



## **State & Regional Services for Autism & Developmental Disabilities**

This document outlines key support programs available to families in Louisiana who have a child or family member with autism. We understand navigating these resources can be overwhelming. This guide aims to provide clear information and a simple way to track your application progress. Please note that eligibility requirements vary for each program.

**Important Tip:** *Apply for everything, even if you think you won't qualify. Many programs consider medical need as well as income. Always keep copies of your applications and follow up regularly.*

### **Supplemental Security Income (SSI)**

SSI provides monthly payments to adults and children with a disability who have limited income and resources.

Apply online: <https://www.ssa.gov/ssi>

- Applied
- Approved
- Denied
- Appeal

### **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**

SNAP helps low-income individuals and families buy groceries.

Apply for SNAP: <http://www.dcf.la.gov/snap>

- Applied

- Approved
- Denied

## Women, Infants, & Children (WIC)

WIC provides nutrition assistance to low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women, and infants and children up to age 5.

**Info & application:** <https://louisianawic.org>

- Applied
- Approved

## Florida Parishes Human Services Authority (FPHSA)

- **What they do:** Provides developmental disability services, behavioral health support, addictive disorder services, and crisis response.
- **Who they serve:** Residents of Livingston, St. Helena, Tangipahoa, Washington, and St. Tammany parishes.
- **Contact:**
  - Phone: 985-543-4333 | Toll-Free: 1-855-452-5437
  - Website: [www.fphsa.org](http://www.fphsa.org)
  - Hours: Mon–Fri, 8:00 am – 4:30 pm

## Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD)

- **What they do:** Single point of entry for waiver programs, family support, and flexible family funding.
- **Services:**
  - Children’s Choice Waiver
  - New Opportunities Waiver (NOW)
  - Residential Options Waiver (ROW)
  - Supports Waiver
  - Flexible Family Fund (financial help for families)
- **Contact:**
  - Website: [www.ldh.la.gov/ocdd](http://www.ldh.la.gov/ocdd)
  - Toll-Free: 1-866-783-5553

## EarlySteps (Ages 0–3)

- **What they do:** Provides evaluations and early intervention for developmental delays. Includes speech, occupational, and physical therapy, plus family training.
- **How to access:** Referral from pediatrician, school system, or parent request.

- **Contact:** 1-866-327-5978 | [ldh.la.gov/earlysteps](https://ldh.la.gov/earlysteps)

## **Child Search / School System (Ages 3+)**

- **What they do:** Free evaluations through your local school district for children suspected of having a disability.
- **Why it matters:** Can lead to services like an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan.
- **Contact:** Call your parish school board's Special Education Department.

## **Medicaid & Waiver Services**

Navigating the available waivers and Medicaid services in Louisiana can be complex. Below is a detailed overview of the various programs designed to support individuals with disabilities and their families. Medicaid provides health coverage to eligible low-income individuals and families. Waiver services offer additional support for individuals with disabilities.

Apply for Medicaid: <https://ldh.la.gov>

- Applied
- On Waitlist
- Approved

## **Children's Choice Waiver (CC)**

- **Ages:** 0–20 (must meet OCDD criteria & Medicaid eligible)
- **Services may include:**
  - Family Support & Training
  - Respite (center/home-based)
  - Crisis Support
  - Specialized Medical Equipment
  - Environmental Accessibility Adaptations
  - Therapy Services: Aquatic, Art, Music, Horseback Riding, Sensory Integration

## **Supports Waiver (SW)**

- **Ages:** 18+ (must meet OCDD criteria & Medicaid eligible)
- **Services may include:**
  - Supported Employment & Transportation
  - Day Habilitation & Community Life Engagement
  - Respite Services
  - Housing Stabilization & Transition
  - Dental Services (Adult Waiver Beneficiaries)

- Community Life Engagement Development

## **Residential Options Waiver (ROW)**

- **Ages:** All (must meet OCDD criteria & Medicaid eligible)
- **Services may include:**
  - Community Living Supports, Host Home, Companion Care
  - Shared Living & Adult Day Health Care
  - Nursing Services & Professional Supports
  - Respite Care (out-of-home)
  - Environmental Adaptations & Assistive Technology
  - Monitored In-Home Caregiving (MIHC)
  - Supported Employment, Career Planning & Transportation

## **New Opportunities Waiver (NOW)**

- **Ages:** 3+ (must meet OCDD criteria & Medicaid eligible)
- **Services may include:**
  - Individual & Family Supports (day/night/shared)
  - Supported Independent Living
  - Substitute Family Care
  - Skilled Nursing
  - Employment Supports & Transportation
  - Housing Stabilization & Transition
  - Environmental Adaptations & Medical Equipment

## **Long-Term Personal Care Services (LT-PCS)**

- **Ages:** 21+ (Medicaid eligible)
- **For individuals needing daily living support.**
- **Services may include help with:**
  - Eating, Bathing, Dressing, Grooming
  - Transferring, Walking, Toileting, Bed Mobility
  - Light Housekeeping, Cooking, Shopping, Laundry
  - Medication Reminders, Help with Appointments

## **Helpful Links**

- **Waiver Services Info:** [ldh.la.gov/page/136](http://ldh.la.gov/page/136)
- **Medicaid Services Chart:** LDH Medicaid PDF
- **Florida Parishes Human Services Authority:** [fphsa.org](http://fphsa.org)
- **Northshore Families Helping Families:** [fhnorthshore.org](http://fhnorthshore.org)

✦ **Tip for Families:** Waivers often have waitlists. Apply early through your local Human Services District/Authority. Keep your contact information updated and request copies of all paperwork.

By understanding these programs and services, you can better navigate the support available to you and your family. Remember, applying early and keeping thorough records can help ensure you receive the assistance you need.

## Flexible Family Fund (Louisiana)

The Flexible Family Fund helps families raising children with disabilities meet their needs with flexible funding for eligible expenses.

- Flexible Family Fund: <https://ldh.la.gov/>
- Applied
- Approved

## Vocational Rehabilitation (LRS)

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) helps individuals with disabilities find and maintain employment.

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services <https://ldh.la.gov/lrs>

- Applied
- In Progress

## Exceptional Lives

Exceptional Lives provides resources and support for families raising children with disabilities.

Exceptional Lives <https://www.exceptionallives.org/>

- Resource

## Notes

✓ **Tip:** Start here if you don't know which program you qualify for. Call FPHSA or OCDD and ask for an Intake Coordinator. They will guide you step-by-step.

**Disclaimer:** *This document is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal or financial advice. Please consult with qualified professionals for personalized guidance.*

## **AVERI SPEAKS, INC.**

Awareness • Voice • Education • Resources • Inclusion

This resource is provided by Averi Speaks to support families, caregivers, and communities impacted by autism.

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Together, we can create a more inclusive world.