

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions from 2020 Transitioning Youth Resource Fair

These questions were posed during the fair webinars on November 14, 2020. The answers have been provided by the presenters.

Transition Process – Maryland Developmental Disabilities Administration

Webinar video here <https://youtu.be/HbZwJkzvN5w>

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How does DDA maintain the connection to transitioning youth in private schools?

Once a family has applied and are found eligible, they receive a coordinator of community services (CCS) from DDA. The CCS will continue to work with the family and guide them through the DDA process.

How DDA/CCS support someone whose choice is self-direction, now that Support Brokers are not required?

The CCS assists the family with the services and resources that DDA can offer. The CCS ensures the person's health and safety needs are being met. The CCS ensures that the services are being delivered according to the PCP. The family is still the employer of record and will be responsible to hire and fire their own staff.

How long does it take to make a DDA determination once the application is received?

It generally takes DDA 60 days to make a determination once the application is received.

If a student wants to attend college, does DDA assist with tuition (for students taking non-credit courses not funded through Financial Aid)?

No DDA does not assist with any form of tuition

We are moving here from NJ (or any other state) where should we start?

The application is the first step. Once we make a determination, we will be able to direct a family from there.

(Note: video on DDA application process is here <https://youtu.be/bk9iUAd87cs>)

Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS)

Webinar video here <https://youtu.be/YpTeHkRRWss>

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Will DORS serve individuals with autism who are high functioning and totally independent?

I would suggest that they submit a referral for services at DORS and go through the application process. Here is the link to submit an online referral to DORS:

<https://dors.maryland.gov/consumers/Pages/referral.aspx> . DORS works with individuals with a variety of disabilities.

My son is now being served by the Hagerstown office owing to staff shortages but they don't seem to know services in Mont County. When will you be staffed up?

Even though we may be short staffed at the moment, Montgomery County has very high numbers of caseloads. So in order to better be able to serve the individuals we work with, upper management decided to even out caseloads throughout the state. This will allow individuals in DORS to better get services. Once we are fully staffed, we will not be transferring back cases and they will be staying with their new assigned counselors.

What is the DORS workforce looking like during COVID?

This all depends on what type of job someone is interested in and how Covid19 has impacted those businesses. We are still working with individuals who want to find employment during this time and assisting them on how to navigate finding employment during Covid19.

For the virtual Pre -ETS Program - can it be individually, too? Or just in small groups?

At this time, all of our Pre-ETS services are only being conducted virtually for the moment. DORS will be making a decision about what the spring will look like for Pre-ETS services. Our virtual services currently have programs that are individual and in small group, it will just depend on how the program is set up.

What about Pre ETS for students in private schools?

Most of the provide special education schools within Montgomery County are assigned to DORS counselors. We do work with the provide special education schools transition teachers, who can assist you with submitting a referral to DORS services. If a provider school is out of Montgomery County, we usually try to assign them to one of our offices that is close to your home.

If students are enrolled in Pre ETS are they automatically enrolled in vocational after 21 and is there a waiting list?

No, they would still need to apply for our vocational services and be determined eligible for services. Pre-ETS and our Vocational services are two different programs, with two different applications and eligibility requirements. Students two years before exiting high school should begin the vocational processes of applying for these services.

During the pandemic, are you offering virtual Pre-ETS services? Are there accommodations for students who are already having trouble accessing/attending to virtual school?

At this time, we are only offering virtual services for Pre-ETS and no in-person Pre-ETS services are offered. We do understand that not everyone does well with virtual services and may need more support during this process. However, at this time we don't have specific supports set up for students within their homes. We do have some one-on-one virtual Pre-ETS services that we offer, which might be an option for those having difficulties.

Is DORS able to work in conjunction with DDA? For example, if an individual is in an adult program that has employment opportunities, but the student requires more support than the adult service provider provides, can DORS come in and supplement the support?

DORS and DDA can work together to support someone in their employment goals within the community. DORS is only considered to be short term support, while DDA is long term support. DORS usually comes in during the beginning stages with providing funding to assist them in finding competitive employment within the community (Job Development Services). Once someone is hired, DORS will then provide the intense job coaching supports during the beginning of their new employment. As the job coaching supports back off, this is when DDA will be providing supported employment (long term supports) where they will be doing regular check-ins.

What are the supports or programs offered for a person who wants to attend a secondary educational program—Montgomery College, for example?

Accommodations within a post-secondary program are provided through the college or school the student will be attending. Each post-secondary program has a Disability Support Services (DSS) office. The services that are offered through the DSS office could include: extra time, quiet rooms for tests, test read, note taker, etc. All students would need to apply for DSS services and be determined eligible for these services, which is done through the college or school the student will be attending. In addition, colleges will offer tutoring services for students. Most supports or accommodations are offered directly through the school.

Does DORS also have business relationships in DC? Or does the job assistance and support only apply to MD?

DORS and our providers do have some connections with businesses within DC. I would say that we have stronger relationships with businesses within Maryland, since our services are here. However, if someone is interested in working within DC we could assist them in applying for jobs and following up on applications. We are always looking at making new relationships with all different businesses.

What businesses (or types of businesses) do you work with most often?

DORS and our providers work with all different types of businesses throughout the state of Maryland and we are always working on building new relationships with business. We don't have one major list of business that we work with; it all depends on who is currently hiring and advertising for employees.

What do you mean by "the waiting list may be closed soon?"

This would mean that if DORS decides to close our waiting list, we would not be able to provide services to those individuals on our waiting list. It would mean that we wouldn't be able to serve these individuals.

My daughter was accepted in DORS and had used services. Who can we call so she can have Pre-Ets services again. This seems the only option for her to be active with DORS now.

If your daughter is currently getting VR services and is currently enrolled within either high school or a credited post-secondary program, they can still obtain Pre-ETS services. All you would need to do is reach out to your assigned DORS counselor about these options. If your daughter has already graduated high school, you might have to provide the DORS counselor with documentation they are enrolled within a credited post-secondary program.

Figuring out Self-Directed Services

Webinar video here https://youtu.be/95rB_4MqdDI

How do you pay for financial management services? Is there DDA funding for this to assist the person with disabilities when parents are no longer able to manage the self-directed services?

Fiscal Management Services (FMS) is a required administrative service funded by the DDA when Self-Direction is chosen by the participant or their representative. Any participant choosing to self-direct will require the support and services of an FMS provider, who can assist them in exercising their employer and budget authority. The rate is a fixed monthly fee. As of now, the FMS deducts this monthly fee from the participant's budget each month. Currently fees are approximately \$300 a month depending on how many staff/vendors are involved.

The FMS Service is not affected by the parents not being able to assist the person with disabilities. Every participant with their team needs to have a long-term plan on what happens when parents are no longer there. This varies and every participant needs a plan for emergencies whether they are in self-direction or provider-based services.

Can you speak to the time commitment and expectations parents would experience with self-directed services?

This is a personal decision. It is fair to assume all parents spend time in the initial set up but after that many rely on a support broker to do the weekly monitoring-

It is important for the participant to have the support of a team including Coordinator of Community Services, Support Broker (if chosen), parents and/or other family, friends and other advocates, as well as the direct support staff. It is important to remember that the plan is driven by the Participant. Time spent will vary by Participant and can involve assisting the Participant in finding staff, creating the plan – remember there is a team of folks to help.

Can you provide a list of fiscal management providers? How does having a fiscal management provider affect DDA funding? Do they eat up a large portion of the funds? On average how much are you able to pay staff per hour?

Currently there are two providers: **MedSource** and the **Arc Central Chesapeake**. DDA is attempting to shift to one provider. At this point the FMS is a service provided at a reasonable cost and does not use a large percentage of the budget.

Rates paid to staff vary with location in the state and experience of the person as well as the amount of the budget. In general, Self-directing participants can pay a higher hourly wage than most providers. The upper limits of pay are suggested by DDA (based on DDA's reasonable cost calculations) and vary with the kind of service being provided.

Is there a good "type of person" that self-directed works best for? For example, someone with many independent living and educational/employment skills, or someone who has difficulties

that may not fit well within non-self-directed formats? Our son has ASD, significant mental health problems that interfere with his ability to function.

Self-direction can work for everyone no matter the disability. Self-direction is the most person centered program in Maryland. If you can spare the 25 minutes to watch the video *Self-Direction and the Good Life*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OH31qOvRyyI&t=26s> , you can see for yourself the value of Self-Direction to a wide range of individuals. Literally each person makes a flexible plan to fit only themselves, their interests, the staff they wish to spend time with etc.

Recommend networking with other sites and families to learn how self-direction might work for yourself or your family member, including:

- Self-Directed Advocacy Network of Maryland: SDAN Website: <http://marylandsds.org>
- The Right to a Full Life: <http://debbiefickenscher.com/>
- MCTransitions Listserv: <https://groups.io/g/MCTransitions>
- MCneeds Listserv: <https://groups.io/g/MCneeds>

Coordinator Community Services (CCS)

Webinar Video here <https://youtu.be/YS2sLY6NPuM>

What happens when the family is no longer able to assist their adult child? What can the CCS do?

The CCS can assist with helping the child or now adult with finding services that will best fit their needs. If he/she is found eligible we will help them to complete the waiver application, complete a Person-Centered Plan, and direct them to obtaining SSI. We assist with other matters as well.

The CCS will assist the individual and family submit new information and request what is called a Detailed Service Authorization Tool. Each case is reviewed on an individual basis. . A new PCA (Priority Category Assessment) will be completed.

My son is a TY who is graduating in June 2021. I have a CCS but am I able to switch agencies at any time? As in mid-transition process? I have just started the process and am about to make our 3 choices of providers.

It is your right and the right of the TY to choose a new CCS Agency at any time. The previous CCS agency will receive an alert from DDA, informing the agency of the transfer. The previous agency will then transfer all documents to the new CCS Agency.

Do CCSs discuss self-direction options with families?

Yes, the CCS will discuss Self-Direction options with the families and the process.

Can you use a CCS service if you do not have DDA eligibility?

Typically, in order to receive Coordination Services from a CCS Agency, the student must be eligible for DDA. However, it does not hurt to call a CCS Agency to ask a few questions. The CCS Agency Optimal Health Inc. has an Information and Referral line that can connect you to some services and/or provide information for transitioning youth. Karla Robeson: krobeson@ohc-inc.com ph # 240-435-6236

Social Security Administration

My daughter has been assigned a case manager. I have left 3 messages but she has not called
If your Claims Specialist has not contacted you, please provide me with your last name and a phone number to call you.

We filled out an application for SSI over the phone in September 2020. We called and asked the status and were told the application was moved into review and medical providers are being contacted. How long does the process usually take to hear back? Do we just assume we will hear back if there are any issues?

A disability determination can take on average 3 – 5 months. Some claims may take less and some other may take longer. It depends on several factors such as the response from providers, if the information provided is enough and conclusive, if there is a need to schedule a medical consultation with another doctor among others.

<https://www.ssa.gov/disability/determination.htm>

My child has an IEP and is on a diploma track for high school. Can he still be eligible for SSI, assuming he meets the criteria?

Basic eligibility criteria for SSI is:

- Age 65
- Individual is blind or disabled
- Has low income and resources (Under the age of 18, we will take into consideration the parents' income and resources)

<https://faq.ssa.gov/en-us/Topic/article/KA-02274>

Can an applicant for SSI reach out to DDA if they have not heard anything, or must they wait to hear from SSI first?

Please ask DDA what is the preferred priority order. In terms of Social Security, when a person meets the minimum eligibility requirements.

Does SSI take into account Maryland ABLE funds when assessing income and assets?

ABLE accounts will be excluded up to the maximum amount allowed.

<https://choosework.ssa.gov/blog/2017-11-20-yawa-able-accounts-what-you-should-know>