

Waiting List Changes

Questions Received at Waiting List Wednesday Presentation and FAQs

What waiting list is changing?

Ohio's DD waiver waiting list for Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) has changed. This waiting list includes Level One, Individual Options (IO), or Self-Empowered Life Funding (SELF) waivers administered by the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD).

Why has the waiting list changed?

Simply put, the old waiting list operation did not work. The process needed altered for many reasons, but most importantly, to identify those who have a current (within twelve months) unmet need and attempt to pair them with resources or alternative services as available. People with developmental disabilities and their families have repeatedly stated that the old DD waiver waiting list was overly complex and in need of simplification. The old waiting list confused people with disabilities and their families, misled advocates, and hindered efforts by policymakers to direct resources to where they are needed most.

Why is it better?

The new waiting list process individually identifies those who have a current need for waiver services through the uniform statewide use of the Waiting List Assessment Tool. The same tool assesses a person's needs across county lines to ensure consistency throughout the state and to clarify the waiver enrollment process.

Does the new rule ensure people will now receive a waiver?

No. The new rule only changes the operation of the DD waiver waiting list. By doing so, the DD waiver waiting list is a more efficient, transparent, and effective process for identifying the immediate or current needs of a person. These needs may be met through a variety of resources that may or may not include a waiver.

If a waiver is not available, do people now have to accept placement in an intermediate care facility before being placed on the waiting list?

No. Nothing in the new rule compels a person to accept placement in an intermediate care facility if they choose to receive their services in a home and community-based setting.

Will people get IO Waivers faster?

No. However, their local county board will assess their needs and connect them to resources in the county to meet the person's needs, if available. If available resources in

the county cannot meet the person's needs, the county board will add the person's name to the new DD waiver waiting list and will identify the waiver that addresses the unmet need.

If someone currently has a waiver, could this process take it away?

No. There is nothing in the new rule that would allow a waiver to be taken away based on the results of the Waiting List Assessment Tool.

What happens if someone has an emergency?

If at any time, a person is in an emergency situation, they may contact their local county board. The county board is required to address the needs of people who present an emergency situation. The services offered to mitigate the risk may or may not be a waiver. The new DD waiver waiting list will identify these situations as people having an immediate need.

What happens if someone has an unmet need for services?

If a person has an immediate or a current unmet need for a service in the next twelve months, they should contact the local county board where they live and request the uniform statewide Waiting List Assessment Tool be completed.

What if a person's needs change and they need something else in the future?

The new DD waiver waiting list gives people the option to ask for help when they need it and requires county boards to follow up with people on the new waiting list regularly. If their needs change at any time, the person or their guardian may contact their local county board and request the statewide Waiting List Assessment Tool be re-administered.

When will people on the transitional waiting list be assessed?

Many county boards will administer the Waiting List Assessment Tool to each person who is receiving service and support administration on the transitional list during their next scheduled ISP review. County boards will administer the Waiting List Assessment Tool to each person residing in their county whose name is included on the transitional list by December 31, 2020.

A person is already on the transitional waiting list. How will the new process affect their place in line?

Every person on the transitional waiting list for a DD waiver will receive a statewide assessment via the Waiting List Assessment Tool. This assessment will determine if they have a current unmet need that qualifies them to be placed on the DD waiver waiting list. Until the person is assessed, their placement on the old waiting list will not change.

How long will the assessment take?

The Waiting List Assessment Tool will be administered as a conversation with the person or their guardian in order to best understand and address their needs. While each conversation will be different, it is expected that the assessment will take at least one hour to complete.

What if the person disagrees with their assessment?

Due process will be available to a person who disagrees with the results of the Waiting List Assessment Tool. Due process shall be provided in accordance with section 5160.31 of the Revised Code and Chapters 5101:6-1 to 5101:6-9 of the Administrative Code.

What does immediate need mean? How will a person know if they have one?

An Immediate need means a person is in a situation that creates a risk of substantial harm to themselves, their caregiver, or another person if action is not taken within 30 calendar days to mitigate the risk. If at any time, a person or their guardian thinks that they have an immediate need, they may contact their local county board and request an assessment using the Waiting List Assessment Tool. The county board is required to address the needs of people who present an emergency situation. The services offered to mitigate the risk may or may not be a waiver.

What does current need mean? How will a person know if they have one?

A current need means a person has a qualified unmet need within twelve months, as determined by their county board based upon the results of the Waiting List Assessment Tool. Once it is determined that they have a current, unmet need and the county board can provide them with alternative resources to meet the need, the person will not need to be placed on the DD waiver waiting because their needs have been met. If it is determined that they have a current, unmet need and no community-based alternative services are available to meet that need, the person will be placed on the waiting list for a home and community based services waiver.

If a person is assessed to have a current, unmet need within the next twelve months and community-based alternative resources can meet that need, does that guarantee they will be offered a waiver within the next twelve months?

No. Because community-based alternative resources can meet their need, they do not need access to waiver funding and will not be placed on the waiver waiting list.

If a person is assessed to have a current, unmet need within the next twelve months and is placed on the DD waiver waiting list, does that guarantee they will be offered a waiver within the next twelve months?

No. However, the county board will continue to work with them to address their needs using alternative resources, as available, and will maintain contact with them to plan for possible enrollment.

Can a person be on the waiting list in multiple counties?

No. The new rule eliminates this concept, as there is one waiting across the state. The local county board where the person lives will be responsible for managing their place on this list.

What happens when a person on the DD waiver waiting list moves from one county to another?

The person, or their guardian, will notify the receiving county board of their move and the receiving county board will review the person’s Waiting List Assessment Tool within ninety days to determine if the person has a current need that cannot be met by alternative community-based resources in the receiving county. If the person continues to meet the qualifications for a current need, the receiving county board will update the person’s county of residence without changing the status date assigned by the previous county board.

The old waiting list was subjective and constantly changing. Will the new process address this issue?

Yes. In the old system, the placement on the waiting list and the order of enrollment was continually changing due to multiple factors (relocations, status category changes, county priorities, etc.). The new waiting list operation creates a more efficient, objective, and transparent queue based on need.

How will the waiver order of enrollment be determined using the new Waiting List?

People selected for county board-funded DD waivers will be enrolled in this order (the earliest of either the status date or date of request from the old waiting list shall take precedence in instances where two people meet the same enrollment status):

1. People with an immediate need who require waiver funding to address the immediate need.
2. People who have met multiple criteria for current need for twelve or more consecutive months and were not offered enrollment in a DD waiver in the prior calendar year.
3. People who have met multiple criteria for current need for less than twelve consecutive months.
4. People who meet a single criterion for current need.

Where will the funds from the Levy go since we won’t be allocating waivers during the transition period?

It’s important to remember that we will continue to allocate waivers in emergency situations, as we always have. It’s also important to remember that when we enroll someone on a waiver, we’re making a lifetime commitment to pay the match on waiver services for that person. Although we won’t be allocating new, non-emergency waivers during the transition period, there are nearly 3,000 people currently enrolled on waivers

in Hamilton County. Levy funds are used to pay the waiver match on all of these existing waivers, as well as any new emergency waivers. Levy funds are also used to pay the required room and board match for local residential facilities and to pay for locally funded services.

Will you consider the amount of money saved during the waiting list transition period when developing future budgets? How is the money being used in the meantime?

There are no savings during the transition period. It's important to remember that we will continue to allocate waivers in emergency situations, as we always have. It's also important to remember that when we enroll someone on a waiver, we're making a lifetime commitment to pay the match on waiver services for that person. Although we won't be allocating new, non-emergency waivers during the transition period, there are nearly 3,000 people currently enrolled on waivers in Hamilton County. Levy funds are used to pay the waiver match on all of these existing waivers, as well as any new emergency waivers. Levy funds are also used to pay the required room and board match for local residential facilities and to pay for locally funded services.

Because the old waiting list was confusing and did not accurately reflecting existing needs, it was impossible to develop a budget to meet all needs. Once all of the assessments have been completed and analyzed, we should finally have the data necessary to develop a budget that would meet all of the current needs in Hamilton County.

None of these needs can be met without funding. Where is the funding coming from and are we asking for an increase during the next levy?

Our goal is to determine exactly how much additional funding will be needed to continue to meet immediate (emergency) needs as well as "current needs" identified in the assessments. Because the old waiting list was confusing and did not accurately reflecting existing needs, it was impossible to develop a budget to meet all needs. Once all of the assessments have been completed and analyzed, we should finally have the data necessary to develop a budget that would meet all of the current needs in Hamilton County.

Why are children being transitioned to another team (adult team)? Why can't they keep their same SSA?

SSAs must know and understand so much information that we've found it beneficial for SSAs to specialize in either adult services or children's services. This allows SSAs to immerse themselves and fully learn a specific system in order to provide the highest quality services to people in each group.

Why do I have to have 2 different SSAs for people who live in the same house?

This generally does not happen, but occasionally there is a reason to have this arrangement. If you have concerns, please contact SSA Manager Matt Goodrich (Matt.Goodrich@hamiltondds.org).

Are there any restrictions or income requirements to receive a waiver?

A person must be Medicaid eligible to be enrolled on a waiver. Income guidelines for those enrolled on a Home and Community Based Waiver are different from those for general Medicaid. You can learn more about Medicaid eligibility guidelines from the Ohio Department of Medicaid [here](#).

What is a MY Plan? And who initiates it?

Every person who receives Service and Support Administration (SSA) services has an Individualized Service Plan (ISP) as required by the state SSA rule. In Hamilton County, this plan is called the “My Plan,” and it is initiated by the SSA.

My brother’s span is coming up in November and no one has contacted me about a My Plan. They only meet my brother at Goodwill and never invite me to the meetings. I am very involved and my brother wants me to be there. I cannot share information about his true decline in functioning, he is unable to.

Each person has the right to invite anyone she or he chooses to the My Plan meeting. If your brother hasn’t asked to have you invited and the SSA is not clear how involved you are in your brother’s life, the SSA may not know to invite you. The SSA typically plans for a span 90 days prior to the span start, but there are exceptions. Please reach out to the SSA to get the My Plan meeting started. Feel free to reach out to the SSA directly and ask to be included. If you experience any difficulties, please contact the SSA Manager (Matt Goodrich – Matt.Goodrich@hamiltondds.org).

Where can I find the definition of current and immediate needs for waiver services?

The definition of current and immediate needs can be found in the Ohio Administrative Code under the definitions section of [Rule 5123-9-04 Home and community-based services waivers - waiting list](#).

If someone is emancipated can a parent or SSA attend the assessment?

All waiting list assessments will be conducted by one of our waiting list specialists. The SSA is typically not present, but if there is a special circumstance, the team can discuss whether this is necessary. If an emancipated person would like their parent to attend the assessment, that is permitted.

When someone is emancipated do they lose their services?

Emancipation does not result in loss of services from Hamilton County Developmental Disability Services. Emancipation is a separate process that is handled by Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services and the courts.

Does emancipation mean that you will automatically be an immediate need?

No, your specific situation will need to be assessed to determine if emancipation will result in you having a current or immediate need for waiver services.

Since there will no longer be separate Level 1, IO, and SELF waiting lists, how do you know what your number will be?

At the end of the transition period there will be one list of people who have been assessed to have needs by using the statewide assessment. The list will not include numbers but families can contact the county board to verify their placement on the waiting list. Families can also visit the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities Family Portal to access this information. Please call Intro and Eligibility at 513-559-6990 with questions.

Is the assessment meant to be objective?

Yes, the questions were designed to be objective and assess the individual's current circumstances and potential support needs.

Do you provide input as an assessor?

The role of the assessor is to gather information from the family about their current circumstances.

Is there a way to see the assessment?

A copy of the assessment can be found [here](#) by visiting dodd.ohio.gov.

Will this assessment remove people from the list?

If the assessment determines a person does not have a current need, her or she will be removed from the list, and due process will be issued.

Do the school districts in Cincinnati know about the waiting list changes and what Hamilton County DD Services is doing?

Hamilton County DD Services is currently coordinating with stakeholders and community partners to provide education about these changes.

What about the people who don't know about Hamilton County DD Services? How are you getting the word out?

Fix the List, a coalition dedicated to sharing information about these changes has been sharing information statewide via fixthelist.info and their social media outlets. Hamilton County also sent multiple correspondences to and hosted several trainings for families, providers, and agencies, about the rule change. In addition, we continuously promote Hamilton County DD Services at community events, on our website, and on social media to connect with people who don't yet know about our services.

A couple of years ago we were 300 on the list and then we became 1000. How is the new list more transparent so I know I am not skipped?

We know that this was a problem with the old list, and it is one of the reasons the state embarked on a two-year process to rewrite the waiting list rule. The list will not include numbers but families can contact the county board to verify their placement on the waiting list. Families can also visit the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities Family Portal to access this information. Waivers will be allocated to those assessed to have a “current” need in the order prescribed by rule.

If I have a waiver, after the assessment could I lose my waiver and services?

You will not lose your waiver. The assessment will be used to assure your current waiver is meeting your needs.

Who is doing the assessment?

Waiting list assessments will be completed by a dedicated waiting list assessor, employed by the Hamilton County DD Services.

How long will someone on the waiting list with a current need have to wait for a waiver?

Meeting the criteria to be placed on the waiting list does not guarantee enrollment on a waiver within a specific time frame.

As an outside agency is it better to tell people to contact Introduction and Eligibility to begin the process to be on the list? How do I provide information to families not on the waiting list?

Yes, families may call our Introduction and Eligibility team at (513) 559-6660. You may also direct families to www.fixthelist.info and www.hamiltondds.org/waitinglist for more information about these changes.

After the assessment, do I lose my SSA?

You will not lose your SSA as a result of these changes.

How often are people on the waiting list with current needs reassessed?

Assessments will be reviewed at least annually as a part of the My Plan process, or when a significant change occurs.

How detailed will you be with outside alternative resources? We wanted a waiver because we don't qualify for outside resources due to our income.

Our goal is to provide you with information about resources that you may qualify for specific to your assessed needs.

How long could someone wait before being assessed?

Assessments for those on the transition list with a SSA must be completed by 2019, and will occur on or around their next My Plan date. Assessments for those who do not have an SSA will be completed in the order of the original “date on” the list, by December 31, 2020.

If you don’t want to be assessed at your span time can you hold off and do it at another time?

No, per the Ohio Administrative Code, assessments must be completed on or around a person’s next span date.

Are assessments done on the same day as the My Plan?

No, a waiting list specialist will contact you to schedule your assessment at a time separate from your My Plan meeting.

If my assessment is done in 2018 and I am found not to have a current or immediate need, will I lose my original “date on?”

Yes, you will be removed from the waiting list if it is determined you do not have a “current” or “immediate” need. If you are assessed at a later time and determined to have a need, you will receive a new date.

What about older parents? We used to get a bump up for being 60 and older. Will that still happen?

Priority categories, including aging caregiver, are no longer a part of the new rule. The new rule looks at immediate and current need criteria, which is defined in the new rule. As part of the assessment, information is gathered about caregivers and their health conditions in order to determine a person’s needs.

If you are a primary caregiver and have a health condition. Is that considered?

Yes, please share this information with your waiting list assessor, and be prepared to provide supporting documentation of your health condition.

When my son graduates from school next year, what happens when his needs change after school? Will he still have to go on the waiting list?

If you believe your loved one is experiencing a significant change, please contact your SSA (if you have one) or our Introduction and Eligibility team at (513) 559-6990 to determine if a waiting list assessment is needed.

What if my son is found not to have a need and then something happens?

If your needs change, you can always contact your SSA (if you have one) or our Introduction and Eligibility team to determine if a waiting list assessment is needed.

If there is a change in status, who do I call to request another assessment?

You may contact your SSA or our Introduction and Eligibility team at (513) 559-6990.

Is every county doing this the same way?

Yes, every county in Ohio is using the same assessment tool, as required by state law, to determine if a person has an immediate/current need that requires placement on the waiting list.

What happens in 2 years if immediate needs are filled?

There are not a specific number of spots to be “filled.” We have always met immediate needs (which were formerly called Emergency Needs). Immediate needs are addressed on a continuous basis as they arise, and there is no plan to stop this process.

How do I get around a *super* emergency? If I drop dead today who will take care of my son?

We understand that some situations are unavoidable. We have always met needs in emergency situations in the past, and we plan to continue to do so in the future.

Who do I call for transition and to sign my child up for a waiver?

Please contact your local school district to begin having conversations about transition. Contact your SSA or our Introduction and Eligibility team to discuss your needs and determine if a waiting list assessment is may be needed for you at this time.

How do you address people without needs?

If a person is assessed to have no current or immediate needs he or she will be removed from the waiting list and provided with potential resources specific to that person, if applicable.

Is there one waiting list for the state and one for the county?

There is only one waiting list, which is stored in the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) system.

What happens when you move to another county?

According to the state waiting list rule, a person can only be on the waiting list in his or her county of residence. If you move, please notify your new county to determine if you need a new waiting list assessment.

Is the SSA involved in the assessment?

The SSA provides basic information to the waiting list assessor prior to the assessment, however SSAs will not be conducting the actual assessment.

Is there a list of resources to look at now?

We do not have an exhaustive list of resources to distribute. Your assessor will gather information about your specific circumstances and provide you with resources tailored to your needs. If you are looking for resources now, contact your SSA.

Is the assessment only for the IO or SELF waivers?

No, the assessment is for all three waivers, Level 1, IO, and SELF. Waiting list assessors gather information to comprehensively assess all of your needs. The type of waiver offered will depend on your specific assessed current or immediate need for waiver services.

Are there any resources on your internet site?

Yes, there are resources available on our website www.hamiltondds.org as well as our social media accounts on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. We continuously update these resources as we receive new information.

Will my SSA be notified about the results of the assessment?

Yes, the waiting list assessor will notify your SSA of the outcome. You do not need to notify him or her of your assessment results.

How will I know the outcome of my assessment?

You will receive a waiting list determination letter via mail, notifying you of the outcome of your assessment.

What if I do not agree with the outcome of my assessment?

Appeal rights are sent along with your waiting list assessment outcomes. If you do not agree with the outcome of your assessment, you have the right to due process.

We have a Level 1 waiver and our needs are not being met. After the assessment and the date 2020, Will we be placed on the current needs list for an IO after 2020?

If the results of the assessment determine that you have a higher level of need, your SSA will be in touch to discuss next steps.

Sometimes you don't know what you need or how to get what you need. How is that handled?

Assessors are trained to listen and ask questions in a way that will provide us with information to determine if you have a current or immediate need for waiver services. Please share all information, even if you do not feel it may be pertinent to the assessment.

Will all assessments be completed in person?

Ideally we would like to complete assessments in person, however we know this is not always possible. Assessments may occur in person or virtually, depending on the needs and availability of the individual or guardian.

You plan to refer us to community partners as a potential resource, what happens if they run out of money?

In the event that a community resource has run out of funding, we would attempt to connect you to another resource to address your specific need.