



**Office for People With
Developmental Disabilities**

INFORMATIONAL LETTER

Transmittal:	22-INF-01
To:	Executive Directors of Voluntary Provider Agencies Executive Directors of Care Coordination Organizations Developmental Disabilities State Operations Offices (DDSOO) Directors Developmental Disabilities Regional Offices (DDRO) Directors
Issuing OPWDD Office:	Office of Strategic Initiatives Division of Fiscal Policy and Management
Date:	May 12, 2022
Subject:	Financial Benefits for OPWDD Eligible Individuals
Suggested Distribution:	Care Managers and Care Manager Supervisors Billing Department Staff Financial Benefits & Entitlements Staff
Contact:	Financial Benefits & Entitlements Management & Assistance: field.operations@opwdd.ny.gov Office of Strategic Initiatives: care.coordination@opwdd.ny.gov
Attachments:	

Related ADMs/INFs	Releases Cancelled	Regulatory Authority	MHL & Other Statutory Authority	Records Retention
			7 CFR 273 20 CFR 416 20 CFR 406 SSA 1945b 14 NYCRR 633.9	

Purpose

People with developmental disabilities in the State of New York are eligible for many forms of financial assistance. This purpose of this memo is to advise of the most common of these financial programs and provide contacts to obtain further information. Individuals with developmental disabilities who want to maximize their income and health insurance coverage should apply for any financial benefits or entitlements for which they are eligible. The programs are listed in the order of popular utilization.

Medicaid is a health insurance program for people whose income and/or resources are below certain levels. People with medical bills may be eligible for Medicaid even if their income and resources are above the allowable Medicaid income levels. Medicaid offers a full range of preventative and emergency health services. Contact the local county Department of Social Services https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/ldss.htm or <https://nymedicaidchoice.com/>. In New York City, call 311 or 888-692-6116, or visit <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/health-assistance.page>.

Supplemental Security Income is cash assistance to people who are age 65 or older, blind or disabled whose income and/or resources are below certain levels. Start the SSI application process by calling 1-800-772-1213. For more information, visit <https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-11000.pdf>.

Social Security Retirement, Survivors or Disability Benefits are cash payments to people with disabilities based on their work record, a parent's work record or a spouse's. Start the application process by calling 1-800-772-1213 (disability applications can NOT be completed online). More information is available at: <https://www.ssa.gov/planners/disability/qualify.html#anchor8>.

Medicare is health insurance for people age 65 or older, under 65 with certain disabilities, and any age with end-stage renal disease. Medicare was established to provide hospital and medical insurance to people who might not otherwise be able to afford health insurance. Medicare may also cover prescriptions. People with disabilities will automatically receive Medicare after receiving disability benefits from Social Security (not SSI) or the Railroad Retirement Board after 24 months. Further information is available at www.medicare.gov. Start the application process through the Social Security Administration (see above.)

SNAP helps low-income working people, senior citizens, those with disabilities and others feed their families. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) eligibility and benefit levels are based on household size, income and other factors. Apply online at <https://mybenefits.ny.gov/> or through the local county Department of Social Services at <http://otda.ny.gov/workingfamilies/dss.asp>.

HEAP helps those with low-income pay the cost of heating and/or cooling their homes. Apply for the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) online at <https://mybenefits.ny.gov/> or through the local county Department of Social Services at <http://otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/contacts/>.

Railroad Retirement Benefits are cash payments for railroad workers and their families in the event of disability, death, unemployment and sickness. Start the RRB application process by calling 1-877-772-5772. More information is available at www.RRB.gov.

Other Entitlements are available to New Yorkers with developmental disabilities based on their service or work record, or a parent's or spouse's. Some may be eligible for additional benefits through the Veterans' Administration (<https://www.va.gov/family-member-benefits/#benefits-for-spouses,-dependents,-and-survivors>), governmental retirement or pension funds, the NYS Medical Indemnity Fund (https://www.health.ny.gov/regulations/medical_indemnity_fund/), or other programs. Since each person's financial benefits depend on their own individual circumstances, a thorough review of those circumstances will be needed to determine eligibility.

Additional Guidance

For further information, please refer to one of the websites above or the Benefits Development Resource Toolkit found on the OPWDD website at:

<https://opwdd.ny.gov/providers/benefit-development-resource-toolkit>

Refer individual specific eligibility questions to the person's care manager or, if the person is in a residential setting, to the benefits and entitlements team for the residence.

Training on financial and health care benefits for people with developmental disabilities is also available on the Statewide Learning Management System, which can be accessed through: <https://nyslearn.ny.gov/>.