

Autism Division of the Department of Mental Retardation: NOTICE

Information on How to Qualify as an Autism Provider for the Autism Waiver Program

Opportunity for Providers of Autism Specialty Services:

The Autism Division (the Division) of the Department of Mental Retardation (DMR) is currently running an Autism Spectrum Disorder Home and Community Based Waiver Program for Children (the Waiver). This program serves children across the Commonwealth. The Waiver Program is currently looking to expand the list of available Providers. Providers can be independent professionals or employees of an agency. These providers are not required to have existing contracts with the Autism Division or with DMR. For this Waiver program providers will go through a specific qualification process that is outlined below. For details about provider qualifications for each waiver service, applications, full service descriptions and rate information please contact one of the seven Autism Support Centers or visit the Autism Division of DMR's website at www.mass.gov/dmr and look under 'Autism Spectrum Services.'

What is the Children's Autism Home and Community-Based Services Waiver Program?

This Waiver Program is designed to provide one-to-one behavioral, social and communication based interventions through a service called Expanded Habilitation, Education. The waiver also provides related support services such as community integration activities and respite. The waiver is a small model program for children under the age of 9, with an autism spectrum disorder, who meet all the eligibility criteria for the Waiver Program.

The major service on the Waiver Program is **Expanded Habilitation, Education**. This service is designed to help support children who demonstrate significant deficits in the areas of behavioral, social and communication skills as a result of their autism. The service consists of one-to-one interventions developed and monitored by trained clinicians that are carried out in the child's home and community. Expanded Habilitation includes, but is not limited to, behavioral approaches such as Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA), Developmental and Relational Models such as Floor Time and Communication Models. Expanded Habilitation Services, Education should help children develop basic adaptive skills, elementary verbal skills and appropriate interactive and play skills.

The Waiver Program uses a service delivery model called Participant Direction in which the parent takes the lead in designing the program and selecting service providers based on the child's assessed level of need. All providers of waiver services are paid through the designated Fiscal Management Service (FMS); the current FMS is Public Partnership Limited (PPL). Each family receives support from an Autism Support Broker, at one of the seven DMR funded Autism Support Centers, and from a Targeted Case Manager at the Autism Division.

Additional services which address other functional needs include:

1. **Habilitation**- This service is designed to assist children in acquiring, improving, and retaining the self-help, socialization, and adaptive skills necessary to reside successfully in their family home and community settings, including :
 - a. Community Integration Activities and
 - b. Activities of Daily Living/Independent Living Skill Development Services
2. **Family Training**
3. **Respite**

What is the Process to Become a Qualified Provider of Services for this Autism Waiver?

The process differs slightly for agency personnel and individual providers. Agency personnel must complete the Agency application form, attest that the agency personnel working with the family meet the qualifications for that service (including having a valid CORI on file) and submit the application by mail to the Autism Division. An individual provider must complete the Individual Application, attest that he/she meets the qualifications for that service, complete the CORI request form and submit the application by mail to the local Autism Support Center. The qualifications for the highest levels of clinical service providers require stringent educational and professional requirements and providers of all service will need to submit documentation that demonstrates their experience working with children on the autism spectrum.

Agency Providers

Step 1: Interested agencies must complete the application form and send it by mail to:

The Autism Division, Att. Provider Applications, 500 Harrison Ave, Boston, MA 02118

- **Only one** application is necessary, even if the agency is interested in providing services statewide.
- Agencies can qualify for all or some of the waiver services. Agency applicants must attest that the staff meets the qualifications for the services they wish to provide.
- All agency providers of waiver services must ensure that the agency personnel have a current CORI.
- By signing the application agencies are confirming that the agency personnel meet the relevant waiver qualifications.

Step 2: Once the application is received by the Autism Division, the application will be reviewed and any necessary follow-up contact for clarification will be made by staff of the Autism Division.

Step 3: The approved materials will then be sent to the FMS. The FMS will then send a provider agreement to the agency. Once the

agreement is completed the agency will be added to the provider list.

Step 4: If an agency is chosen by the family for service provision, an additional agreement is signed between the family and the agency that includes relevant frequency, duration and rate information for the service(s) to be purchased.

Individual Professionals

Step 1: Interested individuals must complete the application form and send it by **mail to their local Autism Support Center** (listed below.)

- **Only one** application is necessary, even if the individual is interested in providing services statewide.
- Individuals can qualify for all or some of the waiver services. Applicants must attest that they meet the qualifications for the service(s) they wish to provide.
- All individual providers of waiver services must agree to have a CORI conducted by the FMS.
- By signing the application an individual is confirming that he/she meets the relevant waiver qualifications.

Step 2: Once the application is received by the Autism Support Center, the application and all relevant materials (resume, educational credentials, SSN number, references, etc.) will be reviewed and any necessary follow-up contact for clarification will be made by staff of the Autism Support Center.

Step 3: The approved materials will then be sent to the FMS. The FMS will then conduct the CORI.

Step 4: If the CORI is satisfactory, then the FMS will send a provider agreement to the individual. Once the agreement is completed the individual will be added to the provider list.

- If chosen by the family for service provision, an additional agreement is signed between the family and the individual that includes relevant frequency, duration and rate information for the service.

Important Information:

- The Fiscal Management Service maintains a web portal listing of all qualified agency and individual providers.
- The process of qualifying providers is on-going; there is no deadline for applications.
- The FMS is responsible for the payment of all approved waiver services.
- Rates for services may not exceed the capped rate that has been set by the Department, nor can they be supplemented by another source. Providers must agree to these rates.
- Families are free to select any qualified provider and negotiate a lower rate which the provider is free to accept.
- Providers must meet the training requirements established by DMR and the family.

All providers of waiver services must meet the qualifications set forth in the Waiver Program as approved by the Federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid. All providers of waiver services will be paid through the designated Fiscal Management Service (FMS). Becoming a qualified provider of Autism Services for this Autism Waiver does not guarantee new clients for the provider as families choose from the master list of providers who they wish to hire for the services.

For additional information about the Autism Waiver Program or provider qualifications, call the Autism Support Center in your area. This Notice and provider forms are available on the DMR web-site at www.mass.gov/dmr and at the DMR funded Autism Support Centers.

<p>Autism Alliance of Metrowest: 14 East Central St. Natick, MA 01760, # 508-652-9900 Serving: Metrowest</p> <p>Autism Resource Center (HMEA): 71 Sterling Street, West Boylston, MA 01583 #508-835-4278 Serving: Central, MA</p> <p>Community Resources for People with Autism (ACL): 116 Pleasant St. Easthampton, MA 01027 #413-529-2428 Serving: Western, MA</p> <p>Community Autism Resources: 2315 GAR Highway, Swansea, MA 02777 #508-379-0371 Serving: Southeast</p>	<p>TILL and Boston Families for Autism: 20 Eastbrook Rd. Dedham, MA 02026 #781-302-4600 x 4835 Serving: Greater Boston</p> <p>The Family Autism Center (SNCARC): 789 Clapboardtree Street, Westwood, MA 02090 #781-762-4001, X. 310 Serving: Norfolk County Area</p> <p>NSARC: The Autism Support Center: 6 Southside Road, Danvers, MA 01923 #978-777-9135 x, 2301 or 2302 Serving: Northeast</p>
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