

Q&A

New Eligibility Rules for Adult Services: What Families and Transition Coordinators Need to Know

By S. Paul Prior, Esq., Hinkle, Fingles & Prior, P.C., Attorneys at Law

This winter, The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) adopted new rules that fundamentally change the ways in which adults with developmental disabilities are found eligible for services.

On January 1, DDD ceased serving children under the age of 21. From that date forward, the New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF) will serve children, but it remains unclear what services DCF will actually provide.

DDD is now requiring all individuals to be Medicaid eligible. This means that parents and transition coordinators at schools will need to plan ahead—and plan carefully—if there is to be a seamless shift from school to adult services when a student graduates.

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Many young people with developmental disabilities will need supports beyond their school years, whether day services, job supports, or residential support services. The state agency charged with providing and funding those services is the Department of Human Services' Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD). It is therefore important, as part of the transition planning process for a young person with a developmental disability, that DDD eligibility be secured BEFORE the student leaves high school.

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Our online Q&A answers the following questions:

- Who is eligible for DDD and at what age?
- What are the eligibility criteria?
- What are the new Medicaid eligibility requirements?
- What happens if the person is not eligible for Medicaid?
- Can an individual who is not eligible for Medicaid receive DDD services?
- How do the new rules affect an individual currently receiving DDD services, but who is not Medicaid eligible or who loses Medicaid eligibility?

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