

# Information About Disability Determinations for County Waiver Agencies

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Wisconsin's county waiver agencies (CWAs) play an important role in helping children with disabilities and their families access needed supports and services to lead full lives in their communities. CWAs help families understand programs and services, connect with other agencies as needed, and plan for the transition to adult services. This information sheet will help CWAs provide assistance to children and families about when disability determinations are needed as part of a program's application or eligibility process.

## Children's Long-Term Support Waiver Program

Effective with DMS Numbered Memo 2017-02, children no longer need a disability determination issued by the Disability Determination Bureau (DDB) to receive state-match-funded Children's Long-Term Support (CLTS) Waiver Program services. The memo can be found on the DHS website at <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/dltc/memos/2017-02.pdf>. (64.74 KB)

## Programs that Continue to Require a Disability Determination

Two programs that require disability determinations from DDB are the Katie Beckett Program, a state benefit program, and Supplemental Security Income (SSI), a federal Social Security Administration (SSA) program.

### Katie Beckett Program

The Katie Beckett Program provides health care coverage to certain children younger than 19 years old with long-term disabilities, mental illness, or complex medical needs who live at home with their families. Children found eligible for the Katie Beckett Program will receive a plastic ForwardHealth card. This card should be shown to their doctor so they can get medically necessary services and equipment covered by Wisconsin Medicaid.

When CWAs are assisting children who are not eligible for other Medicaid programs because their parents' income or assets are too high, they should connect the family with the regional Katie Beckett Program consultant. The consultant can help the family decide if the Katie Beckett Program is the best Medicaid option for their child. Katie Beckett Program consultant contact information is available on the DHS website at [www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/kbp/consultants.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/kbp/consultants.htm).

### SSI

SSI makes monthly payments to people with low income and limited resources who are 65 years old or older, blind, or disabled. In Wisconsin, SSI recipients also receive Medicaid coverage.

Children younger than 18 years old can qualify for SSI if they have a condition that meets the SSA's definition of a disability for a child and if their family's income and resources fall within eligibility limits.

If a child with disabilities could benefit from SSI, CWAs should provide the family with information about SSI, including how to apply. Information about SSI is available on the SSA's website at [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov) or through the Social Security toll-free line at 1-800-772-1213.

Specific information about SSI benefits for children with disabilities can be found in the Benefits for Children with Disabilities booklet available at [www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10026.pdf](http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10026.pdf). (787 KB)

## Disability Determinations and Eligibility for Adult Services

CWAs play an important role in helping ensure that youth with disabilities experience a smooth transition to adult services. Helping youth determine if a disability determination is needed once they turn 18 years old is one way CWAs can assist with this transition.

### Adult Long-Term Care Programs

While people may be enrolled in Family Care, Family Care Partnership, or IRIS (Include, Respect, I Self-Direct) without first obtaining a disability determination, CWAs should make youth aware that a disability determination may be required to establish Medicaid eligibility.

Youth transitioning to adult long-term care programs who did not have a disability determination as children and will need one to establish Medicaid eligibility should begin the process of getting a determination no sooner than three months prior to their 18th birthday. Starting this process earlier could result in a determination being made under SSA's rules for children and a new determination needing to be made when the youth turns 18 years old.

CWAs should refer youth to the disability benefits specialist at the county's Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) to assist with getting a disability determination. ADRC locations and contact information are available on the DHS website at [www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/adrc/consumer/index.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/adrc/consumer/index.htm).

**Note:** Youth can still be referred to their ADRC when they are 17 years and 6 months old to start the transition process to the adult long-term care system.

### SSI

When youth turn 18 years old, the SSA views them as adults and uses different rules to determine if they have a disability. The SSA will contact youth who are receiving SSI prior to their 18th birthday to start the process for a new determination under the adult rules. Youth who were determined eligible for SSI payments as children will continue to receive those payments and Medicaid coverage while the SSA determines their eligibility under adult disability rules.

More information about the transition from SSI for children to SSI for adults can be found in the SSA publication What You Need To Know About Your Supplemental Security Income (SSI) When You Turn 18, which is available at [www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-11005.pdf](http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-11005.pdf). (1.0 MB)

Youth who were not found eligible for SSI as children due to their parents' income or resources being too high may become eligible at age 18 and can reapply for SSI as adults. CWAs should refer these youth to a disability benefits specialist at their ADRC for information and assistance with the application process.

More information about SSI for adults can be found in the SSA publication Supplemental Security Income (SSI), which is available at [www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-11000.pdf](http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-11000.pdf). (480 KB)

### Additional Information

More information about how CWAs can provide support and assistance to youth in transition is available on the DHS website at [www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/clts/waiver/transition/index.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/clts/waiver/transition/index.htm).

