The Individual and Family Support Program

IFSP: First Steps

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IFSP · Individualized · Service · Support

Virginia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Services

My Life, My Community

Need an electronic copy of this document? Use your mobile device to scan this QR code!

Welcome!

The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) made this guide to help families understand resources, supports, and services that the Commonwealth of Virginia offers to people with developmental disabilities.

It includes the following information:

- how to access Virginia's Medicaid Waivers for Developmental Disabilities,
- links to our one-stop information website, My Life, My Community,
- a summary of the Individual and Family Support Program (IFSP), and
- a list of resources for people who are on Virginia's Developmental Disability waiver waiting list.

We know that navigating the developmental disability system can be hard for families. We hope you will find this resource useful!

For more detailed information about the resources named in this document, we invite you to visit our website at **mylifemycommunityvirginia.org** or call My Life, My Community operators at **844-603-9248**.

What is IFSP?

NOTE: Some families may know of or receive services through an Individualized Family Service Plan through the Infant and Toddler Connection of Virginia. *This is not the same as the Individual and Family Support Program at DBHDS!*

The Individual and Family Support Program (IFSP) helps individuals and families by providing:

- **Financial assistance**: Visit **our webpage** to learn more about eligibility and how to apply.
- **Education, information, and referrals**: Visit **My Life, My Community**, our one-stop online tool, to find what you need.
- **Family Mentoring**: Want guidance or support from someone who has been there? The **Family to Family Network at the Center for Family Involvement** can help!
- **Peer Mentoring**: Connect with peers with disabilities through The Arc of Virginia's **Peer Mentoring Program**!
- **Community coordination**: Ready to give back to your community and have your voice heard? Consider joining your **IFSP Regional Council**.

To get updates from IFSP, please sign up for our email list at **tinyurl.com/IFSPList**. This is the best way to get the most up-to-date information from us.

To speak with a live operator, you can call My Life, My Community at **844-603-9248** (Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.). Operators can help you find the Community Services Board or Behavioral Health Authority (CSB/BHA) that serves your area. They can also help you navigate the My Life, My Community website, and can share information about the resources named in this document.

Virginia Developmental Disability "DD" Waivers

This is a brief overview of Virginia's Developmental Disability Waivers (DD Waivers). You can find more detailed information in the **Navigating the DD Waivers Guide**. You can also click on the links provided in this page, or use your mobile device to scan the QR code on Page 1.

What is a developmental disability? A "developmental disability" is usually a lifelong disability that can affect a person's day-to-day physical function, learning, language, or behavior. Developmental disabilities can often — but not always — begin in early childhood.

What is a DD Waiver? DD waivers help people with developmental disabilities, including an intellectual disability, live at home and in their communities. Virginia has **3 types of DD waivers**. Each type provides access to a different level of supports and services for employment, independent living, and other needs.

Who can receive DD supports in Virginia? In Virginia, the service system helps people with developmental disabilities and their families from birth through adulthood.

What DD services are available? You have to be eligible to receive services.

The service system includes the following:

- service providers,
- advocacy organizations,
- public agencies, and
- nonprofit partners.

*To read how Virginia defines "developmental disabilities," **visit this link** or use your mobile device to scan this QR code.*

A person receives services and supports based on individual needs.

Where do I start? Contact your local **Community Services Board or Behavioral Health Authority** (CSB/BHA) to start the process. Local CSB/BHAs are entry points to DD waiver services in your region.

What are Community Services Boards/Behavioral Health Authorities? Local CSB/BHAs provide community assistance for people who:

- are in crisis,
- have behavioral health needs, and/or
- have developmental disabilities.

To find your local CSB/BHA, visit **My Life, My Community**. Type in your city, county, or zip code. Then type "CSB or BHA" in the topic box. You can also visit the **Virginia Community Services Board Directory**.

To learn more about state assistance for people of all ages with DD, please see the **Waivers information section** on My Life, My Community.

Support Coordination/ Case Management (SC/CM)

What is support coordination? Support coordination is when a support coordinator (SC) helps you find the supports and services you need. Support coordination is also called "case management" (CM). SCs are the point of contact for DD waivers and the waiver waiting list.

How can I get support coordination? Contact **your local CSB/BHA** to ask about support coordination. If you have not already had a DD waiver screening, an SC will guide you through the process of determining eligibility.

The process starts with an assessment. The assessment verifies that you have a developmental disability. It also identifies the services and supports that you need. During the assessment, your case manager will ask you questions from an assessment tool called the Virginia Intellectual and Developmental Disability Eligibility Survey (VIDES). The information from the assessment lets your SC know if DD waivers are right for you. Based on your responses, your SC can work with you to develop an individualized plan.

How do I get help for my infant or toddler (under the age of 3)? Early Intervention Services (EI) helps families with children who are:

- under the age of 3,
- not developing as expected, and
- have a medical condition that can delay normal development.

EI services also help parents and caregivers support their children with everyday activities. Services are available for all eligible children and their families. This is true whether you can pay for the services or not. To learn more about EI services, contact the **Infant and Toddler Connection of Virginia**.

How do I get help for a child older than 3? If your child is older than 3, you should contact your local school system.

Your local school system offers services to help your child succeed in school through Special Education services. To connect with the special education program at your local school system, visit the Virginia Department of Education's **Virginia School Directories**.

Where else can I go for help? Community-based supports may also be available. To learn more about state programs and supports in your local community, visit IFSP's **"Resources for Families" webpage** or contact **your local CSB/BHA**.

To find out about supports for children with special health care needs, visit the **Virginia Department of Health Care Connection for Children** and **Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT)**.

Resources for People on the DD Waiver Waiting List

If you or a loved one is on the DD Waiver Waiting List, you are eligible for any of the following supports:

- Financial assistance through the **Individual and Family Support Program (IFSP) Funding Program**. Read the **"Beyond IFSP-Funding"** document to find suggestions for free or reduced-cost alternatives for items or services typically purchased with IFSP funds.

- Advice from a family like yours through the VCU Center for Family Involvement's **Family to Family (F2F) Program**.

- Peer support for self-advocates and people with disabilities through The Arc of Virginia's **Peer Mentoring Program**.

- Connections to other families in your community through the **IFSP Regional Councils**.

- Rent or housing assistance through one of DBHDS's **Integrated, Independent Housing Resources**.

- Local Community Services Boards/Behavioral Health Authorities (CSB/BHA) have **support coordinators/case managers (SCs/CMs)** who can answer your general questions about waivers and services. Support coordinators/case managers should be your point of contact if something changes, or you need help sooner.

- Maintenance and repair of your Durable Medical Equipment (DME), assistive technology and physical therapy consultations through the Office of Integrated Health's **Mobile Rehab Engineering Team**.

- Assistance overcoming barriers and accessing dental care through the **Office of Integrated Health's dental program**.

- Assistance with accessing support for health- and/or safety-related issues. Contact **your local CSB/BHA** and ask about eligibility for assistance from the DBHDS Office of Integrated Health.

- If you have a child who is under the age of 3 years old, you may be eligible for Early Intervention Services through the **Infant and Toddler Connection**.

- If your child on the Waiver Waiting List is 14-22 years old and enrolled in an approved education program, they may receive Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) through the **Division of Rehabilitative Services at DARS**. These services include job exploration counseling, work-based learning, workplace readiness training, and counseling on postsecondary education. To learn about vocational rehabilitation or other employment services in general, contact **your local DARS field office**.

- IFSP partners with disAbilityNavigator to provide My Life, My Community, an online tool that helps individuals and families gain knowledge and connect to resources in their community. Explore the site to find general information on **waivers**, **providers**, and **services**.

To get the links, visit https://tinyurl.com/IFSP-FirstSteps, or use your mobile device to scan this QR code.

Crisis Services and General Information

If you need immediate help for an individual with developmental disabilities experiencing a behavioral or mental health crisis, please contact **the REACH crisis services program in your region** for assistance.

The REACH program is the statewide crisis system of care that is designed to meet the crisis support needs of individuals who have a developmental disability and are experiencing crisis events as a result of a behavioral or mental health support need that puts them at risk for homelessness, incarceration, hospitalization, and/or danger to themselves or others. REACH services are available statewide, with one regional program being located in each of the Commonwealth's 5 DBHDS regions (Southwestern, Western, Northern, Central, and Eastern).

The **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline** offers 24/7 call, text, and chat access to trained crisis workers who can help people experiencing suicidal, substance use, and/or mental health crisis, or any other kind of emotional distress. Dial 988, or visit **988lifeline.org** for more information.

- **Region I Adult Crisis Line:** (855) 917-8278 (Charlottesville)
- **Region I Children Crisis Line:** (888) 908-0486 (Lynchburg)
- **Region II Crisis Line Children and Adults:** (855) 897-8278 (Woodbridge)
- **Region III Crisis Line Children and Adults:** (855) 887-8278 (Radford)
- **Region IV Crisis Line Children and Adults:** (855) 282-1006 (Chester)
- **Region V Crisis Line Children and Adults:** (888) 255-2989 (Suffolk)

To find your region or to get more information, visit **mylifemycommunityvirginia.org** and select "Resources for Families".

If you need this message provided in Spanish or another language, please contact us at **(804) 663-7277**.

Si necesita este mensaje proporcionado en Español, por favor contáctenos en **(804) 663-7277**.

Did you know that you can complete the **Annual Choice form** and the **Needed Services form** online? Visit **tinyurl.com/mlmc-DDWWLQuickTips**, or scan this QR code to get the form link and instructions.

Special thanks to Virginia Commonwealth University's **CENTER FOR FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**