



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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COMMISSIONER

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Welcome to the Developmental Disabilities (DD) Waivers!

You are receiving this letter because you or a family member were recently enrolled in one of the DD waivers. We know that the wait for waiver services can be lengthy; now that you have received a waiver, we want to help you understand Virginia's disability service system and all your available options for services and support. In this letter, we have provided waiver and service-related information and resources that we hope are helpful when you consider the waiver service options that will best meet your (or your family member's) needs.

DD Waivers Information At-a-Glance

Virginia's DD waivers are designed to support a life lived in the community instead of in an institution. Virginia operates three DD waivers: The Building Independence Waiver (BI), the Family and Individual Supports Waiver (FIS), and the Community Living Waiver (CL). The waiver you are enrolled in and the services that you will ultimately receive are tied to your support needs.

Services available through any of the DD waivers can be accessed anywhere they are offered in Virginia. *At the bottom of this letter, you will find a link to a resource entitled, *DD Waiver: First Steps*, which provides information on the services available under each of the three waivers.

Listed below is a summary of the roles of the different organizations who help administer the waivers:

- The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) - the federal agency that oversees the waivers programs at the federal level. Each state operates its waivers under CMS oversight.
- ¹ Community Services Boards/Behavioral Health Authority (CSB) – 40 local agencies located across the state that coordinate activities, programs, and services for individuals with DD (including DD waiver screening, support coordination, and targeted case management).
- Department of Behavioral Health and Development Services - manages the day-to-day operation of the waivers and oversees the work of CSBs and waiver providers.

- Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) - responsible for the overall administration of the DD Waivers and payments to providers for services.
- Virginia General Assembly - approves regulations and funding for the DD waivers, including funding for additional waiver slots each year.

Who Can Assist Me if I Need Help?

The support coordinator (SC) assigned to you (sometimes called a case manager) is the connection to your services. SCs work directly for a local CSB or contract with one. Whether you have a waiver or not, the SC will help you access needed medical, social, and educational services you may be eligible for, as well as refer you to other state and local programs. Your SC is responsible for developing and maintaining your ² individual support plan (ISP) with feedback from you, your family and/or substitute decision-maker (as applicable), and other team members who you want to participate. The SC will help you select your services and get them authorized. The SC is also responsible for monitoring the services included in your ISP. Although support coordination is not a DD Waiver service, it is required for all individuals receiving DD Waiver services paid for by Medicaid.

Family and Peer Support

If you would like to talk to another family member with lived experience, two programs in Virginia can connect you to people who use waiver services:

- **The Family-to-Family Network of Virginia (F2F Network)** is a program sponsored by the **Center for Family Involvement** at the Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) Partnership for People with Disabilities. The program offers emotional, informational, and systems navigational support for families. Children and adults with disabilities (of all ages) representing diverse backgrounds, are matched with people in their own communities to identify and obtain needed information, services and community supports. The team is made up of people with disabilities, parents, siblings, other family members, and professionals. Contact the information for the Center for Family Involvement: <https://cfi.partnership.vcu.edu/> or (877) 567-1122.
- **The Arc of Virginia - Peer Mentoring** is a service that is available through the Arc of Virginia. The Arc of Virginia is an advocacy organization that works with individuals with disabilities who have experience using waiver services. Peer Mentors are people with developmental disabilities who are trained to provide guidance, support, and resources to help others achieve the life they want in their communities. Peer Mentors can work with people aged 16 and over with or without a DD waiver.
Peer Mentoring: <https://tmilling.wixsite.com/ally/copy-of-who-we-are-1>
The Arc of Virginia Website: [https://www.thearcofva.org/about us?](https://www.thearcofva.org/about-us?)
[804-649-8481](https://www.thearcofva.org/about-us?)

The contact information for both agencies is also in the DD Waivers First Steps resource.

You can also research specific service options and waiver providers by visiting the My Life My Community website sponsored by DBHDS: <https://www.mylifemycommunityvirginia.org/>. If you cannot find what you are looking for or need help navigating this website, feel free to call the My Life, My Community Call Center toll-free at (844) 603-9248 (open 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Monday-Friday).

***DD Waivers: First Steps** document.

You can access the DD Waivers First Steps document by scanning the following image with your phone camera.



You may also access the document online at:

<https://dbhds.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/DD-Waiver-First-Steps-7.29.23.pdf>

If you have additional questions, please contact the IFSP mailbox at: ifspsupport@dbhds.virginia.gov.

We are excited about the possibilities for you as you learn more about how the DD Waivers can support your good life!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather Norton".

Heather Norton, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Developmental Services

¹ Please visit the DBHDS website for the location and other information about your local CSB/BHA:

<https://dbhds.virginia.gov/community-services-boards-csbs/>

² The "Individual support plan" or "ISP" is a plan developed by you, your family, your support coordinator, and your service providers that describes your dreams and goals, what is most important to you in your life, and what you need to be safe in the community. The plan outlines how your services and your service provider can help you achieve what is in your plan.