

Transitioning Youth Guide (Ages 16-18)

SSI

What is Supplemental Security Income (SSI)? Your child younger than age 18 can qualify if he or she meets Social Security's definition of disability for children, and if his or her family income and resources fall within the eligibility limits.

How Do I Get SSI?

Your child must meet all of the following requirements to be considered disabled and therefore eligible for SSI:

- The child must not be working and earning more than \$1,000 a month in 2010. (This earnings amount changes every year.) If he or she is working and earning that much money, they will find that your child is not disabled.
- The child's assets must not exceed \$2,000.
- The child must have a physical or mental condition, or a combination of conditions, which results in "marked and severe functional limitations." (See the criteria in the SSI Toolbox for details.) This means that the condition(s) must very seriously limit your child's activities.
- The child's condition(s) must have lasted, or be expected to last, at least 12 months; or must be expected to result in death.

If your child's condition(s) results in "marked and severe functional limitations" for at least 12 continuous months, your child will be found to be disabled. But if it does not result in those limitations, or does not last for at least 12 months, your child is found not to be disabled.

For disability purposes in the SSI program, a child becomes an adult at age 18, and SSI uses different medical and nonmedical rules when deciding if an adult can get SSI disability payments. For example, SSI does not count the income and resources of family members when deciding whether an adult/child meets the financial limits for SSI. They count only the adult's or child's income and resources. SSI also uses the disability rules for adults when deciding whether an adult is disabled.

- If your child is already receiving SSI payments, they must review the child's medical condition when he or she turns age 18. They usually do this review during the one- 3 year period that begins on your child's 18th birthday. They will use the adult disability rules to decide whether your 18-year-old is disabled.
- If your child was not eligible for SSI before his or her 18th birthday because you and your spouse had too much income or resources, he or she may become eligible for SSI at age 18.

For more information, please visit the Social Security Administrations website at: <http://www.ssa.gov/>

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

What is Medical Assistance? Medical Assistance (also referred to as Medicaid) is a Program that pays the medical bills of your child. The Program is administered by the State and pays medical bills with Federal and State funds.

Eligibility

If your child is receiving **Supplemental Security Income (SSI)**, they are automatically eligible to receive Medical Assistance.

If your child receives Services through a Medicaid Waiver Program they are eligible to receive Medical Assistance.

If your child has private health insurance such as coverage on a parent's Plan, their eligibility for Medical Assistance is not affected.

How do I apply for Medical Assistance?

You must file an Application with your local Department of Social Services in the city or county where you live. To locate the office closest to your home you can visit www.dhr.state.md.us/county.htm or you can call **1-800-332-6347**.

You can download an Application by visiting www.dhr.state.md.us/fia/forms.htm. Applications are also available at your local Department of Social Services and local Health Department. One can also be mailed to you by calling **1-800-456-8900**. The completed Application can be mailed or dropped off at your local Department of Social Services office. Once your Application is received you will be contacted by an Eligibility Worker to schedule a time to come into the office for an Interview.

What documentation do I need to bring with me to the Interview?

- Proof of age, like a birth certificate
- Proof of citizenship or status
- Social Security number
- General information about family members (such as names and birth dates)
- Recent paycheck stubs (if you are working)
- Proof of your income from sources like Social Security Disability Income, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Veteran's Benefits (VA).
- If you or anyone who lives with you is 65 years old or older, legally blind, or diagnosed with a disability, you need to give information on bank accounts, insurance policies and other resources
- Proof of where you live, like a rent receipt, landlord statement, mortgage statement, or envelope from mail you received recently
- Insurance benefit card or the policy (if you have any other health insurance) Medicare Benefit Card (the red, white and blue card)

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES ADMINISTRATION (DDA)-WHAT IS DDA?

The Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) determines whether a person has a developmental disability and is eligible for DDA funded services.

Why Do I Need DDA?

DDA funding is a funding source that can potentially provide a person with a developmental disability with a variety of community based supports and services. These may include In-home support services, Residential Services, Employment or Vocational Services, and Respite. It is important to note that a determination of developmental disability does not mean the person is eligible for all DDA funded services. Some DDA services have additional eligibility criteria. To access some services, a person must be in the Medicaid Waiver.

How Do I Get It?

Eligibility Determination Process

In order to access DDA funding, a person must apply. For persons under the age of 21 yrs applications should be made at the time that they turn 19. This will increase the likelihood of them receiving funding at age 21. Documentation of the person's developmental disability should also be included as part of the eligibility request. DDA staff review the eligibility request and assign it to a Resource Coordinator. The Resource Coordinator will schedule a face to face interview with the applicant. Applicants to DDA should keep copies of anything submitted to DDA (i.e. the application, supporting documentation, etc.). Once the face to face interview is completed, the Resource Coordinator will prepare a written recommendation to the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA). It will include their findings of whether or not the applicant meets the criteria as having a Developmental Disability, what services the person is seeking, and information about the person's current situation.

During the interview, it is important to be honest about the applicant's current needs and their current living/family situation. This will help the Resource Coordinator know how urgent the request for services is.

Once DDA receives the Resource Coordinator's written recommendation, they will make a final determination of eligibility. The applicant will receive notification of the status of their request in writing from The Developmental Disabilities Administration.

For more information, please visit the Developmental Disabilities Administration's website at: http://dhmh.maryland.gov/dda_md/

DORS

What is DORS?

The Division of Rehabilitative Services (DORS) offers programs and services that can assist your child go to work, start their own business and/or stay independent in their home and community. DORS is a part of the Maryland State Department of Education. DORS offers a wide range of Services that may assist your child prepare for the future. Some examples of Services that may help your child obtain skills they need to go to work and keep a job include:

1. Career assessment
2. Career guidance & counseling
3. Job training
4. College or technical training
5. Job search, placement and job-keeping services
6. Supported employment

7. Assistive technology
8. Medical Rehabilitative services

Who receives DORS Services?

DORS begins providing Services to students while they are still in high school, usually at the beginning of their next to last year. This will enable them to move into higher education, vocational training and employment.

If your child has a wide variety of significant physical, emotional, cognitive and learning disabilities they may qualify for Services.

If your child has been in Special Education Programs, received accommodations in school or has significant health conditions they may be eligible for Services.

How do I apply to DORS?

You can apply for Services in one of the following ways:

1. To complete and submit the Application on line go to dors@dors.state.md.us.
2. Print the Application from website, complete and mail it or bring it to the nearest DORS location.
3. Call the nearest DORS office or the toll-free number (1-888-554-0334) and complete the referral over the phone.
4. Visit the nearest DORS office and request Services.

DORS Contact Information

Division of Rehabilitation Services
2301 Argonne Drive
Baltimore, MD 21218

Phone: 410-554-9442 / 888-554-0334 toll free

TTY/TDD: 410-554-9411

Email: dors@dors.state.md.us

MTA/MOBILITY

What is Mobility?

It is a specialized, curb-to-curb Service for your child if they are not able to ride fixed-route public transportation, including lift-equipped buses. Mobility Service s provided within three-quarters of a mile of any fixed-route Service in Baltimore City and Baltimore County.

How do I apply?

You can obtain an Application in one of the following ways:

1. Log onto the MTA website at www.mtmaryland.com.
2. Call the MTA's Certification office at 410-764-8181 (Press 2, then 1).
3. Visit the MTA's Certification office at 4201 Patterson Ave., Baltimore, MD 21215 (near Reisterstown Road Plaza) Monday-Friday from 8:30a.m.-4:30p.m.

Upon receipt of the Application, you must complete and have a doctor sign the application. Only then can you call and schedule an appointment with the MTA for an IN-PERSON INTERVIEW. You must bring the original signed application with you to the appointment. Do not mail it in. This Interview is a

necessary part of the application process. Your child may also be asked to take a FUNCTIONAL ASSESSMENT at a Concentra office in the Baltimore area.

How is eligibility determined?

Your child's eligibility is determined by assessing their functional ability from information provided on the Application, their healthcare professional's verification of disability, the in-person Interview and a functional assessment, if applicable.

If your child meets the certification requirements an identification card will be provided along with instructions on reserving rides.

Can someone ride along with my child, if needed?

Some people are approved to have a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) to ride along with them. This will be explained further in a packet your child will receive, if they meet the certification requirements.

DIPLOMA VS. CERTIFICATE (PROS & CONS)

What is the benefit of staying in school through age 21 and receiving a Certificate?

Individuals with Developmental Disabilities who are receiving Special Education Services are entitled to remain in school through the age of 21. This will enable them to graduate with a certificate.

Individuals approved for services through the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) may be able to start Employment/Vocation Services in July of the year they turn 21. Remaining in school until 21 and then beginning DDA services enables individuals to have a continuity of daytime activities. Both Baltimore City and Baltimore County Schools have transition programs at local colleges for students still enrolled in school for the final two years of their special educational programming - ages 19-21.

What happens when individuals receive a diploma?

Individuals can choose to graduate at age 18 and receive a Diploma, instead of remaining in school through 21 and receiving a certificate. For individuals who choose to receive a Diploma, they can apply for services through DORS. They can also apply for services through DDA. However, DDA may decide not to fund the individual until they turn 21 yrs old. Individuals who need more continuous support than DORS provides, who don't qualify for DDA support until the age of 21, may find themselves without a consistent meaningful daytime activity.

ELIGIBILITY FOR TRANSITIONING YOUTH FUNDING

When is an individual eligible for TY funding?

If an individual's 21st birthday is after the start of the school year, they are entitled to complete that school year. They are eligible for TY funding starting July 1 following the year they should have exited school. They are eligible as a transitioning youth for one year from July 1st through June 30th.

Does an individual's age dictate when they are eligible for TY funding?

Eligibility for TY funding is not based on age other than their age dictates when they would leave school. It can be different for different school districts. For example, someone born on 8/28 would have another year of school in Baltimore City if the system started on 8/28. However, if they attended Baltimore County Schools and they started on 8/29, he would be done with schooling and thus eligible for TY funding. Some non-public schools have an extended school year that affects individuals with a summer birthdate.

ALTERNATIVES TO GUARDIANSHIP

While The Arc Baltimore acknowledges that many individuals need additional assistance with decision making, specifically related to health care decisions and financial decisions/management, The Arc of Baltimore does not encourage/recommend that guardianship be obtained for individuals needing this assistance. Guardianship is very restrictive and significantly reduces a person's ability to make decisions independently. Also, when an appointed guardian can no longer remain as guardian, the courts appoint a new guardian. At times, the newly appointed guardian does not have the same intentions for the person as the original guardian. If the courts cannot identify a person who is willing to become the new guardian, who knows the individual, then the courts will assign a Public Guardian. When a person has been determined by the courts to need a guardian, it is very difficult for the guardianship to be rescinded in the future, even if the person is capable of making decisions independently.

How do I ensure my loved one's health and financial needs are managed?

Representative Payee. What is this?

A Representative Payee acts as a person's financial representative. The Representative Payee's name is on the individual's Social Security checks the individual receives and they manage a "Representative Payee" account at the bank. This person is responsible for making sure the individual's bills are paid and that they receive spending money. They make financial decisions on behalf of the individual.

How to apply to become a Representative Payee?

You should contact the SSA office nearest you to apply to be a payee. You must then submit an application, form SSA-11 (Request to be selected as payee) and documents to prove your identity. You will need to provide your social security number or if you represent an organization, the organization's employer identification number. SSA requires you to complete the payee application in a face-to-face interview (with certain exceptions).

More information can be obtained at the Social Security Administration's website:

<http://www.ssa.gov/payee/index.htm>

Power of Attorney. What is this?

Being a person's Power of Attorney allows for decision making in pre-determined areas, which may include financial matters and health related issues. To become a Power of Attorney, the individual requesting one and the person being assigned as Power of Attorney need to fill out the Power of Attorney document and have it notarized.

More information about Power of Attorney and forms can be located at:

<http://www.uslegalforms.com/powerofattorney/marylandpoa.htm>

Advanced Directives. What does this mean?

Adults can decide for themselves whether they want medical treatments. This right to decide-to say yes or no to proposed treatment-applies to treatments that extend life, like a breathing machine or a feeding tube. Accident, illness, or disability can limit a person's ability to make health care decisions. But decisions still have to be made. If an individual cannot make these decisions, someone else will need to. These decisions should reflect the values and priorities of (in this case) the individual with a disability. A Maryland law called the Health Care Decisions Act says that individuals can do health care planning through "advance directives." An advance directive can be used to name a health care agent. This is someone to make health care decisions for the person with a disability, who is trusted by the individual with a disability. An advance directive can also be used to say what the individual's preferences are about treatments that might be used to sustain their life.

For more information about Advanced Directives or to appoint or become a Health Care Agent, please visit: <http://www.oag.state.md.us/Healthpol/adirective.pdf>

IMPORTANT MILESTONES

By age 17, individuals should make a decision about whether or not they intend to pursue a Diploma or Certificate through school.

At age 18, individuals should apply for Social Security SSI benefits.

At age 18, individuals should obtain a Maryland State Identification Card. Contact your local MVA for more information. <http://www.mva.maryland.gov/>