



How to apply for the

COMMUNITY PATHWAYS WAIVER

A Guide for You and Your Family



About This Guide

This guide explains how to apply for the Community Pathways Waiver, a Medicaid home and community-based services waiver. It walks you through each step in the process, from getting information to receiving services.

The Maryland Department of Health Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) runs this waiver for Medicaid. This is known as the Operating State Agency (OSA). The OSA focuses on serving the people in the waiver and manages specific waiver services.

A waiver is when certain Medicaid rules are set aside to cover people who may not otherwise be able to get Medicaid. It also allows Medicaid to provide special benefits and services that Medicaid would otherwise not cover.

A waiver is different from regular Medicaid because there is no guarantee that you will get services even if you are eligible. A waiver has a set number of spaces known as slots. A waitlist is available when all waiver slots are full.

Following is the step-by-step process using a real-life like example. Meet Joe.

JOE'S STORY

Joe is 24 years old and lives with his parents. Joe has Down syndrome. Joe wants to apply for the Community Pathways Waiver. Here's how Joe applies — and how you can too.



How the Application Process Works

Step 1: Contact Your Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) Regional Office and Complete a DDA Eligibility Application

- Joe's mother contacts their [DDA Regional Office](#). Joe's mom is his authorized representative and helps him with applications and paperwork. She also gets copies of any notices that he gets.
- Joe's mom submits a [DDA eligibility application](#) and required documents. **The DDA eligibility application is different from the Medicaid waiver application. You must be eligible for DDA services before you can apply for the Community Pathways Waiver.**
- DDA assigns Joe a Coordinator of Community Services (CCS).
- Joe has a face-to-face meeting with his CCS to gather all the information needed to apply and to see if he is eligible for DDA services or supports.
- The DDA Regional Office reviews Joe's application and sends him a letter to let him know their decision - usually within 60 days.

If DDA finds Joe eligible, they will place Joe on the Community Pathways waitlist.

Scan for the DDA
Eligibility Application.



Step 2: The Community Pathways Waitlist and Waiting for a Slot to Open

Joe will stay on the Community Pathways' waitlist until a waiver slot opens. How long Joe will wait depends on funding and his DDA eligibility priority category. While he waits:

- His CCS can help him explore other state and community programs.
- He can update his information with DDA if his needs change.
- He can ask about his status at any time.
- If his needs become urgent, he can ask for a review for a higher priority category.

Step 3: Slot is Available! Complete a Medicaid Waiver Packet

Now that a slot is available, Joe's CCS will help him complete the full Medicaid Waiver packet. This includes the:



Joe and his Coordinator of Community Services.

- Medicaid waiver application
- Person-centered plan (PCP)
- Level of care form
- Freedom of Choice form
- Consent for Release of Information form. DDA also calls this the EDD Release form.
- Supporting documents, including income and asset– see the full list in the packet

Joe's CCS will add all this information to the *LTSSMaryland* online portal. This is how DDA and Medicaid keep track of what Joe and his CCS have submitted and what Joe still needs to submit to figure out his eligibility.

To be eligible for Community Pathways, Joe will have to meet all the medical, technical, and financial rules for the waiver.

Step 4: Complete the Person-Centered Plan (PCP)

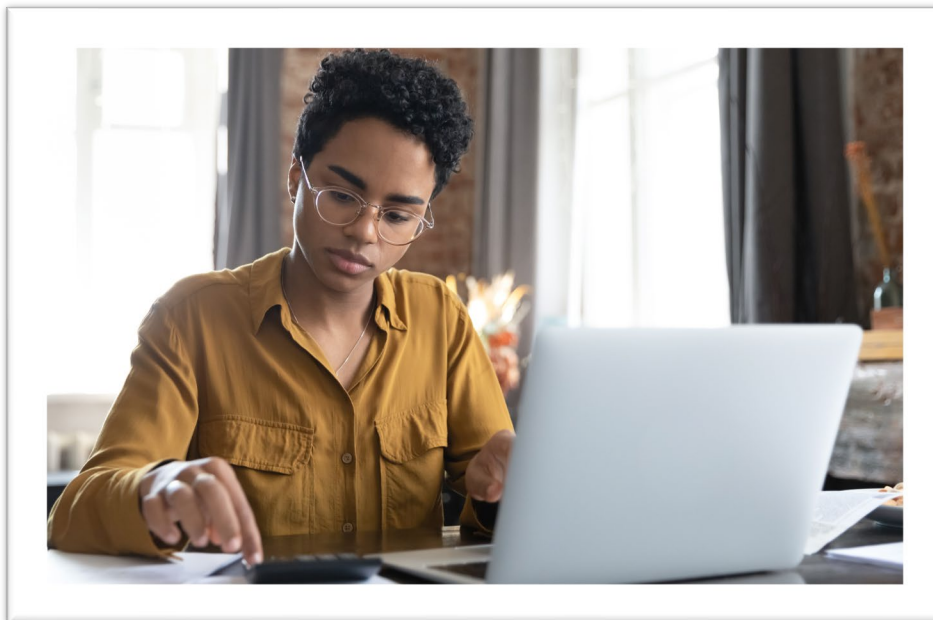
Joe, his family, and his CCS create a PCP that explains Joe's goals and support needs.

This plan will list out paid and unpaid services and who will provide them. Joe's CCS submits the plan through *LTSSMaryland*. This is how DDA and Medicaid will keep track of Joe's services.

If Joe chooses to self-direct his services, he will work with a Financial Management and Counseling Services (FMCS) provider to:

- Check worker and vendor requirements.
- Track his budget
- Submit payments
- Keep up with tax reporting

The DDA Regional Office will review and authorize Joe's PCP. DDA must authorize the plan before the DDA or Medicaid can review Joe's eligibility for Community Pathways.



DDA reviewing
Joe's person-
centered plan.

Step 5a: Person-Centered Plan Authorized! Submit the Full Medicaid Waiver Application Packet

Joe's CCS submits the full Medicaid waiver application packet using the *LTSSMaryland* portal.

- The waiver application must have Joe's or his authorized representative's signature. The application is not complete without the required signatures.
- Joe must use his full legal name on the application. This is the name that is on his Social Security records. Medicaid cannot process his application without his correct legal name.
- Joe should include all pages of all required financial documents and must not black out any information.
- Joe's financial documents must show the balance as of the first of the month of the date he submits his application. For example, if he submits his signed application on March 21, 2025, the financial document must show the balance as of March 1, 2025.

The DDA Regional Office will approve and authorize the application and forms. Medicaid's Eligibility Determination Division (EDD), which assesses financial eligibility, will review the income and asset documents. Medicaid's EDD will let Joe know if they need more information. Joe should work with his CCS to respond to any EDD request right away. Joe's CCS will add his new or missing financial documents to LTSS*Maryland*. Missing financial documents will delay an eligibility decision.

Step 5b: Complete the State Review Team packet, if Needed

Not everyone will need to complete a State Review Team (SRT) packet. The SRT is part of the Department of Human Services (DHS), not Medicaid. They will send applicants a letter and the packet if they do not have either a federal or state disability determination. An individual has a federal disability determination if they have benefits from Social Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Railroad, or the Veterans Administration. If not, the SRT will determine the individual's disability. It can take 60 days for the SRT to make a decision. It can take longer if the individual does not submit or delays submitting the required paperwork to the SRT.

Step 6: Review of the Medicaid Application Packet and Final Decision

- DDA checks to see if Joe meets the medical and technical eligibility rules.
- Medicaid's EDD checks to see if Joe meets the Medicaid financial eligibility rules.
- If Joe meets medical, technical, and financial eligibility, DDA sends an Authorization to Participate (ATP) to Medicaid's EDD.

Step 7: Receive Approval or Denial

If approved:

- When Medicaid's EDD receives the Authorization to Participate, they enroll Joe in the Community Pathways Waiver. They will send him an enrollment letter saying they approved his application.
- Providers can begin approved services.

If denied:

Joe may file an appeal. Information on how to file an appeal will be in Joe's denial notice.

Your Application Open and Close Dates

Your application has a 6-month consideration period. This means it remains open during this time. The consideration period begins on the first day of the month when DDA receives your signed Medicaid application. For example,

- DDA receives your signed Medicaid application on March 21, 2025.
- The consideration period begins on March 1, 2025.
- The consideration period ends on August 31, 2025.

You must submit all required forms and documents during this time. If you do not, Medicaid will deny and close your application. You will have to start the application process again when a slot is available.

Important Tips to Speed Up the Approval Process

- Work with your CCS to complete and submit forms and documents through *LTSSMaryland*.
- Gather all required financial documents before submitting your application.
- Use your full legal name on your application and ensure it matches your Social Security information.
- Be sure you or your authorized representative signs all forms and your application.
- Provide full, unedited bank and other financial statements – even blank pages!
- Respond quickly to requests for more information or for a State Review Team packet.
- Check your [Maryland Benefits consumer portal](#) regularly for notices.
- Keep copies of all forms, documents, and letters.
- Update DDA right away if your needs change.

Contact Information

Your CCS is your main point of contact for this process. Ask questions whenever you need help. Your CCS is there to support you.

For more information or questions, call your DDA Regional Office. Find your [DDA Regional Office and contact information](#).

Scan to find your DDA
Regional Office and
contact information.



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