

Community Housing Guide Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

This glossary provides Community Housing Guides a quick reference tool for terms and acronyms they will encounter in the course of their daily work.

A

ABLE Account – A state-established savings program for eligible people with disabilities. ABLE accounts were created as a result of the passage of the Stephen Beck Jr. Achieving a Better Life Experience Act of 2014 (the ABLE Act). The beneficiary of the account is the account owner, and income earned by the accounts will not be taxed. Contributions to the account, which can be made by any person (the account beneficiary, family, friends, Special Needs Trust or Pooled Trust), must be made using post-taxed dollars and will not be tax deductible for purposes of federal taxes; however, some states such as Virginia allow for state income tax deductions for contributions made to an ABLE account. ABLE accounts help individuals with disabilities save money to pay for qualified expenses without losing eligibility for certain means-tested benefit programs. Examples of qualified expenses include, but are not limited to, expenses for basic living, health and wellness, housing, financial management, transportation, education and training, assistive technology, and legal fees.

Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) - A series of basic activities performed by individuals on a daily basis that are necessary for independent living at home or in the community, including personal hygiene (bathing/showering, grooming, nail care, oral care), dressing (the ability to make appropriate clothing decisions and physically dress/undress oneself), eating (the ability to feed oneself, though not necessarily the capability to prepare food), maintaining continence (the mental and physical capacity to use a restroom, including the ability to get on and off the toilet and to clean oneself), transferring/mobility (moving oneself from seated to standing, getting in and out of bed, and the ability to walk independently from one location to another).

Area Median Income (AMI) – The midpoint of a region’s income distribution, such that half of the families in a region earn more than the median and half earn less than the median.

Assistive Technology – Any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.

Authorized Representative (AR) – a person permitted by law or 12 VAC 35-115 to authorize the disclosure of information or to consent to treatment and services or participation in human research. The decision-making authority of an AR is limited to decisions pertaining to the designating provider. Legal guardians, attorneys-in-fact, or health care agents appointed pursuant to § [54.1-2983](#) of the Code of Virginia may have decision-making authority beyond such provider.

B

Benefits Planning – See “Medicaid Waiver Benefits Planning.”

C

Case Management — See “Support Coordination.”

Continuum of Care (COC) – A regional or local planning body that coordinates housing and services funding for homeless families and individuals based upon a community plan to organize and deliver housing and services to meet the specific needs of people who are homeless as they move to stable housing and attain maximum self-sufficiency. There are four parts of a continuum of care: (1) outreach, intake, and assessment in order to identify service and housing needs and provide a link to the appropriate level of both; (2) emergency shelter to provide an immediate and safe alternative to sleeping on the streets, especially for homeless families with children; (3) transitional housing with supportive services to allow for the development of skills that will be needed once permanently housed; and (4) permanent and permanent supportive housing to provide individuals and families with an affordable place to live with services if needed.

Community Housing Guide (CHG) – See “Medicaid Waiver Community Housing Guide Services.”

Community Resource Consultant (CRC) – Staff employed by the Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Services in the Office of Provider Development who assist providers with expanding existing waiver services or developing new waiver services.

Community Services Board (CSB) — An entity established under the Code of Virginia which assures the delivery of community-based behavioral health and developmental disability services to individuals with behavioral health and developmental disability service needs. CSBs are mandated to provide case management and emergency services, and they partner with other public and private providers to make an array of services available. CSBs are known as Behavioral Health Authorities in some communities (BHA).

D

Developmental Disability—The Code of Virginia defines developmental disability as a severe, chronic disability of an individual that (i) is attributable to a mental or physical impairment, or a combination of mental and physical impairments, other than a sole diagnosis of mental illness; (ii) is manifested before the individual reaches 22 years of age; (iii) is likely to continue indefinitely; (iv) results in substantial functional limitations in three or more of the following areas of major life activity: self-care, receptive and expressive language, learning, mobility, self-direction, capacity for independent living, or economic self-sufficiency; and (v) reflects the individual's need for a combination and sequence of special interdisciplinary or generic services, individualized supports, or other forms of assistance that are of lifelong or extended duration and are individually planned and coordinated. An individual from birth to age nine, inclusive, who has a substantial developmental delay or specific congenital or acquired condition may be considered to have a developmental disability without meeting three or more of the criteria described in clauses (i) through (v) if the individual, without services and supports, has a high probability of meeting those criteria later in life.

Developmental Disability (DD) Waivers – See “Medicaid Developmental Disability Waivers.”

Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) – The state agency that administers Virginia’s Medicaid program for low-income families and individuals who are aged, blind or have a disability. The mission of the Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) is improving the health and well-being of Virginians through access to high-quality health care coverage.

Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) – The state agency that licenses the services provided by 40 locally-run community services boards (CSBs), 13 state facilities and over 1,050 private providers which comprise Virginia’s publicly-funded behavioral health and developmental disabilities services system. This system serves children and adults who have or are at risk of mental illness, serious emotional disturbance, developmental disability or substance use disorders. DBHDS protects individuals receiving public or private behavioral health or developmental services from abuse, neglect, or exploitation and assures that public and private services providers adhere to basic standards of quality. DBHDS also has a legislative mandate to assure and protect the legal and human rights of individuals receiving services at state facilities or in programs operated, licensed or funded by the department. In addition, DBHDS supports a network of case managers operated by CSBs across the state. The DBHDS central office provides strategic direction, financial resources to and operational and financial oversight of the public behavioral health and developmental services system.

E

Employment & Community Transportation Services (ECT) – See “Medicaid Waiver Employment & Community Transportation Services.”

Environmental Modification Services – See “Medicaid Waiver Environmental Modification Service.”

Eviction – Eviction is the legal process by which a landlord attempts to remove a tenant from the rental property.

F

Fair Market Rent (FMR) – A gross rent estimate that includes the base rent, as well as any essential utilities that the tenant must pay, such as gas or electric. HUD establishes fair market rents annually for metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas of the country using census data and renter surveys. The FMR is used to determine payment standard amounts for rent subsidy programs such as the Housing Choice Voucher Program and DBHDS’ State Rental Assistance Program, or SRAP.

Flexible Funding – A program funded by the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services that provides financial assistance to individuals in the Settlement Agreement population. This assistance offsets costs that (1) pose barriers to individuals who are securing integrated, independent housing for the first time or (2) could jeopardize an individual’s housing stability.

Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) — The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) is a federal law which establishes minimum wage and overtime pay rules, recordkeeping requirements, and child labor standards affecting full-time and part-time workers in the private sector and in federal, state, and local governments.

G

Guardian (Legal Guardian) – According to the Code of Virginia, a **guardian** is “a person appointed by the court who is responsible for the personal affairs of an incapacitated person, including responsibility for making decisions regarding the person’s support, care, health, safety, habilitation, education, and therapeutic treatment, and, if not inconsistent with an order of commitment, decisions regarding the person’s residence.” In Virginia, there is a separate role for substitute financial decision making, called a **conservator**, which is “a person appointed by the court who is responsible for managing the estate and financial affairs of an incapacitated person.” The guardian and conservator may be the same person.

General Community Guide (GCG) – See “Medicaid Waiver General Community Guide Service.”

H

Household Composition— Household composition describes the members of a household based on certain characteristics, such as age, relationship to the head of the household, marital status, or dependent status.

Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) and Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP) – Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) are rent subsidies funded by HUD and administered by local public housing agencies. The Housing Choice Voucher Program helps low-income households rent private, market-rate rental units using tenant-based rent subsidies or project-based rent subsidies (“project-based vouchers”).

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) - This federal agency was established as a Cabinet Department in 1965 and is responsible for national policy and programs that address America's housing needs, improve and develop the Nation's communities, and enforce fair housing laws.

I

Individual Service Plan (ISP) – A comprehensive, person-centered plan that sets out the supports and actions each service provider will perform during the year to achieve the individual’s desired outcomes, goals and dreams.

Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs) - Actions that are important to being able to live independently, but are not necessarily required activities on a daily basis, including: basic communication skills (using a phone, email, or the Internet), transportation (driving oneself, arranging rides, or using public transportation), meal preparation (meal planning, cooking, clean up, storage, and safely using kitchen equipment and utensils), shopping (making appropriate food and clothing purchase decisions), housework (doing laundry, washing dishes, dusting, vacuuming, and maintaining a hygienic place of residence), managing medications (taking accurate dosages at the appropriate times, managing re-fills, and avoiding conflicts), and managing personal finances (operating within a budget, writing checks, paying bills, and avoiding scams).

Intellectual Disability (ID) – A disability that originates before the age of 18 years and is characterized concurrently by (i) significant subaverage intellectual functioning as demonstrated by performance on a standardized measure of intellectual functioning, administered in conformity with accepted professional practice, that is at least two standard deviations below the mean and (ii) significant limitations in adaptive behavior as expressed in conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills.

Integrated Independent Living – A setting where a person resides in which the individual: 1) has legal tenancy or ownership rights to live in the dwelling, 2) does not live with a parent,

grandparent or guardian, and 3) lives in housing that is separate from services (e.g., the housing is not a licensed or provider-controlled setting).

L

Lease Agreement – A contract that a landlord and tenant sign when a tenant wants to rent from the landlord. A lease agreement outlines the terms and conditions of a tenancy and the responsibilities of the landlord and tenant.

Live-In Aide – A type of reasonable accommodation that enables an individual with a disability to access and use a rent assistance program or rental housing. A live-in aide must provide essential care and supports for the person’s well-being. A live-in aide is not obligated for the support of the person with a disability and would not live in the unit except to provide necessary support services.

Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Program - This affordable housing program provides equity from federal tax credits to developers so they can construct or renovate privately owned or public housing with below-market rents. The rents for units in these properties are restricted so they remain affordable to households in certain income categories such as households between 40% and 60% of the area median income.

M

Medicaid Home & Community Based Services Waiver – The federal government mandates state Medicaid programs to fund and provide long-term care services for all eligible persons with disabilities in institutional settings. However, within broad Federal guidelines, States can develop home and community-based services waivers (HCBS Waivers) to meet the needs of people who prefer to get long-term care services and supports in their home or community, rather than in an institutional setting. State HCBS Waiver programs must:

- demonstrate that providing waiver services won’t cost more than providing these services in an institution
- ensure the protection of people’s health and welfare
- provide adequate and reasonable provider standards to meet the needs of the target population
- ensure that services follow an individualized and person-centered plan of care

States can request exceptions to certain Medicaid program requirements under HCBS waivers, including requirements to make services available statewide, to make comparable services available to all Medicaid eligible individuals, and to provide Medicaid to people who would otherwise be financially eligible only in an institutional setting. Virginia has opted to offer

HCBS waivers to several targeted disability populations, including children and adults with developmental disabilities. Individuals must cede their right to long-term care in institutional settings and choose long-term care in home and community settings. Some of Virginia's Medicaid HCBS Waivers have waitlists, because waivers can have limits on the number of individuals with disabilities who can receive services in home- and community-based settings.

Medicaid Developmental Disability (DD) Waivers – Virginia's Medicaid program has three HCBS Waivers that fund home- and community-based services for people with developmental disabilities ("DD Waivers"). Each waiver funds a specific array of services and supports. The Community Living Waiver is for individuals who require significant medical or behavioral supports and need 24/7 active services. The Family and Individual Supports Waiver is for people who need supports for between a few hours and most hours of the day, including overnight monitoring in some cases. The Building Independence Waiver is for people who can live and work with a fair amount of independence, but need periodic supports during the week to maintain stability. There is a waitlist for the Medicaid DD Waivers.

Medicaid Waiver Benefits Planning - A DD Waiver service that provides individualized analysis and consultation to assist individuals receiving waiver services and social security benefits (SSI, SSDI, SSI/SSDI) to understand their benefits and explore the possibility of work, to start work, and the effect of work on local, state, and federal benefits. This service is available in all three Medicaid DD Waivers.

Medicaid Waiver Community Housing Guide (CHG) Service – A DD Waiver service that provides direct assistance to promote individuals' self-determination through brokering community resources that lead to connections to and independent participation in integrated, independent housing. This service is available in all three Medicaid DD Waivers.

Medicaid Waiver Companion Service – A DD Waiver service that provides nonmedical care, socialization, or support to adults ages 18 and older in the individual's home or at various locations in the community. Companion services can be an agency-directed or consumer-directed service. This service is available in the Community Living and Family and Individual Supports Waivers.

Medicaid Waiver Employment & Community Transportation Service (ECT) – A DD Waiver service that enables individuals to gain transportation access to a place of employment or volunteer activity, community services or events, activities and resources, homes of family or friends, civic organizations or social clubs, public meetings or other civic activities, and spiritual activities or events as specified by the support plan and when no other means of access is available. The service funds transportation in a private vehicle by person such as a co-worker or community member or the purchase of fares for public transportation (bus, train, trolley). This service is available in all three Medicaid DD Waivers.

Medicaid Waiver Environmental Modification Service – A DD Waiver service that funds physical adaptations to a house, place of residence, primary vehicle or work site, when the work site modification exceeds reasonable accommodation requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, necessary to ensure individuals' health and safety or enable functioning with greater independence when the adaptation is not being used to bring a substandard dwelling up to minimum habitation standards and is of direct medical or remedial benefit to individuals. This service is available in all three Medicaid DD Waivers.

Medicaid Waiver General Community Guide Service – A DD Waiver service that provides direct assistance to promote individuals' self-determination through brokering community resources that lead to connections to and independent participation in community activities so as to avoid isolation. General Community Guides utilize existing assessment information about the individual's general interests to determine specific activities and venues available in the community that can promote inclusion and independent participation in community life, such as clubs, special interest groups, physical activities or sports teams.

Medicaid Waiver Independent Living Supports – A DD Waiver service that provides adults (18 and older) skill building and support to secure a self-sustaining, independent living situation in the community and/or may provide the support necessary to maintain those skills. This service is only available in the Building Independence Waiver.

Medicaid Waiver In-Home Support Service – A DD Waiver residential service that take place in the individual's home, family home, or community settings and typically supplements the primary care provided by the individual, family or other unpaid caregiver. Services are designed to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the individual. This service is available in the Community Living and Family and Individual Supports Waivers.

Medicaid Waiver Personal Assistance Services (PAS) – A DD Waiver service that includes support with activities of daily living, instrumental activities of daily living, access to the community, monitoring of self-administered medications or other medical needs, monitoring of health status and physical condition, and work-related personal assistance. PAS can be an agency-directed or consumer-directed service. The service is available in the Community Living and Family and Individual Supports Waivers.

Medicaid Waiver Shared Living Service – A DD Waiver service that supports a unique arrangement in which a person with a disability lives with and shares life experiences with a roommate of his or her choosing, in exchange for the roommate providing companionship, fellowship and limited ADL/IADL supports. The Shared Living service is available to adult individuals ages 18 or older enrolled in any of the three Medicaid DD Waivers. The Waiver pays for a portion of the total cost of rent, food, and utilities that can be reasonably attributed to a person who has no legal responsibility to support the individual and resides in the same household as the individual. The roommate cannot be a parent, grandparent, spouse, or guardian.

Shared Living is not a standalone waiver service. In order to be eligible for Shared Living an individual would be required to have another compatible Waiver service in addition to Shared Living.

Medicaid Waiver Transition Services – a DD Waiver service that covers nonrecurring set-up expenses for individuals who are transitioning from an institution or licensed or certified provider-operated living arrangement to a living arrangement in a private residence where the person is directly responsible for his or her own living expenses. This service is available in all three Medicaid Waivers for people with developmental disabilities.

Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) – A region that consists of a city and surrounding communities linked by social and economic factors.

N

Natural Supports – Supports and assistance that naturally flow from associations and relationships typically developed in natural environments such as the family, school, work and community. These relationships and the support and assistance they offer can help maintain and enhance safety and quality of life for people with disabilities.

P

Payment Standard – The maximum amount a rental assistance program administrator is allowed to pay in subsidy for a rental unit based on unit size and location.

Person Centered Planning – A guided process for learning how someone wants to live at home, at work or in the community and developing a plan to help make it happen.

Person Centered Thinking (PCT) – Practical strategies for gathering meaningful information about an individual and facilitating conversations about goal setting, problem solving and action planning. These strategies are used to ensure the focus remains on the perspective of the individual.

Preference – A priority that is given to serving applicants who qualify for a specific category of individuals (e.g., homeless, veterans, people with developmental disabilities in the Settlement Agreement population).

Project-based Rental Assistance – Rental assistance that is attached to a specific unit or units at a rental property. The assistance stays with the unit or property, even when the renter moves.

Public Housing – Rental properties for low-income households that are publicly owned and managed.

Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) — Government-created entities created to own & operate public housing. PHAs are authorized to administer HUD housing programs.

R

Reasonable Accommodation – A change or adjustment to a rule, policy, practice or service necessary to give a person with a disability equal opportunity to use and enjoy his or her unit.

Reasonable Modification – A structural change made to existing premises, occupied or to be occupied by a person with a disability, that is necessary to afford this person full enjoyment of the premises. Reasonable modifications can include structural changes to interiors and exteriors of dwellings and to common and public use areas.

Regional Housing Coordinators (RHCs) - Staff employed by the Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Services who help develop housing resources for people with developmental disabilities in local communities and provide technical assistance around transitioning individuals to integrated, independent housing.

Regional Support Specialists (RSSs) – Staff employed by the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services who oversee the administration of the Supports Intensity Scale® (SIS®) in five regions throughout Virginia. Regional Support Specialists coordinate scheduling of SIS® assessments, provide information and training on the SIS® as needed and support efforts to integrate the SIS® with other electronic system assessments. Finally, Regional Support Specialists work with the CSBs in their regions to maintain the Medicaid DD Waiver waiting list, monitor the local committees that assign DD Waiver slots to individuals, and complete the assignment of DD Waivers to individuals in WaMS.

Representative Payee – a person or an organization appointed by the Social Security Administration to receive the Social Security or Supplemental Security Income benefits for anyone who cannot manage or direct the management of his or her benefits. A payee must use the beneficiary's benefits to pay for the current and future needs of the beneficiary and properly save any benefits not needed to meet current needs. A payee must also keep records of expenses and provide an accounting of how benefits were used or saved to the Social Security Administration.

S

Set-aside – Rental units or rental subsidies that are made available to people in a preference category.

Settlement Agreement Population – In the context of housing, this term refers to Virginians with developmental disabilities who are at least 18 years of age or older and who are in one of the following categories: 1) Living in a training center, intermediate care facility, skilled nursing

facility and eligible for a Medicaid DD Waiver; 2) receiving Medicaid DD Waiver services; OR 3) on a waitlist for Medicaid DD Waiver services.

Service Authorization Request – A request for Medicaid approval of the provision of a covered service funded by a Medicaid Waiver.

Shared Living Service – See “Medicaid Shared Living Service.”

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) – a federal insurance program that pays cash assistance to an individual with a disability who can no longer work. The individual and/or the individual’s retired family members must have a work history and must have paid Social Security taxes.

Special Needs Trust – A specialized trust that allows a disabled beneficiary to enjoy the use of financial resources or real property that is held in the trust for his or her benefit, while at the same time allowing the beneficiary to receive essential needs-based government benefits.

State Rental Assistance Program (SRAP) – A rental assistance program administered by the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) in collaboration with local partner agencies that serves individuals with developmental disabilities in the Settlement Agreement population who want to live independently in their own housing. The program enables individuals who meet program eligibility criteria to lease private market rental housing that meets their needs.

Subsidy - Rental assistance which enables an individual to pay about 30% of monthly household income toward rent and utilities. The remainder of the rent is subsidized by the government or a private organization.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) — A federal income supplement program funded by general tax revenues (not Social Security taxes) that is designed to help aged, blind, and disabled people who have little or no income by providing cash assistance to meet basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter.

Support Coordinator – A person employed by a Community Services Board or an agency that contracts with Community Services Board who assesses and plans services, links individuals with developmental disabilities to services and supports identified in the Individual Support Plan (or ISP), assists individuals to locate, develop or obtain needed services and resources, coordinates services and service planning with other agencies; enhances community integration, makes collateral contacts to promote implementation of the person's individual support plan, monitors and assesses ongoing progress, ensures services are delivered, and educates and counsels individuals to develop supportive relationships that promote the ISP.

Supports Intensity Scale (SIS) – An assessment tool that measures the support needs of an individual with a developmental disability in personal, work-related, and social activities in order to identify and describe the types and intensity of supports an individual requires.

T

Tenant-based Rental Assistance - a subsidy that a renter can use in rental properties that will accept the subsidy. The renter can take the subsidy from one property to another.

Transition Services – “See Medicaid Waiver Transition Services.”

TTY – A special device that lets people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech-impaired use the telephone to communicate, by allowing them to type messages back and forth to one another instead of talking and listening. TTY stands for “teletypewriter.”

V

Virginia Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD) – The state agency that partners with Virginia’s communities to develop their economic potential, regulates Virginia’s building and fire codes, provides training and certification for building officials, and invests more than \$100 million each year into housing and community development projects throughout the state - the majority of which are designed to help low- to moderate-income citizens.

Virginia Housing (VH) – The housing finance agency created in 1972 by the General Assembly to help Virginians attain quality, affordable housing. VH provides mortgages for first-time homebuyers, as well as financing for apartment communities and neighborhood revitalization efforts. VH also offers free homebuyer classes, supports housing counseling, and helps people with disabilities and the elderly make their homes more livable. VH administers the federal Housing Choice Voucher and Low Income Housing Tax Credit programs in Virginia.

Virginia Residential Landlord and Tenant Act – A state law that defines the legal rights and obligations of landlords and tenants. A landlord can be a natural person, an estate or a legal entity. A tenant is anyone who pays rent to someone else in exchange for lodging.

W

Waitlist – A list of households who are waiting to apply for a program such as a Medicaid DD Waiver or an affordable housing program.

Waiver Management System (WaMS) – An electronic record-keeping system hosted by the Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Services that tracks data on individuals with developmental disabilities who are receiving Medicaid DD Waiver services or on the Medicaid DD Waiver waitlist.