



Winter 2019

# Informing Families ...Today and Tomorrow

A project of the Washington State DD Council



Considering the many service systems that touch the lives of children and adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD)—from health care and education to housing and in-home services—getting connected to supports for you and your family member can be daunting, if not outright confusing.

In addition to the challenges of navigating multiple systems, misunderstandings about what's available (or not available) causes many people to delay the search for needed services and benefits.

In this navigation-themed issue, we address common questions and misunderstandings about services, such as: *Is it true that Developmental Disability Administration waiver slots are full? What are entitlement programs? What does it mean to be on*



*the No Paid Services caseload?*

We're also excited to announce the release of our new *Navigating Your Way* video series, which offers a bird's eye view of services, supports and ideas for building connections at every stage of life.

Although services are an important part of any support system, don't forget to consider help from people right in your own neighborhood, especially when it comes to preparing

for, and responding to, winter weather events.

Our article, *Make People Part of Your Emergency Preparedness Plan* (back page), offers resources for connecting with neighbors and others who have special skills or assets you might need in an emergency.

## Stay Informed

Keep up-to-date on current news, events and information about changes to services, as well as ideas for connecting with others in your community, by signing up for our twice monthly e-news listserv at [informingfamilies.org/news](http://informingfamilies.org/news).

Sincerely,

Ed Holen  
Executive Director  
Washington State DD Council



## Washington Autism Alliance and Advocacy

### Health Insurance Navigators

Are you a parent of a person diagnosed with, or suspected of having, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or a Developmental Disability (DD) related to ASD? Do you know that insurance covers therapies such as speech, occupational or behavior, as well as other medically necessary services?

Washington Autism Alliance and Advocacy (WAAA) is here to help you navigate the insurance system, whether it's Apple Health or private insurance. WAAA can help empower you with information and advocacy resources to ensure that your loved one is getting the best possible access to programs that support ASD/DD.

WAAA also helps families determine if they are eligible to receive the Premium Payment Program (PPP). PPP provides reimbursement for private health insurance premiums for Apple Health clients with access to private health insurance (e.g., employer or parent's insurance).

Please contact WAAA for more information at:  
425.894.7231, ext 103 or [INP@washingtonautismadvocacy.org](mailto:INP@washingtonautismadvocacy.org).





# BUSTING the MYTH that WAIVER SLOTS are FULL

**A**lthough it's true that Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) waiver programs are not an entitlement, it's a MYTH that there are no openings.

In fact, all DDA Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waiver programs are enrolling eligible DDA clients.

## The Who, What and How of Waiver Enrollment

DDA has five HCBS waiver programs: Individual Family Services, Basic Plus, Core, CIIBS and Community Protection Waivers.

Each waiver program is designed to serve a specific group of individuals, based on their assessed need. Waivers offer a variety of community-based services.

They are called waivers because individuals waive a federal rule that provides services in an institutional setting (such as Residential Habilitation Centers).

If your family member is a client of DDA, they (or you, as a legal representative) can request a waiver program at *any* time. They can even request a waiver more than once if needed.

If an individual is already on a waiver, and that particular waiver program is not meeting their needs, they are able to request a different waiver that will meet that specific need. They do not need to wait for an annual assessment to request services to meet their needs.

## Reasons to request a waiver can include:

- ▶ a change in the person's physical health;
- ▶ a change in the person's life;
- ▶ a need for employment services;
- ▶ the caregiver becomes unable to meet the person's needs.

## What happens after an eligible client requests a waiver service:

1. A DDA Case Manager will conduct a *functional assessment*.

2. DDA's waiver review committee determines if the request and functional assessment meet waiver eligibility criteria.

3. If approved by the waiver review committee, *financial eligibility* will be reviewed.

4. If found financially eligible, the person meets with the DDA case manager for service planning.

## Be Proactive: Ask!

A DDA eligible client cannot be considered for waiver services if they (or their representative) don't ask. Be sure to let DDA know if there's a need, or if needs or circumstances with current caregivers change.

## LEARN MORE

DDA waiver programs explained:  
[informingfamilies.org/dda-waivers](http://informingfamilies.org/dda-waivers).

Service and Information Request  
phone numbers and online form:  
[dshs.wa.gov/dda/service-and-information-request](http://dshs.wa.gov/dda/service-and-information-request).



## What does No-Paid Services Mean?

Individuals on the Developmental Disabilities Administration's (DDA) No Paid Services (NPS) caseload are DDA eligible clients who are not receiving any paid services from DDA. There are currently more than 14,000 individuals on NPS.

Being on the NPS caseload is not permanent. Anyone who is DDA eligible can ask to talk to a DDA case manager to discuss service options. To request services, visit: [dshs.wa.gov/dda/service-and-information-request](http://dshs.wa.gov/dda/service-and-information-request) for a list of local NPS toll-free numbers and online request form.

# The 411 on Entitlement Programs

Meeting eligibility criteria for a benefit or service does not necessarily guarantee that it will be provided. Limitations due to funding or program capacity often determine who will receive services (and when). Some services and benefits, however, *must* be provided to anyone who is eligible. These are known as *entitlements*.

Although many Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) programs are considered *non-entitlements* (see “*Waivers*” on opposite page), individuals with developmental disabilities are often entitled to receive other services and benefits. In fact, most clients of DDA receive both entitlement and non-entitlement services.

## Examples of entitlement programs include:

### ✓ Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

A monthly cash benefit for low-income individuals who are determined “aged, blind or disabled” by the federal Social Security Administration (SSA). Contact SSA to apply at [ssa.gov](http://ssa.gov).

### ✓ Apple Health and Apple Health for Kids

Our state’s Medicaid health care benefit for children and adults who qualify for SSI, as well as those who meet financial eligibility for expanded Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act. Visit [wahealthplanfinder.org](http://wahealthplanfinder.org) to apply.

### ✓ Community First Choice (CFC)

A Medicaid program that includes personal care, assistive technology, skill acquisition and other benefits. CFC services can be requested through DDA (see opposite page for contact information) or Home and Community Services (for adults with disabilities and seniors). Find a local HCS office at [www.waclc.org](http://www.waclc.org).

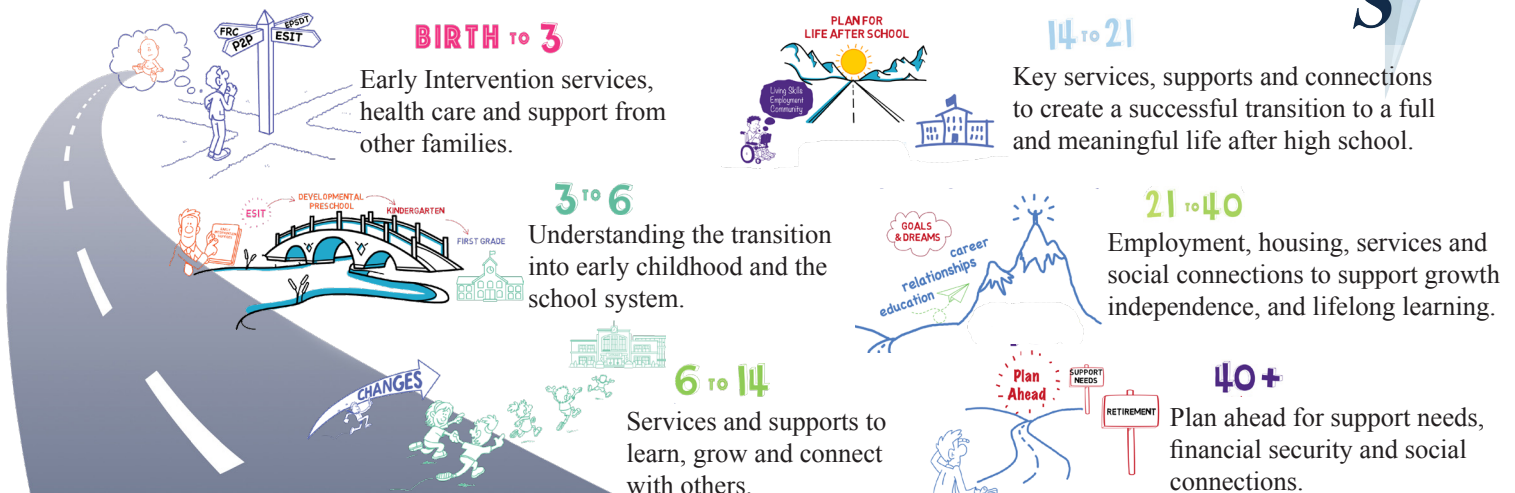
### ✓ Basic Food

Monthly food benefits to low income individuals and families. Apply online at [washingtonconnection.org](http://washingtonconnection.org) or your local Community Services Office.

## Navigating Your Way

### A road map of supports and resources for children with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Washington State

Our new explainer video series, *Navigating Your Way*, offers an overview of service systems, supports, and ideas to help you and your family member at each stage of life. Visit [informingfamilies.org](http://informingfamilies.org) and click on an age range to watch the video and find links to additional information and resources.



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## Make People Part of Your Emergency Preparedness Plan



Whether it's a storm, flooding, wildfires, earthquake, micro-burst or even a train crashing onto a freeway, the Northwest is not immune to natural and man made emergencies. Each event presents a challenge that affects everyone, but none more so than people with disabilities who face additional barriers, such as:

- ✧ how or where to evacuate
- ✧ where to get power for mobility or medical needs
- ✧ how to keep medicines cool
- ✧ who to contact if family or care providers can't travel due to road conditions or illness

These are not the kind of problems that can be solved by a last minute rush to the store for food and batteries,



*"The best resource in  
an emergency is often  
right next door."*

but by having conversations and planning with the people in our lives.

Whether it's at home or the workplace, connecting with those around us is key to any effective emergency planning. The best resource in an emergency is often right next door.

In creating your own emergency or disaster preparedness plan, identify neighbors who have special skills or assets you might need, such as

a generator for charging medical equipment, or a neighbor with a medical background.

Programs like **Map Your Neighborhood** guide neighbors through simple steps to help enhance preparedness for an emergency at the neighborhood level (15-20 homes or a defined area that you can canvas in one hour). It teaches neighbors to rely on each other during the hours or days before fire, medical, police or utility responders arrive.

### Learn More

For links to Map Your Neighborhood and emergency planning resources for persons with disabilities, visit: [informingfamilies.org/emergency-response](http://informingfamilies.org/emergency-response).