



State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services

DDS

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**Home and Community Based Waiver for Persons with Autism
Status Update: May 2012**

Autism Waiver Application Update:

- September 2011, three separate autism waivers were presented to and approved by the legislature (Appropriations and Human Services Committees).
- The purpose of the new autism waivers was to formalize Connecticut's initiative to increase supports to individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and to maximize federal revenue by allowing Medicaid coverage for services on behalf of individuals with ASD that had previously been provided by three state agencies at 100% state expense: the Department of Developmental Services (DDS), the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS). Connecticut is seeking federal reimbursement for 50% of the costs of these services under the Home and Community Based Services waiver program.
- September 30, 2011, three autism waivers were submitted to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).
- December 2011, DSS received a formal Request for Additional Information from CMS consisting of 300 questions stopping the 90 day processing clock on all three of the waiver applications.
- April 30, 2012, a single revised waiver application was resubmitted to CMS with DDS as the operating agency to cover the target population described below. DMHAS is pursuing a separate waiver for individuals with Autism and Mental Health Disorders.
- August 1, 2012, target approval date for revised DDS Autism waiver.

Target Population for DDS Autism Waiver:

- Adults who are currently receiving services through the DDS Autism Division (previously the Autism Pilot Program).
- Children and young adults who are currently receiving services through DCF's Voluntary Services Program (VSP) who meet DDS Autism Division eligibility criteria. (DCF VSP is for children with behavioral health needs).
- As openings in the waiver become available, additional participants will be allocated funding within the limits of the waiver and available appropriations. Eligible participants must be at least three years of age with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder who live in a family or caregiver's home or one's own home. DDS's Level of Need (LON) Assessment tool will be used in combination with the SIB-R or other appropriate assessment tools to determine the assignment of resources as they become available.

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Eligibility:

- A primary diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) as determined by a diagnostic evaluation as described on the DDS Autism Division webpage
- Substantial functional limitations in two or more of the following areas of major life activity: a) self-care, b) understanding and use of language, c) learning, d) mobility, e) self-direction, f) capacity for independent living
- IQ= 70 or higher: The Division of Autism Services provides services to individuals with ASD **who do not have intellectual disability**.
- Enrollment in Medicaid/ Medicaid eligible
- Connecticut resident
- Impairment prior to age 22 and expected to continue indefinitely

Waiver Details:

- Capped at \$60,000 annually per participant
- Maximum total number of individuals to be enrolled in the waiver each year: 100 in year 1; 115 in year 2; 122 in year 3; 129 in year 4; 136 in year 5.
- Included in the maximum number of individuals per year are: 75 individuals receiving services from the DDS Autism Division, two slots per year starting in year 2 designated for Money Follows the Person (MFP) and the remainder for eligible individuals from DCF's Voluntary Services Program.

Services and Supports:

- Community Companion Homes (formerly Community Training Homes); Live-in Companion; Respite; Assistive Technology; Clinical Behavioral Supports; Community Mentor; Individual Goods and Services; Interpreter; Job Coaching; Life Skills Coach; Non-Medical Transportation; Personal Emergency Response System; Social Skills Group; Specialized Driving Assessment

DDS Autism Division Staff Update:

- The DDS Autism Division Director position was posted with a closing date of May 21, 2012. The official interview process will begin in June 2012.
- Autism waiver administration will be operated out of DDS Central Office (not regionally).
- Distinct case management services for waiver participants will be operated through the DDS Autism Division (separate from DDS regional caseloads).
- Going forward the DDS Autism Division will play a role assisting in the coordination and collaboration of services and supports for persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Feasibility Study:

- Public Act 11-6 required a study of issues related to the needs of persons with autism spectrum disorder, including the feasibility of a Center for Autism and Developmental Disabilities.
- State agency representatives led by the Department of Social Services and including DDS, DMHAS, DCF, the Department of Education, and the Office of Policy and Management have been participating in the study since last summer and have been joined by representatives from the Hospital for Special Care, autism advocacy organizations, parents, psychologists and doctors who treat individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder, educators from several Connecticut universities and others. The workgroup has been reviewing state agency data, discussing the data's limitations, identifying gaps in the service system and developing recommendations for how to address these gaps.
- After the feasibility study is completed in late June/early July 2012, representatives from the workgroup plan to continue to meet to discuss a strategy for implementation of the recommendations of the study.

For additional information on DDS Autism Services, please visit the DDS Autism Division

Website: <http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=2730&q=442840>