



State of Connecticut Department of Social Services



Division of Autism Spectrum Services

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In July 2006, the Autism Spectrum Disorder Pilot Program was established under the Department of Developmental Services (DDS)

Section 37 of Public Act 06-188

- The pilot program began in New Haven county in July 2006 and then expanded to Hartford county in August 2008.
- In 2011, Public Act 11-4 established the Division of Autism Spectrum Disorder Services.
- Both the Pilot, and the Autism Division were established to fill a void in services for individuals with autism who do not have an intellectual disability.
- The pilot originally served individuals with ASD over the age of 18. It was later opened to those age 3 through the lifespan.
- To be eligible to receive services from the Division of Autism an individual must have:
 - ❖ **PRIMARY** diagnosis of autism
 - ❖ A full scale IQ of 70 or above
 - ❖ At least three years of age
 - ❖ Legal residency in Connecticut
 - ❖ Medicaid eligibility
 - ❖ Impairment prior to age 22
 - ❖ Impairment expected to continue indefinitely
 - ❖ Reside in their own home or their family home

Effective July 1, 2016 the Division of Autism Spectrum Disorder Services was transferred from the Department of Developmental Services to the Department of Social Services

(Section 47 of Public Act 16-3, An Act Concerning Revenue and Other Items to Implement the Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2017)

The transition included the DDS staff dedicated to the Autism Division and two autism waivers:

- ❖ Waiver For Persons With Autism (Lifespan Waiver)
- ❖ Early Childhood Autism Waiver (ECAW) *****officially closed in 2018*****

The Division of Autism staff consists of:

- A Program Manager
- One Administrative Assistant
- Two Autism Support and Resource Specialists
- Three Case Managers

What is a Waiver?

The Waiver For Persons With Autism is a Home and Community Based (HCBS) Waiver under Medicaid. This waiver allows Connecticut to receive partial reimbursement from the Federal Government for providing needed community-based programs and supports designed to enable individuals to leave an institutional setting or to prevent their placement in one in the first place. The Federal Government reimburses Connecticut 50% of the cost of services and support through the Medicaid program; therefore a person must be a Medicaid member to participate.

Medicaid Waivers

A Medicaid waiver allows the state to “waive” certain federal requirements within the Medicaid Program. These waivers permit the state to do the following:

- Offer services that are not available under the present state plan
- Limit the amount of spending per person
- Limit the number of individuals served
- Utilize special “institutional” eligibility requirements primarily related to income

Medicaid provides Connecticut reimbursement for ASD services through two distinct Medicaid payment methods:

- Medicaid Waiver (Autism Lifespan Waiver)
- Medicaid State Plan Services

Waiver For Persons With Autism (Lifespan Waiver)

- The Department of Social Services Waiver for Persons with Autism provides home-and community-based services to individuals with autism who do not have an intellectual disability (individuals must have a full IQ score of 70 or higher).
- Services provided under the waiver include:
 - ❖ Behavioral Services
 - ❖ Job Coaching
 - ❖ Community Mentor
 - ❖ Life Skills Coach
 - ❖ Social Skills group
 - ❖ Respite (In-home and Out-of-home)
 - ❖ Assistive Technology
 - ❖ Interpreter
 - ❖ Specialized Driving Assessment
 - ❖ Personal Emergency Response System
 - ❖ Individual Goods and Service
 - ❖ Non-Medical Transportation
 - ❖ *****The Waiver for Persons with Autism is not an entitlement; therefore, services and access to services under the ASD waiver may be limited, based on available funding and program capacity. A waiting list applies.**

Lifespan Waiver Cont'd

- The Autism Lifespan Waiver was renewed at the end of 2017 for 5 years, and currently has a cap for 2021 of 124 slots.
- Number of individuals presently being served by the waiver: 118 ***The waiver is expected to expand by 10 slots per year***
- Maximum Waiver cap per person per year: \$50,000
- ***There are currently over 1800 individuals on the wait list.

Connecticut: Autism Insurance Reform Law

- The Autism Insurance Reform Law (SB 301/Public Act 09-115) was enacted on June 9, 2009. It became effective January 1, 2010 and required fully insured group health insurance plans to provide coverage for autism services to children under the age of 15 years.
- ASD services covered by the law include:
 - Diagnosis
 - Behavioral Therapy
 - Prescription drugs
 - Psychiatric care and Psychological care
 - Physical therapy, Speech therapy and Occupational Therapy

***Self-funded insurance plans (ERISA's) do not have to comply with State Autism Insurance Reform Laws, although many have made the decision to offer coverage on their own.

State Plan Services

- The State Plan for ASD services was the result of guidelines issued by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). This required Medicaid programs to cover autism services for individuals under the age of 21, citing the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) child health component under federal law.
- The Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) benefit provides comprehensive and preventive health care services for children under age 21 who are enrolled in Medicaid. EPSDT is key to ensuring that children and adolescents receive appropriate preventive, dental, mental health, developmental, and specialty services.
 - ❖ **Early:** Assessing and identifying problems early
 - ❖ **Periodic:** Checking children's health at periodic, age-appropriate intervals
 - ❖ **Screening:** Providing physical, mental, developmental, dental, hearing, vision, and other screening tests to detect potential problems
 - ❖ **Diagnostic:** Performing diagnostic tests to follow up when a risk is identified, and
 - ❖ **Treatment:** Control, correct or reduce health problems found

State Plan Services Cont'd

- The State Plan Services for ASD are managed under the Integrated Care Unit in the Division of Health Services at DSS.
- The Autism Lifespan waiver is managed under the Community Options Unit within the Division of Health Services.
- **Beacon Health Options** is the Administrative Service Organization for the State Plan ASD services. They are responsible for reviewing documentation to support level of care guidelines and medical necessity to authorize ASD services for Medicaid (HUSKY A, C and D) members under the age of 21. ***Husky B members are not eligible for State Plan ASD services.
- Beacon Health Options also provides Care Coordination and Peer Specialist Services for individuals with ASD.

Autism Spectrum Disorder Services: The State Plan

- Autism services available through the Medicaid State Plan (HUSKY A, C and D) for individuals under the age of 21 include:
 - ❖ Comprehensive diagnostic evaluation
 - ❖ Behavioral Assessment
 - ❖ Treatment Plan Development
 - ❖ Development of a Program Book
 - ❖ Direct Intervention
 - ❖ Group Treatment Services (Social Skills groups and Parent groups for members and their families)

Department of Social Services Website

- To access the Division of Autism website:
www.ct.gov/dss
- Click on Programs and Services
- Click on Autism Spectrum Disorder-ASD
- ❖ **Overview**-program description and services offered
- ❖ **Eligibility**-program eligibility criteria and links to application. ******The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) currently determines eligibility for the Department of Social Services (DSS) Autism Waiver. Please note that the application is the same for both the DSS Autism waiver and the waivers provided through DDS.**
- ❖ **Related Resources**-Autism Checklists and Guides by age, Autism resources at the Local, State and National level, Autism Resource Library.
- ❖ **Contact**-How to reach us

Autism Spectrum Disorder - ASD

Overview

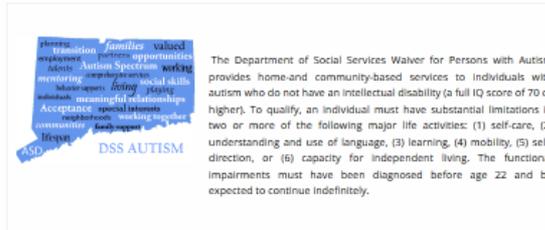
Eligibility

Related Resources

Contact

Provided by:
Department of Social Services

Overview



The Department of Social Services Waiver for Persons with Autism provides home-and community-based services to individuals with autism who do not have an intellectual disability (a full IQ score of 70 or higher). To qualify, an individual must have substantial limitations in two or more of the following major life activities: (1) self-care, (2) understanding and use of language, (3) learning, (4) mobility, (5) self-direction, or (6) capacity for independent living. The functional impairments must have been diagnosed before age 22 and be expected to continue indefinitely.

The following services and supports, which are capped at \$50,000 annually per participant, are available under the waiver:

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

The Waiver for Persons with Autism is not an entitlement; therefore, services and access to services under the ASD waiver may be limited, based on available funding and program capacity. A waiting list applies.

[Autism Spectrum Disorder Advisory Council](#)

Autism Spectrum Disorder - ASD

Overview

Eligibility

Related Resources

Contact

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Eligibility

In order to be eligible to apply to the Waiver for Persons with Autism from the Department of Social Services (DSS) Division of Autism Spectrum Disorder Services, a person must have:

1. Legal residence
2. A Primary diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder supported by a standardized diagnostic instrument such as the Autism Diagnostic and Observation Schedule (ADOS), Childhood Autism Rating Scale (CARS), Gilliam Autism Rating Scale (GARS), etc. Evaluations that do not include a standardized test of autism will not serve to qualify individuals for the DSS Division of Autism Spectrum Disorder Services.
3. At least 3 years of age
4. A Full Scale IQ score of 70* or higher as indicated on a test of intelligence such as the Wechsler Intelligence Scale or Stanford-Binet. Intelligence testing that occurred during the developmental period (prior to the age of 18). Psychological testing must be current (within three years).

*For children under the age of 8, intelligence testing may not produce reliable and valid IQ scores, in which case eligibility is based on a diagnosis of autism and developmental delays.
5. 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.
6. Live in either their own home or their family home. Individuals who reside in residential or a school setting are not eligible for autism waiver services.
7. Medicaid eligibility (HUSKY A, C, or D).
8. Impairment prior to age 22.
9. Impairment expected to continue indefinitely.

[Please follow this link for the eligibility application.](#)

[Please follow this link for the eligibility application in Spanish.](#)

[Please follow this link for the HIPAA Acknowledgement Letter.](#)

Autism Spectrum Disorder - ASD

[Overview](#)

[Eligibility](#)

[Related Resources](#)

[Contact](#)

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Related Resources

[Autism Checklist Ages Birth to 5](#)

[Autism Checklist Ages 6 to 12](#)

[Autism Checklist Ages 13 to 17](#)

[Autism Checklist Ages 18 to 21](#)

[Autism Checklist Ages 21 and Older](#)

[Resources for Families](#)

[Adolescent and Adult Resources](#)

[Lifeskills Inventory](#)

[ASD IDEA Simplified](#)

[Transition Resources](#)

[Employment Resources](#)

[Autism By Category](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions about Connecticut Autism Insurance Law](#)

[Autism Speaks Insurance Link](#)

[Autism Speaks: Self-funded Employer Tool Kit](#)
A tool kit to help families approach their self-funded "ERISA" employers about adding autism benefits to the company health plan

[Connecticut Guidelines For a Clinical Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder](#)

[Advancing Ability: Teaching Independent Living Skills to Individuals with ASD](#)

The Department of Social Services provides a list of Approved Providers that includes address and contact information. This list is updated on a regular basis.

[State of Connecticut - DSS Approved Autism Providers](#)

Providers interested in applying to become a DSS Autism Waiver Provider please contact ASD.DSS@ct.gov

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- Overview
- Eligibility
- Related Resources
- Contact**

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