However, if one of the reasons you want to start receiving Day Services in the community again is because you've missed being with your friends, you need to realize that they may not be participating in activities on the same day or times as you.</p>											
<input type="checkbox"/>		I'm OK with This		<input type="checkbox"/>		I'm NOT SURE About This		<input type="checkbox"/>		I'm NOT OK with This	

Section III: Day Dream Believers			Name:		
4.	CHANGES TO DAILY SCHEDULES AND WHO YOU SPEND TIME WITH DURING THE DAY				
<p>Some agencies may stagger the times when people eat lunch and have breaks during the day. They may ask you to eat lunch and do activities in different areas than before. You also may need to sit with a small group that includes the same people every day.</p> <p><i>This is important because limiting the number of people you come into close contact reduces your risk of being exposed to Coronavirus.</i></p> <p>However, if you're looking forward to returning to your Day Program so you can hang out and doing things with your friends, these changes mean that you may not have the same opportunities to that the same way you did before the pandemic.</p> <p>NOTE: None of these questions mean that you won't ever be able to hang out with your friends again. But you need to know that the way you do so will probably be a lot different.</p>					
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 30%; text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> I'm OK with This </div> <div style="width: 30%; text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> I'm NOT SURE About This </div> <div style="width: 30%; text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> I'm NOT OK with This </div> </div>					
5.	CHANGES TO THE AMOUNT AND TYPE OF DAILY ACTIVITIES				
<p>The pandemic has made it difficult for many Agencies to provide the same services as they did before they shut down earlier this year. As a result, even though they're beginning to re-open, some may not be able to offer you the same number of support hours. Some of the places you went during the day before things shut down may also have restrictions in place so people can practice social distancing.</p> <p>This means you may not be able to get your Day Services as often as you did before. And you may not be able to do some of the same activities because the places you used to visit either aren't open yet, or are only open for a few hours. Unfortunately, a few of them may have closed for good. Places of businesses might limit the number of customers who can be in the building at the same time. That means you may not be able to go there with as many people as you used to. You may need to take turns with some of the other Consumers your Agency supports who also want to spend time there during the day so that everyone can visit in smaller groups.</p>					
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 30%; text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> I'm OK with This </div> <div style="width: 30%; text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> I'm NOT SURE About This </div> <div style="width: 30%; text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> I'm NOT OK with This </div> </div>					
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Section III: Day Dream Believers

Name:

7. YOUR *READY TO RETURN* PLAN

If you're OK with all of the changes described in 1-5 above, and you'd like to restart the same type of Days Services you were receiving before the pandemic, it's time to make a *Ready to Return* plan.

Use the space below to think about what you need and how you'll get it. For example, if you need to wear a face mask or other protective equipment, where can you get those items and learn how to wear them properly? If the support staff who worked for you before the pandemic aren't available, who will you get to replace them? If the transportation you've taken in the past isn't an option right now, how will you get to different places during the day?

If you get stuck, check out the *Person-Centered Planning Tips* in the Addendum for some ideas to help figure things out. Start planning now, so you'll be prepared when the Agency you use and the places you go are ready to re-open during the day.

Section III: Day Dream Believers

Name:

8. PLANNING FOR A DIFFERENT DAY

If you're NOT SURE or NOT OK about the changes described in questions 1-5 above, does it make you re-consider what, where, when, and who you want to do things with during the day?

Have you started doing something new during the day that you enjoy and want to continue more than the things you did before? For example, have you been participating in video meetings or webinars? Have you started a new hobby? Have you been joined any virtual communities? Are you taking classes or connecting with people online?

Is there someone you'd like to hang out and do things with during the day?

Do you prefer certain days of the week or different times of day more than others? For example, are you more of an *Early Bird* or a *Night Owl*? Would you like to do things in the morning, afternoon, or evening?

Where would you like to do things? If you don't want to go back to the same settings where you spent most of your time before the pandemic, where else would you like to go or be during the day?

The fact is, how you spend your time and the way you manage your services during the day don't need to be the same as they were before unless you want them to. If you're ready something new, use the space below to think about the changes you want to make, and what you'll need to make them happen.

Remember, if your current Agency can't provide the services or supports you're looking for, don't change what you want to do, change how you'll do it! If you get stuck, check out the *Person-Centered Planning Tips* in the Addendum for some ideas to help figure things out.

9. DON'T FORGET PLAN B!

While it's true that you can't always get what you want, sometimes you can't get what you need, either, despite what the song says. Living in the middle of a global pandemic could undoubtedly be one of those times. That where *Plan B* comes in.

Plan B is your back-up plan. Whether you've decided to return to the same Day Services, or you're ready to try something different during the day, *Plan B* means thinking about what happens if you can get what you'll need to do either of those things.

Maybe you won't be able to find enough support staff. Maybe family members or your doctor will ask you to wait because they don't think it's safe yet. Maybe you won't have transportation. Whatever the reason, it's a good idea to know your alternatives in case things don't work out the way you thought they would.

Plan B won't be forever, so don't change your goals for the future based on current circumstances. Instead, consider what else you'd like to try, and other ways to spend your time until you're able to do the things that matter most to you during the day.

Use the space below to think about what to include in your back-up plan to make it Person-Centered, and to make sure everyone who sees it knows the "Person in the Center" is YOU!

If you get stuck, check out the *Person-Centered Planning Tips* in the Addendum for some ideas to help figure things out.

Re-Entry Decision-Making Guide: Person-Centered Planning

Person-Centered Planning Tips

Once you've decided how you want to spend your time during the day, it's time to figure out what you'll need to make that happen. Here are some questions to ask that can help you figure things out, and some ideas about how to answer them:

➤ **WHAT do I need?**

- Be clear about what you need. Do your research and include as many details as possible.
- Don't limit yourself to the things that were available before the pandemic. Consider every option and look for alternatives. For example, if you need some assistance during the day, it doesn't mean you need to rely on the same support staff you had before. If those people aren't available, think about who else you could hire. Are there any family members, friends, or neighbors you'd like to have work for you?

➤ **WHY do I need it?**

- Make sure you understand the reason for including something in your plan so you can make an informed decision about it.
- Think about why it matters. How will it help you spend your time during the day doing more of the things you want?

➤ **WHEN do I need to have it?**

- Find out if you need to do something by a specific date, and how it may affect the rest of your plan if you can't meet that deadline. For example, if your goal is to return to Day Services, do you need to do this first? Can you still return without it?

➤ **HOW will I get it?**

- Decide how you want to spend your time during the day. Once you know what you want your day to look like, then you can plan where and how to make that happen.
- Don't just look to past experiences, or rely on the types of services you received before the pandemic and the Agency that provided them to find your answers. For example, if the Agency you've been using during the day doesn't offer the type of services or support you want, find out who does.
- Keep in mind that Service Agencies can't do everything. They have a lot to offer, but can only do so much. The fact is, some Agencies won't be able to provide all of the supports you're looking for, and that's not necessarily a bad thing.
- Look at what's available in the community. and other options that may not be part of the Service System.
- Ask friends and family members about their own experiences and see if they have any suggestions to share.
- Be willing to try something new. Know that mistakes are OK, and you can always change your mind.
- Imagine what's possible, look for every opportunity to get there, and think outside the box as you figure things out!