

Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services



Individual and Family Support Program Guidelines

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I. Program description.

The purpose of the Individual and Family Support Program (IFSP) is to assist individuals on the IDD Waiver Wait List and their family members to access needed person-centered and family-centered resources, supports, services and other assistance as approved by the Department. The overall objective of the Individual and Family Support Program is to support the continued residence of an individual with IDD maintain his own home or the family home, which could include the home of a principal caregiver. To accomplish this, IFSP funds, once approved, are distributed directly to the requesting individual or family member.

Individual and Family Support Program funds shall not supplant or in any way limit the availability of services provided through a Medicaid Home and Community-Based Waiver, Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT), or similar programs.

II. Program eligibility requirements

Only individuals who are living on their own or in a family home and are on the statewide waiting list for the IDD Waiver and family members who are assisting those individuals are eligible for IFSP funds.

Individuals who are on the waiting list for IDD Waiver and currently on the Elderly or Disabled with Consumer Direction, Day Support, or Technology Assisted Waivers may apply for funds if needed items are not available through these waiver programs, EPSDT or Medicaid State Plan Option.

III. Program implementation.

IFSP funds are limited by the amount of funds allocated to the program by the General Assembly. Department approval of funding requests shall not exceed the funding available for the fiscal year.

Based on funding availability, the Department shall establish an annual individual financial support limit, which is the maximum annual amount of funding that can be provided to support an eligible individual during the applicable fiscal year.

Information regarding the current maximum annual funding amount can be obtained at <http://www.dbhds.virginia.gov/individuals-and-families/developmental-disabilities/community-support-services> and will include the current application and the application review criteria. IFSP funds may be provided to individuals or family members in varying amounts, as requested and approved by the Department, up to the established annual individual financial support limit.

Individuals and family members may submit applications for IFSP during the announced funding period. Applications shall be considered by the Department on a first-come, first served basis until the annual allocation appropriated to the program by the General Assembly for the applicable fiscal year has been expended.

Individuals and their family members may apply for IFSP funding each year and may submit more than one application in a single year; however the total amount approved during the year shall not exceed the annual individual financial support limit.

Individuals and their family members should be informed of the IFSP upon placement on the IDD Waitlist by their Case Manager/Support Coordinator.

IV. Covered and non-covered services and supports

Services and items funded through the IFSP are intended to support the continued residence of an individual in his own or the family home and may include:

1. Professionally provided services and supports, such as respite, transportation services, behavioral consultation, and behavior management;

2. Assistive technology and home modifications, goods, or products that directly support the individual;
3. Temporary (one month) rental assistance or deposits;
4. Fees for summer camp and other recreation services for the individual;
5. Temporary (one month) assistance with utilities or deposits;
6. Dental or medical expenses of the individual;
7. Family education, information, and training;
8. Peer mentoring and family-to-family supports;
9. Emergency assistance and crisis support; or
10. Other direct support services as approved by the Department. These might include limited provision of Companion services, Personal Assistance services, Personal Emergency Response Systems, Therapeutic Consultation, and companion animals, employment support services (not a comprehensive list).

Services and items NOT funded through the IFSP are:

1. Clothing
2. Food
3. Purchase of vehicles
4. Luxury vacations
5. Car payments, insurance, repairs
6. Internet service
7. Cell phone service

V. Application for funding.

Eligible individuals or family members who choose to apply for Individual and Family Support Program funds shall submit a completed application to the Department. The application is available at the DBHDS website during announced funding periods at <http://www.dbhds.virginia.gov/individuals-and-families/developmental-disabilities/community-support-services>.

This program is designed for to provide funding for services that a family or individuals is unable to obtain without assistance from the IFSP. **IFSP will NOT reimburse for services and supports previously paid for by the family or individual.**

Completed applications shall include the following information:

1. A description of the services or items for which funding is requested;
2. Explanation of how the requested services or items are needed to support the continued residence of the individual with IDD in his own or the family home and no other public funding sources are available;
3. The requested funding amount.
4. A signed statement in which the financially responsible person (individual or family member) agrees to provide the Department with documentation to establish that the requested funds were used to purchase only approved services or items; and acknowledges that failure to provide documentation that the requested funds were used to purchase only approved services or items may result in recovery of such funds and denial of subsequent funding requests; and

VI. Application review criteria.

Upon receipt of a completed application, the Department shall:

- Verify that the individual is on the statewide Medicaid IDD Waiver waiting list;
 - Confirm that the individual/ financially responsible person (individual or family member) has returned all necessary receipts from any previous IFSP funding period.
3. Confirm that the services or items for which funding is being requested are eligible for funding in accordance with 12 VAC 35-230-50 (See Section V, “Covered Services and Supports” above);
 4. Determine that the services or items for which funding is requested are needed to support the continued residence of the individual with ID/DD in his own or the family home;
 5. Should DBHDS staff request information from the regarding their application, individual or family member will be given up to 15 days in order to collect and forward the needed information.
 6. If the additional requested information is received, DBHDS staff will continue to process the application, approving or denying the request based on the criteria in Section VII, “Application Review Criteria,” above.
 8. If the additional requested information is not received, DBHDS staff will deny request and send a letter following the denial procedure.

VII. Funding decision-making process

The Department shall provide a written notice to the individual or family member who submitted the application indicating the funding decision.

Approvals

Approval notices shall include:

- 1 The amount that the individual will receive
- 2 The expected date that the funds should be released; and
- 3 Documentation requirements regarding submitting receipts to the Department and the date or dates by which this documentation shall be provided to DBHDS.
 - a. In general, receipts or other documentation to verify expenses for which IFSP funds have been requested shall be submitted to the Department within 30 days upon the completion of the purchase of approved items/delivery of approved services and shall include the name of the provider of the goods/services and the individual's name.

Applications may be approved at a reduced amount when the amount requested exceeds a reasonable amount as determined by Department staff as being necessary to purchase the services or items.

Denials

Applications shall be denied if the Department determines that:

1. The requesting individual or family member has not used previously received IFSP funds in accordance with the Department's written notice approving the request or has failed to comply with IFSP policies or regulations;
2. The requesting individual or family member has not returned receipts for previously received IFSP funds

3. The total annual IFSP funding appropriated by the General Assembly has been expended for the applicable fiscal year.
4. The family did not respond to request for additional information in a timely manner (i.e., 15 days)
5. Other viable public funding sources have not been fully explored or utilized;

For applications for which funding is denied or approved at a reduced amount, the Department's notice shall state the reason or reasons why the requested services, supports, or other items were denied or approved at a reduced amount and the process for requesting the Department to reconsider its funding decision.

VIII. Requests for reconsideration

Individuals or family members who disagree with the determination of the Department may submit a written request for reconsideration to the IFSP Manager. Most issues can be resolved at this level. If the IFSP Manager is not able to resolve an issue to the family or individuals satisfaction, they may submit a written request for reconsideration to the Commissioner, or his designee, within 30 days of the date of the written notice of denial or approval at a reduced amount. The Commissioner, or his designee, shall provide an opportunity for the person requesting reconsideration to submit for review any additional information or reasons why the funding should be approved as originally requested. The Commissioner, or his designee, after reviewing all submitted materials shall render a written decision on the request for reconsideration within 30 calendar days of the receipt of the request for reconsideration and shall notify all involved parties in writing. The Commissioner's decision shall be binding.

Applicants may obtain further review of the decision in accordance with the Administrative Process Act. [Virginia Code § 2.2-4000 et seq.]

X. Post-funding review

Utilization review of documentation or verification of funds expended may be undertaken by Department staff. Reviews may include home visits to view items purchased or services delivered. Individuals and family members receiving IFSP funds shall permit the Department representatives to conduct utilization reviews, including home visits, cooperating with such reviews and providing all information requested by the Department.

Failure to use funds in accordance with the Department's written notice or provide documentation that the funds were used to purchase only approved services or items may result in recovery of such funds by the Department.

XI. Termination of funding for services, supports, or other assistance

Funding through the Individual and Family Support Program shall be terminated when the individual is enrolled in the IDD waiver, or if approved funds are used for purposes not approved by the Department in its written notice. Any funds approved, but not released, will be forfeited in such circumstances.