

From the Desk of High Point Village Social Worker, Natalie Hendrix



What are Medicaid Waivers

If you take nothing else away from these newsletters, I hope that you will follow this advice: **Get your loved one on Medicaid Waiver waitlists.** Medicaid Waivers are specialized state programs designed to fund long-term home and community-based services for individuals with disabilities, chronic illnesses, or complex medical needs. They are called "waivers" because they bypass, or waive, standard financial Medicaid requirements—such as looking at overall household or parental income—allowing individuals to qualify based strictly on their own income and functional needs. The core objective of these programs is to provide enough specialized care, adaptive aids, and therapeutic support at home to prevent individuals from being placed in institutional facilities like nursing homes.

A few of the many services and benefits these waivers provide include funding support for residential living, full or partial tuition reimbursement for programs like High Point Village, therapeutic supports such as hippotherapy, music and speech therapies, as well as medical and adaptive supports.

Types of Waivers

Home and Community-based Services (HCS):

Provides full daily living supports, therapies, and residential options for people of all ages with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Texas Home Living (TxHML): Supplies essential services and caregiver relief to individuals of any age with IDD who live in their own homes or family homes.

Community Living Assistance and Support Services (CLASS): Offers alternative community care, specialized therapies, and adaptive aids to people of any age with a diagnosed related condition that originated before age 22.

Medically Dependent Children Program (MDCP):

Delivers nursing care, home modifications, and respite care to medically complex children and young adults under age 21 who would otherwise require a nursing home facility.

STAR+PLUS Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS):

Provides comprehensive long-term care and healthcare coordination for adults aged 21 and older who require a nursing facility level of care.

Deaf Blind Multiple Disability (DBMD): Provides home and community-based services to people who are deaf-blind with multiple disabilities as a cost-effective alternative to institutional placement. The program focuses on increasing opportunities for consumers to communicate and interact with their environment.

Eligibility Criteria

Financial Limits: For most waivers, the individual's monthly income must not exceed 300% of the standard Supplemental Security Income (SSI) rate. Parental income is typically excluded from this calculation.

Functional Diagnosis: The applicant must meet the specific "level of care" designated by the program, such as requiring medical care equivalent to a nursing home or intermediate care facility.

Age Requirements: Applicants must fall within the precise age bracket dictated by the specific waiver program.

Caregiver Corner: Practical Tips From an IDD Caregiver

Lyndee Kiesling and Leslee



Medicaid waivers have been a part of life for Leslee for a very long time. When she first expressed an interest in living outside of our parents' home, our mom researched available resources and was able to get Leslee on the waiting list for the Medicaid Home & Community-Based Services (HCBS) Waiver program. That decision has played a crucial role in Leslee's care ever since.

Thankfully, when Leslee came to live with me, her waiver was already in place, and we were able to transition her services with relative ease. We were incredibly fortunate to have a caseworker who was instrumental in helping us tailor the waiver to fit our family's needs. She walked me through the available options, explained how each one could benefit our specific situation, and helped me make informed decisions that allowed me to care for Leslee while minimizing unnecessary burdens.

One of the most reassuring aspects of the waiver program was knowing that additional services were available if our needs changed over time. That flexibility has given me peace of mind as Leslee's caregiver. Most importantly, Medicaid waivers have made it possible for me to continue working full-time while ensuring that Leslee receives the care and support she needs. I encourage every family to explore the waiver programs available in their state. Even if you don't need every service today, understanding your options and getting on a waiting list early can make a tremendous difference for your Villager and your family in the future.

How to apply

1) For the **CLASS**, **MDCP** and **DBMD** waivers, call Health and Human Services at: 877-438-5658 and say, "I would like to place my child on the interest lists for CLASS or DBMD." You can also join the waitlist online: <https://www.thearcoftexas.org/resources/medicaid-waivers/>

2) For the **HCS** and **TxHmL** waiver, call your Local Intellectual and Developmental Agency (LIDDA) which, in Lubbock, is StarCare at 806-740-1421. You will say, "I would like to place my child on the interest list for HCS and Texas Home Living." If you live outside of Lubbock county, you can find your local LIDDA here: <https://resources.hhs.texas.gov/directories>

3) For each waiver, be sure to write down your "interest list number" that they will give you, and ask that they send you a letter of "verification of intent".

Make sure you give them any new addresses and phone numbers if those change at any point, or else you could be dropped from the list.

4) You can--and should-- remain on waitlists for remaining waivers even once you begin services with a different waiver program. These waitlists are 10-20 years long, so keeping your options open in case your circumstances change is crucial.

Resources

Click for the links:

[Medicaid Waiver Comparison Chart](#)

[Functional Eligibility Chart](#)

[Consolidated Planning Group](#) (assists with navigating benefits and financial planning)

For printable documents and a link to a webinar with this information and more, visit:
www.highpointvillage.org/medicaidwaivers

Upcoming Dates:

- Weekend Workshops at High Point: September 19, October 3, November 21, & December 5. Information and registration available here: [Weekend Workshops](#)
- High Point Village Respite Nights for ages 8+: 8/21 6pm-9pm; Register Here: [Respite Nights](#)
- High Point Village Halloween Party (open to all and free of charge!): October 22 6-7:30pm
- High Point Village Gala: November 12 5:30-9pm at the Overton Hotel. Buy tickets here: [HP Gala 2026](#)