Options Counseling is a type of planning centered on the individual and designed to streamline access to long-term support options for older adults, persons with disabilities of all ages, and family caregivers.

It is an interactive process that supports an individual in establishing and pursuing personal goals based on their preferences, values, circumstances, and needs. Because it is person-centered, the individual controls the planning process, which includes: determination of goals; communication preferences, when and where meetings are held; who participates in the planning meetings; the topics to be/not be discussed; and decisions about supports the individual selects.

Options Counseling includes the following steps:

* One or more personal conversations to discuss current circumstances
* Identification and discussion about available public and private resources and supports provided by family, friends and neighbors
* Decision support in weighing pros and cons of various options
* Support in the development of an individual action plan
* Assistance with enrollment in publicly-funded agency and/or consumer-directed supports, which may also include coordination of eligibility determination
* Links to public and/or privately purchased supports and benefits
* Follow-up to ensure personal goals have been achieved

Agencies that provide Options Counseling in Virginia have received training in and deliver the support according to the statewide standards. The support is offered regardless of an individual’s ability to pay. There may be a sliding fee scale set by the agency for those who are able to privately pay for the support. (*Agencies can customize this section depending on whether or not they have a sliding fee scale.*)

Individual satisfaction is an important component of Options Counseling. As a result, each individual who participates in Options Counseling will be surveyed to verify that they felt supported and informed throughout the process, that their choices were honored, and that decisions made reflected their personal preferences.