

Children’s Long-Term Support Waiver Renewal—Summary of Public Posting

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) is planning to submit requests to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to renew the Children’s Long-Term Support (CLTS) § 1915(c) waiver for home and community-based services and the § 1915(b)(4) waiver for selective contracting of Support and Service Coordination.

The CLTS Waiver renewal envisions the next five years of our program for children with substantial needs and their families in Wisconsin. The waiver application outlines the rules of the program, including what supports and services are available and who is eligible. This means that the waiver renewal process is our opportunity to evaluate the CLTS program and make larger improvements that require federal authority. The new waiver will begin in January 2027 and remain in effect through 2031.

The goal of the CLTS Waiver Program is to support children with substantial needs, as well as their parents/guardians, by delivering services to promote the goal of every child living their best possible life now and into the future.

About the Public Comment Period

DHS is seeking public comment on its waiver renewal applications. Input on the renewal is important for ensuring that the waiver application is the best it can be. You may submit comments via email or mail by **June 13, 2026**.

Proposed Waiver Changes

Feedback from participants, families, counties, advocates, and other program partners have contributed to an updated CLTS Waiver application that focuses on greater consistency across the state, and improved support for families.

Statewide Program Updates

- Developing a new **Professional Development (PD) Infrastructure** for Support and Service Coordinators that will provide updated foundational and refresher trainings, plus in-person workshops.
- Adding a standardized **grievance protocol** that will allow families to address issues that cannot be appealed.
- Creating a **CLTS Ombuds** resource that will assist in navigating conflict and informal problem resolution, while also assisting families through the appeals or grievance process.
- Setting up a new **County Waiver Agency (CWA) “Readiness Review”** where DHS reviews local policies and procedures on a cyclical basis to ensure that all waiver agencies have the capacity to operate the CLTS program.
- Redefining **Self-Direction** by removing budget authority to align with current operations, and retaining employer authority for daily living skills training, personal supports, respite, transportation, and specialized youth care.

Changes at a Glance

- A new service for caregiver training
- A new service for supervision of participants 12 and older.
- Removing the supplement for child care for participants under 12.
- Eliminating Participant and Family Directed Goods and Services.
- Revising existing services for clarity.
- Redefining Self-Direction.
- Creating a CLTS Professional Development Infrastructure.
- Adding a CLTS Ombuds.
- Developing a standardized grievance protocol.

Changes to the Service Package

All 32 CLTS services were reviewed and revised to improve consistency. The changes were designed to promote clarity, decrease overlap between services, and support a high-quality network of providers.

- Discontinuing the child care supplement for participants under 12. Participants 12 and older can access supervision through the new **Specialized Youth Care** service, which covers supervision in the home or community.
- Redefining the **Day Services** benefit to cover adult day care and day habilitation services for participants 18 and older.
- Revising the **Health and Wellness** service to explicitly prohibit coverage of items, equipment, or things that are primarily recreational.
- Eliminating **Participant and Family Directed Goods and Services** to align with the changes to self-direction and the removal of budget authority.
- Adding new guidelines for **Specialized Medical and Therapeutic Supplies** specifying that items must be disability-specific and not something that would typically be purchased for a child of the same functional age.

Services that Have Moved

Some services have had parts moved to another service category better aligned with the purpose.

- Moving ongoing training for caregivers from the Family/Unpaid Caregiver Supports and Services into its own separate service, **In-Home Unpaid Caregiver Training**. This new service will allow for ongoing training from credentialed providers.
- Consolidating all camp services exclusively under the **Respite** service. Camps are currently covered under various service categories.
- Narrowing **Counseling and Therapeutic Services** to a set of specific therapies, such as art, music, or equine therapy, with credentialed providers. Providers of other therapies may be able to transfer services to **Health and Wellness**.
- Moving the supervision component of **Personal Supports** to the new **Youth Supervision** service for participants 12 and older.

Submitting Public Comments

Individuals can submit public comments by emailing DHSCLTSWaiverRenewal@dhs.wisconsin.gov or via mail. The deadline to submit public comments is **June 13, 2026**. After the public comment period closes, DHS will address the feedback received and finalize the waivers for submission to CMS. Once the waivers are approved by CMS, they will take effect January 1, 2027, and operate through December 31, 2031.

View the draft of each waiver on our website: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/clts/renewal.htm>.

Guiding Pillars

Consistency in the CLTS Experience

- Identify changes that clarify the service package and improve SSC training and support.

Timely Access and Coordination of Benefits

- Identify changes that improve coordination and alignment with other Medicaid programs.

Operational Efficiency

- Identify changes that promote effective program administration and operations.

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