



Disability Support Guide

This Disability Support Guide acts as a localized repository of systemic protection, peer-led navigation, and clinical infrastructure for individuals with developmental, intellectual, and physical disabilities across **Washington Parish** and **LDH Region 9**.

1. Core Systems & Self-Advocacy Networks

Use these entities to challenge systemic barriers, navigate educational settings, and influence state disability policies.

- **Disability Rights Louisiana (DRLA):** Call **1-800-960-7705** for the state's federally mandated protection and advocacy system [Disability Rights Louisiana]. DRLA provides free legal aid, rights enforcement, and representation concerning special education (IEPs), public benefits, housing discrimination, and institutional rights [Disability Rights Louisiana].
- **Northshore Families Helping Families (NFHF):** Located at [108 Highland Park Plaza, Suite 108, Covington, LA 70433](#) (Phone: **985-875-0511** or **1-800-383-8700**) [Families Helping Families Northshore]. As the official family resource center for Region 9, they connect adults and parents to peer-to-peer training, disability resource logs, and dedicated Education Liaisons who assist families navigating Washington Parish and City of Bogalusa school districts [Families Helping Families Northshore, Education Services].
- **Louisiana Council's Advocacy Network (LaCAN):** Connect with the regional LaCAN team via NFHF [Families Helping Families Northshore]. This network mobilizes local individuals, family members, and professionals to engage directly with legislators, ensuring sustainable state



funding for home- and community-based waiver services [LaCAN Brings Disability Awareness Message to Capitol].

¶ 2. Clinical Intake, Waivers & Financial Assistance

Access state entitlements, cash stipends, and specialized regional medical support.

- **Florida Parishes Human Services Authority (FPHSA):** Call the **Developmental Disabilities Division** at 985-543-4730 [Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Services] or visit the local **Bogalusa Behavioral Health Clinic** at [2106 Avenue F, Bogalusa, LA 70427](#). FPHSA acts as the single point of entry for the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) waiver programs (including the New Opportunities Waiver, Children's Choice, and Supports Waivers).
- **Individual & Family Support (IFS):** Apply through FPHSA for flexible funding options tailored to needs that exceed normal community resources [Developmental Disabilities Services | FPHSA | Louisiana]. This includes funding for personal care attendants, in-home respite care, companion services, and specialized equipment [Developmental Disabilities Services | FPHSA | Louisiana].
- **Flexible Family Fund:** Inquire via FPHSA regarding monthly cash stipends for low-income families caring for children under age 18 with severe or profound developmental disabilities living at home [Developmental Disabilities Services | FPHSA | Louisiana].



- **Medicaid Disability Services:** For targeted medical assistance eligibility guidelines or application support, consult the localized financial checklists curated by [Northshore Families Helping Families Medical Links](#).

¶ 3. Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Services

- **Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS):** Call the regional workforce team via the Louisiana Workforce Commission at **1-800-520-0588** to establish an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). LRS provides transition services for youth, vocational tracking, adaptive technology evaluations, and job placement assistance.
- **Supported Employment Programs:** Partnered through FPHSA and regional vendors to secure long-term job coaching, interactive vocational training, and workplace accommodations [15th annual report to the board fy 2019, Developmental Disabilities Services | FPHSA | Louisiana].

Louisiana administers Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) through a tiered Medicaid waiver framework managed by two distinct departments under the [Louisiana Department of Health \(LDH\)](#).

¶ 1. Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD)

Waivers

These four waivers form Louisiana's **Tiered Waiver System**. Instead of waiting years on a static list, applicants undergo a Screening of Urgency of Need (SUN) assessment and are placed into the specific waiver that matches their precise level of care. All require an official OCDD Statement of Approval proving a developmental disability originating before age 22.



- **Children's Choice Waiver (CCW):**

- *Target Population:* Children from **birth through age 20** who live at home with family or foster families.
- *Services:* Provides a flexible, supplemental budget capped at a set financial limit per year for center-based respite, family training, therapies (art, music, aquatic), and home modifications. It does not provide 24-hour care

- **Supports Waiver:**

- *Target Population:* Adults aged **18 and older** who need localized vocational and community support but do not require 24-hour care.
- *Services:* Focuses heavily on independence and employment, providing job coaching, supported employment, day habilitation, and personal emergency response systems.

- **Residential Options Waiver (ROW):**

- *Target Population:* Individuals of **all ages**. It is primarily designed to help individuals transition from institutional Intermediate Care Facilities (ICF/IID) or nursing facilities back into home- and community-based living settings.
- *Services:* Offers community living supports, host homes, shared living services, companion care, dental services, and one-time transitional funding. [7, 20, 21]

- **New Opportunities Waiver (NOW):**

- *Target Population:* Individuals aged **3 and older** who require an intensive, comprehensive level of care equivalent to an institutional setting.
- *Services:* Louisiana's most inclusive waiver. It provides extensive individual and family residential supports, day habilitation, personal



care attendants, and up to 24-hour community inclusion frameworks.

¶ 2. Office of Aging and Adult Services (OAAS) Waivers

These programs serve older adults and individuals who acquire physical disabilities later in life (after age 22). Eligibility requires meeting the **Nursing Facility Level of Care (NFLOC)** standard.

- **Community Choices Waiver (CCW):**
 - *Target Population:* Adults aged **21 and older**. Priority tracks are open for individuals with ALS, those transitioning out of nursing homes, or individuals handled by Adult Protective Services.
 - *Services:* Provides an individualized budget based on medical acuity. Covered support includes personal care assistance, home-delivered meals, assistive technology, caregiver respite, and home modifications.
- **Adult Day Health Care (ADHC) Waiver:**
 - *Target Population:* Individuals aged **22 and older** who require nursing-facility levels of care but want to continue living at home.
 - *Services:* Provides supervised care, medical monitoring, nutritional meals, and physical/occupational therapies inside a licensed adult day health care facility during daytime hours.

Waiver System Comparison

Waiver Program	Managing	Age Group	Core Functional Focus
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	Office	Covered	
Children's Choice	OCDD	0 through 20 years	Supplemental respite and childhood therapies
Supports Waiver	OCDD	18 and older	Vocational training and employment assistance
Residential Options (ROW)	OCDD	All ages	Transitioning from facilities to community homes
New Opportunities (NOW)	OCDD	3 and older	Intensive, round-the-clock home stabilization
Community Choices (CCW)	OAAS	21 and older	Physical disability and elder independence
Adult Day Health Care	OAAS	22 and older	Daytime center-based medical and nursing care

▮ **Summary of Available Options**

The **Medicaid and OCDD Home and Community-Based Waivers** are active long-term care structures operating in Louisiana.

▮ **Verification of Systemic Structure**

Louisiana organizes its disability waivers into a cohesive system split between **developmental disability programs (OCDD)** and **aging/physical disability**



programs (OAAS) to bypass nursing facilities and keep residents supported in their own homes.

To apply for Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) waivers through the Florida Parishes Human Services Authority (FPHSA), you must complete a formal intake process called the **Eligibility Determination**.

Gather and organize the following strict documentation to verify a developmental disability diagnosis that manifested prior to the age of 22:

▮ 1. Core Identification & State Residency

- **Proof of Identity:** Valid state-issued driver's license, government photo ID, or birth certificate for the applicant. [4]
- **Social Security Card:** A copy of the applicant's physical Social Security card.
- **Louisiana Residency Verification:** A current utility bill, lease agreement, or voter registration card establishing residence in Washington Parish or Region 9.
- **Medicaid Card:** A copy of the applicant's Louisiana Medicaid card (if already enrolled). *Note: If the applicant does not have Medicaid, they must still apply for the waiver registry, as waiver slots trigger specialized Medicaid eligibility.*
- **Legal Guardianship Papers:** Official court-ordered tutorship, guardianship, or power of attorney documents if the applicant is an adult with a legal representative.

▮ 2. Clinical & Diagnostic Documentation



You must provide medical and psychological evidence proving a severe, chronic disability attributable to a mental or physical impairment (or combination) that is likely to continue indefinitely.

- **Psychological Evaluation:** A comprehensive diagnostic evaluation detailing intellectual functioning (IQ scores) and adaptive behavior testing. This must explicitly show onset before age 22.
- **Medical Diagnostic Records:** Clinical records from a licensed physician confirming diagnoses such as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Cerebral Palsy, Down Syndrome, Epilepsy, Spina Bifida, or other neurological impairments.
- **School Records (IEP/1508 Evaluation):** The most recent **Form 1508 Exceptionality Evaluation** and **Individualized Education Program (IEP)** if the applicant is currently in school or recently graduated. School records are critical for proving the disability was present in early development.
- **Therapy Assessments:** Recent speech, occupational (OT), or physical therapy (PT) evaluations outlining functional limitations.

&3. Functional Limitation Documentation

The intake team uses your records to verify substantial functional limitations in at least **three** of the following major life activities (six for children under age 5):

- *Self-care* (bathing, dressing, eating)
- *Receptive and expressive language* (communication)
- *Learning* (cognitive capability)
- *Mobility* (walking, transferring)
- *Self-direction* (making choices, safety awareness)
- *Capacity for independent living* (age-appropriate daily tasks)



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▮ Next Steps to File

1. **Submit the Packet:** Mail, fax, or hand-deliver these documents to the FPHSA Developmental Disabilities Office.
2. **Request an Intake Appointment:** Call the regional FPHSA coordinator directly at **985-543-4730** to initiate the application.
3. **The SUN Assessment:** Once basic eligibility is confirmed, a face-to-face assessment using the **Screening of Urgency of Need (SUN)** tool will be scheduled to determine your priority level on the state's registry.

Long-Term Personal Care Services (LT-PCS) is a Louisiana Medicaid state plan service that provides assistance with Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) to help qualifying individuals remain safely at home instead of moving into a nursing facility

Unlike waivers, which have limited slots and waiting registries, LT-PCS is an entitlement program under the Medicaid State Plan, meaning **there is no waiting list** if an applicant meets the strict medical and financial eligibility requirements.

▮ 1. Core Eligibility Requirements

To qualify for LT-PCS in Louisiana, an applicant must meet all three of the following criteria simultaneously:

- **Age Criterion:** Must be **21 years of age or older**.
- **Financial Criterion:** Must be currently enrolled in Louisiana Medicaid, or qualify financially for a Medicaid card under long-term care guidelines.



- **Medical Level of Care:** Must meet the **Nursing Facility Level of Care (NFLOC)** standard. This means a medical assessment must prove the individual requires assistance with at least one Activity of Daily Living (ADL) due to a physical, cognitive, or medical impairment

¶ 2. Covered Services & Support Limits

LT-PCS covers hands-on assistance inside the home, but it **does not provide 24-hour care**. The hours approved are based strictly on a formal nurse assessment up to a maximum cap.

- **Activities of Daily Living (ADLs):** Eating, bathing, dressing, grooming, toileting, transferring, and ambulation (walking/mobility support).
- **Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs):** Light housekeeping, laundry, preparing basic meals, and grocery shopping. *Note: IADL assistance can only be performed if it is direct support for the qualifying individual and is done alongside ADL tasks.*
- **Medical Escort Services:** Assistance accompanying the individual to essential medical appointments.
- **Maximum Hours:** Serves up to a strict state-regulated cap of **32 hours per week** (determined by individual acuity scores).

¶ 3. Crucial Exclusions & Rules

- **No 24-Hour Supervision:** LT-PCS is strictly task-oriented and cannot be approved solely for supervision, safety monitoring, or companionship.
- **Waiver Restrictions:** You **cannot** receive LT-PCS if you are already actively receiving services through the *Community Choices Waiver (CCW)* or the



New Opportunities Waiver (NOW), as those programs already build personal care support directly into their budgets.

- **Physical Presence:** Services must be delivered inside the individual's private home or apartment. They cannot be utilized while an individual is admitted to a hospital, nursing facility, or rehabilitation center.

▮ 4. How to Apply: Step-by-Step Intake Pathway

Step 1: Contact Louisiana Options in Long Term Care

Initiate the intake request by calling the state's centralized clearinghouse at **1-877-456-1146** (TTY: 1-855-288-3967). Inform the representative that you are calling to request an assessment for **Long-Term Personal Care Services (LT-PCS)**.

Step 2: The Face-to-Face Assessment

The state will dispatch a regional nurse or assessor to the applicant's home. They will complete a comprehensive assessment using the **interRAI Home Care tool** to evaluate physical mobility, cognitive status, and functional deficits.

Step 3: Select a Provider Agency

If approved, you will select a licensed Medicaid personal care provider agency from the regional Region 9 registry. The chosen agency will then hire and schedule the Personal Care Attendants (PCAs) to come into your home.

EPSDT Personal Care Services (EPSDT-PCS) is a Louisiana Medicaid state plan service that provides assistance with Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) for



individuals from **birth through age 20** who have a physical, mental, or developmental condition.

The Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) mandate requires Medicaid to provide any medically necessary service to children, meaning **there is no waiting list** for EPSDT-PCS if a child meets the eligibility requirements.

¶ 1. Core Eligibility Requirements

To qualify for EPSDT-PCS in Louisiana, a child or youth must meet all of the following criteria:

- **Age Criterion:** Must be **under the age of 21** (birth through 20).
- **Financial Criterion:** Must be actively enrolled in **Louisiana Medicaid**.
- **Medical Necessity:** Must have a prescription and medical documentation from a licensed physician stating that personal care services are medically necessary to treat, correct, or ameliorate a physical or mental condition.
- **Functional Deficit:** Must exhibit an age-inappropriate inability to perform Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) independently due to their medical condition.

¶ 2. Covered Services & Support Limits

EPSDT-PCS covers hands-on assistance inside the child's home or in the community, but it **cannot replace the standard parental responsibilities** of a primary caregiver.

- **Activities of Daily Living (ADLs):** Assistance with eating, bathing, dressing, grooming, toileting, transferring, and mobility/ambulation.



- **Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs):** Light housekeeping, laundry, and meal preparation. *Note: IADL tasks are restricted strictly to the child's personal needs and must be done in conjunction with an ADL task.*
- **Community Integration:** Assistance with personal care needs while the child is participating in community activities outside the home.
- **Service Limit:** Approved hours are based strictly on individual medical necessity following a formal assessment. Unlike adult programs, there is no fixed maximum cap if a higher number of hours is proven to be medically necessary for the child.

¶ 3. Key Exclusions & Interactions

- **No Daycare or Babysitting:** EPSDT-PCS cannot be used for childcare, general supervision, oversight, or parental respite. A caregiver or parent must still be present or available.
- **School Environments:** Services cannot be delivered in a school setting or substitute for services mandated under a school board's Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- **Waiver Coordination:** Children enrolled in the **Children's Choice Waiver** or the **New Opportunities Waiver (NOW)** can still receive EPSDT-PCS, but the hours cannot duplicate services already paid for by the waiver budget.

¶ 4. How to Apply: Step-by-Step Intake Pathway

Step 1: Obtain a Physician's Prescription

Schedule an appointment with your child's pediatrician or primary care physician. The doctor must complete and sign the **EPSDT-PCS Medical Necessity**



Form (Form 90-P), explicitly outlining the child's diagnoses, functional limitations, and the specific necessity for personal care hours.

Step 2: Select a Medicaid PCA Agency

Locate a licensed Medicaid provider agency serving Washington Parish/Region 9 that accepts EPSDT-PCS clients. You can request a local provider directory by calling your child's Medicaid Managed Care Organization (MCO) provider line:

- **Aetna Better Health:** 1-855-242-0416
- **AmeriHealth Caritas:** 1-888-756-0004
- **Healthy Blue:** 1-844-521-6941
- **Humana Healthy Horizons:** 1-800-448-3810
- **Louisiana Healthcare Connections:** 1-866-595-8133

Step 3: Prior Authorization & Assessment

The chosen PCA provider agency will submit the physician's documentation along with a formal intake packet to the state's prior authorization contractor. An independent nurse assessor will then complete a face-to-face assessment of the child at your home to finalize the approved weekly hour allocation.

Washington Parish Medicaid Contact Information

For local Medicaid inquiries, document processing, and state plan personal care services (such as LT-PCS or EPSDT-PCS), you can contact the local office directly or utilize the statewide customer service pipeline:

- **Direct Local Phone:** 985-732-6844 (Washington Parish Medicaid Office)
- **Statewide Customer Service Hotlines:** 1-888-342-6207 (Louisiana Medicaid Customer Service) or 1-877-267-2323



- **Physical Intake & Economic Stability Hub:** [1017 Ontario Ave, Bogalusa, LA 70427](#) (Phone: 1-888-524-3578)
- **Office Hours:** Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM

▮ **Social Security Administration (SSA) Contact Information**

The local Social Security Administration field office handles applications for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and replacement Social Security cards.

- **Direct Local Phone:** 1-888-748-7678 (Bogalusa SSA Field Office line)
- **National Toll-Free Line:** 1-800-772-1213 (TTY: 1-800-325-0778)
- **Physical Address:** [438 Ave B, Bogalusa, LA 70427](#)
- **Office Hours:** Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Important Note for Appointments: If you need to schedule a face-to-face appointment at the physical Social Security office, the agency prefers that you call the main line at **1-800-772-1213** first rather than arriving unannounced, as many services can now be processed over the phone or digitally.