



Eligibility and Process for People with Developmental Disabilities

Community Services for Every1 is pleased to assist you in qualifying for services with the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD). There is a process to determine if a person is eligible for services.

What is a Developmental Disability?

The following are the developmental disabilities that qualify a person for services with OPWDD:

- 1. Intellectual Disability** - The person must have an IQ of 69 or below.
- 2. Cerebral Palsy** - Caused by damage to the brain and affects the control of muscles.
- 3. Seizure Disorder** - Seizure activity which impair the daily functions of the person.
- 4. Autism** - A group of disorders that can impair multiple areas, including communication, social integration and sensory reaction.
- 5. Familial Dysautonomia** - A genetic disorder of the central nervous system and found in the Eastern European Jewish population.
- 6. Neurological Impairment** - A group of disorders of the brain and nervous system which impairs multiple functions of the brain, including memory, attention and understanding. These conditions must be proven to limit the daily functioning of the person. Examples include substantial learning disabilities and traumatic brain injury.

Are there Additional Requirements?

Yes. The following requirements are necessary to qualify for OPWDD eligibility:

1. Prior to age 22 Proof of Disability

- School records, proof of Special Education/IEP, school psychological reports with IQ, and other school adaptive functioning assessments and reports.

2. Pediatric, primary physician, or other specialists medical records documenting the disability

- If no school records exist, then a letter from an involved family member attesting to the disability with description of functional deficits and school history. Community Services provides an outline for this statement.

3. Current Proof of Disability

- Updated psychological testing with an IQ of 69 or below to prove Intellectual Disability
- Updated diagnostic testing (CT brain scan, MRI imaging) to prove neurological impairments, brain injury, or seizure disorder
- Childhood Autism Rating Scale Second Edition (CARS-2), Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS), or Autism Diagnostic Interview-Revised (ADI-R) Testing to confirm Autism Disorders
- Current medical records and medical treatment records to confirm cerebral palsy and seizure disorders
- Current Adaptive Functioning assessments

4. Psychiatric treatment records if applicable

5. Substance abuse treatment and counseling records if applicable.

6. The person must also have impaired functioning in at least three (3) of the following areas:

- Communication
- Learning
- Mobility
- Self-care
- Capacity for independent living
- Self-direction
- Economic self-sufficiency (for adults)



Community Services Referral Process

1. Your referral will be assigned to a specialist who will call you to schedule a screening meeting. You will meet to sign Community Services' paperwork and consent forms. We need to request information about you from places like your school and your doctor. We need your school records to gather test reports and to prove that you were in Special Education classes. We need medical records for proof of your diagnosis.
2. Next, your worker will request all records that we need. We will work with you to gather other needed information about you and your current situation.
3. You may need testing to determine your disability. Your worker can help schedule you for testing.
4. Once all records and test results are received, your worker will send your information to the Western New York Developmental Disabilities Regional Office (WNYDDRO) for eligibility review. The timeframe could take a few months, but depends on when we receive all of your information. Your cooperation will be appreciated.

OPWDD Eligibility Review Process

1. Your information will be reviewed by the Eligibility Review Committee of New York State. There they will review all of your information and determine whether you have a developmental disability and if you qualify for services. This process may take about one (1) month. Upon decision, you will receive a letter of approval and services can begin soon after.
2. Sometimes the committee cannot determine a decision and they request for more information. We will work with you to obtain what the committee needs. The committee can review your case three (3) times to determine a decision.



Community Services FOR EVERY1

For additional information, please contact:
Referral Specialist
(716) 883-8002