

HOME AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICE WAIVER PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES IN SOUTHWESTERN PA

What are Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Waiver programs?

These are programs that provide individuals at risk for institutionalization with support services and Medical Assistance to allow them to remain living in a home or community-based setting.

Who is eligible for waiver programs?

There are both functional and financial requirements that must be met for each waiver:

- Functional eligibility varies from program to program, but all programs require that the consumer need an institutional level of care.
- Financial eligibility-To qualify, individuals must have **countable income below \$2,022/month** (for an individual) and **countable resources below \$8,000** (includes savings accounts and stocks and bonds). Spousal impoverishment rules apply to income and resources of a married couple.

How can I apply for a waiver?

Generally, applying for a waiver is a two-step process. First, an assessment is completed to determine if someone meets the functional criteria. Second, there is a review of income and resources to see if someone meets the financial criteria. Call the **Office of Long-Term Living (OLTL) Helpline at 1-866-286-3636** for a referral to the local agency that can assist you in applying for a waiver program.

Please note that entry into a waiver program is not guaranteed. There are limited funds available and some consumers are placed on a waiting list before they can receive services.

What are the programs that are available to adults with physical disabilities in SW PA?

- **Attendant Care Waiver** – for individuals aged 18-59 with physical disabilities lasting 12 months or more, who are mentally alert and able to direct their own care.
- **Aging (PDA) Waiver** – for individuals age 60 and over who require intermediate or skilled care but prefer to remain in the community.
- **LIFE Program** – for individuals age 55 and older in Allegheny, Beaver, Butler and Westmoreland Counties, who require intermediate or skilled care but want to remain in the community. Most services are provided at an adult day care facility or senior center.
- **Michael Dallas Waiver** – for individuals of any age who depend on technology to sustain life.
- **COMMCARE Waiver** – for individuals age 21 and over who have been diagnosed with a traumatic brain injury and who are not ventilator dependent.
- **OBRA Waiver** – for those who are 18 and older with severe developmental disabilities that manifested before age 22 and likely to continue indefinitely. The individual cannot have mental retardation or a mental health disorder as a primary diagnosis.
- **Independence Waiver** – for individuals who are 18 and over with a physical disability likely to continue indefinitely. The individual cannot have mental retardation or a mental health disorder as a primary diagnosis and cannot be ventilator dependent.

The other Waiver programs for adults in SW PA are: Autism Waiver, AIDS Waiver, Person/Family Directed Support Service Waiver, and Consolidated Waiver. Please see www.dpw.state.pa.us or contact the OLTL Helpline for more information.

The Pennsylvania Health Law Project provides free legal assistance to consumers wanting to access home and community-based services through HCBS Waivers and other state-funded programs. If you need further information or assistance in applying for or getting services, please call us on our toll-free HELPLINE at 1-800-274-3258.