

Housing Support Services

I. APPLICABILITY

A. This policy applies to:

1. People receiving Developmental Disabilities Administration funded services through its Traditional or Self-Directed Services Delivery Model;
2. Their families and/or legal representatives; and
3. Coordinators of Community Services; Self-Directed staff, vendors, Support Brokers; Financial Management and Counseling Services agencies; DDA providers; and DDA staff.

II. IMPLEMENTATION DATE

- A. This policy begins 30 days after posting and overrides any other policies or guidance related to Housing Support Services.
- B. In the event of a public health or state of emergency, this policy can be overruled by any and all federal authorities.

III. PURPOSE

This policy describes requirements and guidance for Housing Support Services funded through DDA's Medicaid Waiver Programs or State funds.

IV. DEFINITIONS

- A. "Assistive Technology" or "AT" is an item, computer application, piece of equipment, software, or product system that maintains or improves a person's functional ability and promotes their ability to live independently and meaningfully participate in their community.
- B. "Coordination of Community Services" are targeted case management services to help people receiving and/or requesting services funded by the DDA. Targeted case management services are provided in accordance with, [COMAR 10.09.48](#).

- C. "Coordinator of Community Services" or "CCS" is an individual who provides Coordination of Community Services. They can be either an employee or a contractor of a DDA Provider.
- D. "DDA Medicaid Waiver Program" is one of three Medicaid Home and Community-Based Waiver Programs operated by the Developmental Disabilities Administration, that serve eligible children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. These programs are approved by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and include the:
1. Family Supports Waiver;
 2. Community Pathways Waiver; and
 3. Community Supports Waiver.
- E. "DDA Provider" is an individual or entity, licensed or certified by the Maryland Department of Health, that provides DDA-funded services to people in accordance with the DDA's requirements.
- F. "Department" is the Maryland Department of Health.
- G. "Environmental Modifications" are changes made to a person's home, based on an assessment, that are designed to support the person to be more independent.
- H. "Financial Management and Counseling Services" or "FMCS" [formerly called Fiscal Management Services or FMS] are services provided to support a person using the DDA self-directed services delivery model in using their budget authority and, if applicable, employer authority. FMCS services include, but are not limited to:
1. Processing claims for payment for Waiver Program Services in accordance with the person's self-directed budget allocation; and
 2. Verifying that the DDA provider, vendor, or direct support staff meet all qualifications to provide the Waiver Program Service.
- I. "Housing Information and Assistance" or "HIA" are supports that assist a person to obtain and retain independent housing.

- J. "Housing Support Services" or "HSS" are time-limited supports to assist people identify and navigate housing opportunities, address or overcome barriers to housing, and secure and retain their own home. Housing Support Services include:
1. Housing Information and Assistance;
 2. Housing Transition Services; and
 3. Housing Tenancy Sustaining Services.
- K. "Housing Support Services Specialist" is a DDA licensed provider or professional approved to provide Housing Support Services.
- L. "Housing Tenancy Sustaining Services" are supports that assist a person to remain in their current rented or leased home.
- M. "Housing Transition Services" are supports that assist a person to assess their housing needs and develop individual Housing Support Plans.
- N. "Legal guardian" is either:
1. A natural or adoptive parent of a person under the age of 18; or
 2. An individual who has been appointed by a court order as guardian of the person.
- O. "Legally responsible individual" is an individual who has a legal obligation under the provisions of Maryland law to care for another individual. This includes:
1. A parent of a minor (either natural or adoptive);
 2. Legal guardian; or
 3. An individual otherwise legally responsible for the care of a minor (e.g., foster parent or relative appointed by court).
- P. "LTSS*Maryland*" is the state's data management system, developed and supported by the Department. It is used by the Developmental Disabilities Administration, the Coordinator of Community Service, and DDA Providers to create, review, and maintain records about:

1. A person's eligibility status for DDA-funded services; and
2. The person's Person-Centered Plan, services, and funding authorized by the DDA.

Q. "Natural Supports" are the relationships that occur in everyday life, and that do not include people who are paid, and that:

1. Include family, friends, co-workers, neighbors, and people in the community; and
2. Help people to develop a sense of social belonging, dignity, and self-esteem.

R. "Person" is an individual who is eligible to receive or receives DDA-funded services.

S. "Person-Centered Plan" or "PCP" is a written plan, developed through a planning process, driven by the person with a developmental disability to:

1. Identify their goals and preferences;
2. Identify services to support them to pursue their personally defined outcomes in the most integrated community setting;
3. Direct the delivery of services that reflect their personal preferences and choice; and
4. Identify their specific needs that must be addressed to ensure their health and welfare.

T. "Regional Office" or "RO" is one of the DDA's four local offices. ROs are the point of contact for applicants, people getting DDA-funded services, families and DDA providers living and working in the counties they serve. Each RO has the authority to review individual Person-Centered Plans and approve funding for services. The Regional Offices include the:

1. Central Maryland Regional Office, serving Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Howard, and Harford Counties and Baltimore City;

2. Eastern Shore Regional Office, serving Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties;
 3. Southern Maryland Regional Office, serving Calvert, Charles, Montgomery, Prince George's, and St. Mary's Counties; and
 4. Western Maryland Regional Office, serving Allegany, Carroll, Frederick, Garrett, and Washington Counties.
- U. "Relative" is a natural or adoptive parent, step-parent, child, stepchild, or sibling of an ~~n-applicant or~~ person, who is not also a legal guardian or legally responsible person.
- V. "Self-Directed Services Delivery Model" or "SDS Delivery Model" is a model of service delivery that the DDA provides through its Waiver Programs. In the SDS Model the person (not the provider) has:
1. The power and responsibility for overseeing, coordinating and directing the services they have been approved to receive;
 2. Budget authority over how the Medicaid funds are spent to purchase authorized services; and
 3. Employer authority to recruit, hire, train, and supervise the staff and service providers they want to hire.
- W. "Traditional Service Delivery Model" is a service delivery model that the DDA provides through its Waiver Programs. In the Traditional Service Delivery Model, the person chooses a DDA Provider who is responsible for overseeing, coordinating and providing their approved services.
- X. "Waiver Program Service" is a service funded by a DDA-operated Medicaid Waiver Program.

V. POLICY

- A. Housing Support Services are time-limited supports to assist a person to identify and navigate housing opportunities, address or overcome barriers to housing, and secure and retain their own home.
- B. Housing Support Services are available to people who need them, as documented in their Person-Centered Plan (PCP).

VI. STANDARDS

A. Housing Support Services includes:

1. Housing Information and Assistance;
2. Housing Transition Services; and
3. Housing Tenancy Sustaining Services.

B. Housing Information and Assistance:

1. Housing Information and Assistance supports people get and keep independent housing by:
 - a. Reviewing housing programs' rules and requirements and how they impact the person;
 - b. Assist with exploring types of housing;
 - c. Searching for housing;
 - d. Helping a person with the processes of applying for the various low-income housing programs;
 - e. Assessment of the living environment to determine if it meets the person's accessibility needs and is safe and ready for move-in.
 - f. Assistance with requests for reasonable accommodations in accordance with the [Fair Housing Act](#) and [Maryland Code, State Gov't § 20-702](#), to help to support the person to have equal opportunity and ensure the person is not harassed or discriminated against for having a disability.
 - g. Identification of resources for:
 - i. Security deposits;
 - ii. Moving costs;
 - iii. Furnishings;

- iv. Assistive technology;
 - v. Environmental modifications;
 - vi. Utilities;
 - vii. Low-income assistance programs such as Energy Assistance and Maryland Emergency Food Program (MEFP); and
 - viii. Other one-time costs to help them secure housing.
- h. Reviewing ~~of~~ the lease and other documents, including property rules, prior to signing a lease;
 - i. Creating~~ion~~ and reviewing ~~of~~ a monthly budget, including rent and utility payment plans;
 - j. Identifying and helping a person overcome housing challenges such as credit and rental history, criminal background, and behavioral responses and interactions that may present barriers to community living; and
 - k. Assisting with resolving housing related disputes.

C. Housing Transition Services includes:

1. Conducting a tenant screening and housing assessment, including collecting information on potential housing barriers, and identifying potential barriers to keeping housing; and
2. Developing an individualized Housing Support Plan that is included in the person's PCP or record, that includes:
 - a. The person's short and long-term housing goals;
 - b. A description of the person's barriers to obtaining and retaining housing;

- c. Strategies to address the person's identified barriers, including using prevention and early intervention services when housing is at risk; and
- d. The person's natural supports, resources, community-based service providers, and services that support the goals and strategies identified in the Housing Support Plan.

D. Housing Tenancy Sustaining Services includes:

1. Education and training on:
 - a. The role, rights, and responsibilities of a tenant and landlord;
 - b. How to be a good tenant; and
 - c. Lease compliance.
2. Coaching to develop and maintain key relationships with a landlord/property manager and neighbors;
3. Early identification and intervention to address the person's emotional and behavioral responses and interactions that may jeopardize tenancy;
4. Assistance with resolving disputes with landlords and/or neighbors;
5. Advocacy and linkage with community resources to prevent eviction;
6. Coordinating with the person and their team to review, update, and modify the Housing Support Plan on an annual or as needed basis;
7. Assistance with the housing recertification process; and
8. ~~Starting July 1, 2023, a~~ Assistance with bill paying services (e.g., assistance with setting up and monitoring systems to pay rent, mortgage, utilities, and other related housing expenses).

E. Criteria to be Eligible

1. A person may be eligible to receive funding for Housing Support Services if:
 - a. The person is at least 18 years of age;
 - b. Is enrolled in a DDA Medicaid Waiver Program;
 - c. Has an assessed need for this service, which is documented in their approved PCP; and
 - d. The request for funding of this Waiver Program Service meets all requirements in this policy, guidance, and the DDA Medicaid Waiver Program.

F. Special Service Requirements and Limitations

1. Housing Support Services must be provided in a manner consistent with programs available through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, and applicable federal, State, and local laws, regulations, and policies.
2. Housing Support Services will only be authorized for a maximum of ~~eight (8)~~ hours per day and up to 175 hours annually per person receiving this Waiver Program Service.

G. Requirements to be Paid to Provide Services

1. A Provider of Housing Support Services must be a:
 - a. Housing Support Service Provider; or
 - b. Housing Support Professional.
2. Under the Traditional Services Delivery Model, the DDA Provider must:
 - a. Be a DDA-certified provider of Housing Support Services;

- b. Have a minimum of ~~five (5)~~ years demonstrated experience and capacity providing quality housing support services to persons with disabilities who successfully transitioned to independent renting or similar services;
- c. Have experience with federal affordable housing or rental assistance programs;
- d. Ensure that Housing Support Professional staff meet all qualifications as outlined in the approved DDA Medicaid Waiver Program application at the time of service delivery;
- e. Maintain documentation of credentials and completion of required training by an approved training vendor; and
- f. Keep documentation and records regarding delivery of services in accordance with the applicable laws, regulations, policies, and guidance, and the DDA Medicaid Waiver Program application.

3. A Housing Support Professional must:

- a. Be at least 18 years old;
- b. Have a signed Medicaid Provider Agreement;
- c. Complete required orientation and training designated by DDA;
- d. Possess a GED or high school diploma;
- e. Possess current first aid and CPR certification;
- f. Pass a criminal background investigation and any other required background checks and credentials verifications;
- g. Possess a valid driver's license, if the operation of a vehicle is necessary to provide services;
- h. Have automobile insurance for all automobiles that are owned, leased, and/or hired and used in the provision of services;

- i. Demonstrate financial integrity through IRS, Department, and Medicaid Exclusion List checks;
 - j. Have completed training on the following topics:
 - i. Conducting a housing assessment;
 - ii. Person-centered planning;
 - iii. Knowledge of laws governing housing as they pertain to individuals with disabilities;
 - iv. Affordable housing resources;
 - v. Leasing processes;
 - vi. Strategies for overcoming housing barriers;
 - vii. Housing search resources and strategies;
 - viii. Eviction processes and strategies for eviction prevention;
 - ix. Tenant and landlord rights and responsibilities; and
 - x. ~~Starting July 1, 2023, e~~Creating personal budgets with individuals with developmental disabilities.
 - k. Maintain documentation of credentials and completion of required training by an approved training vendor; and
 - l. Keep documentation and records regarding delivery of services in accordance with the applicable laws, regulations, policies, and guidance, and the DDA Medicaid Waiver Program application.
4. The required Housing Support Services training must be provided by a DDA-approved vendor. The vendor shall issue a certificate of completion after successful completion of the training and post-training exam.
5. Under the Self-Directed Services Delivery Model all qualifications must be met:

- a. As outlined in the approved DDA Medicaid Waiver Program application at the time of service delivery; and
 - b. As confirmed by the Financial Management and Counseling Services (FMCS) agency.
6. People in the Self-Directed Services Delivery Model and their FMCS agencies must keep documentation and records regarding delivery of services in accordance with the applicable laws, regulations, policies, and guidance, and the DDA Medicaid Waiver Program application.

H. Rates/Billing

1. Rates shall be reasonable, customary, and necessary, as determined by the person's needs, recommended by their team.
2. Rates under the Traditional Service Delivery Model are posted on the [DDA Rates and Invoices](#) webpage and [LTSSMaryland](#) webpage.
3. People under the Self-Directed Service Delivery Model determine pay rates based on the reasonable and customary rates posted on the [DDA Self-Directed Forms](#) webpage.
4. Housing Support Services provided under the Traditional Service Delivery Model are billed in accordance with the [DDA Guidelines for Service Authorization and Provider Billing Documentation](#).
5. Under the Self-Directed Service Delivery Model the person must submit invoices as per their FMCS agency's policies and practices.

I. Legally Responsible Individuals, Legal Guardians, or Relatives Requirements

A legally responsible person, relative, or legal guardian of the person cannot be paid by the Waiver Program, either directly or indirectly, to provide this Waiver Program Service.

VI. LEGAL REFERENCES

- A. [Family Supports Waiver](#)
- B. [Community Pathways Waiver](#)
- C. [Community Supports Waiver](#)

VII. RELATED POLICIES

- A. [Person-Centered Planning](#)

VIII. REFERENCE MATERIALS

- A. [Fair Housing Act](#)
- B. [Housing and Services Resource Center](#)
- C. [HUD 811 PRA Program Guide](#)
- D. [HUD 811 user guide](#)
- E. [MD Code, State Gov't § 20-702](#)
- F. [Office of Home Energy Programs](#)
- G. [Maryland Emergency Food Program \(MEFP\)](#)