

FACT SHEET

New Options Waiver Program (NOW) and Comprehensive Supports Waiver Program (COMP)

Overview

The New Options Waiver (NOW) and the Comprehensive Supports Waiver Program (COMP) offer home-and community-based services for people with intellectual disabilities (ID) or developmental disabilities (DD). The Department of Community Health (DCH) administers Medicaid which delegates the day-to-day operation of the NOW/COMP Programs to the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD), Division of Developmental Disabilities. DCH maintains administration over the NOW/COMP Program and oversees DBHDD's performance of operational functions. The DBHDD Central Office performs statewide waiver operational and daily administrative functions. The six DBHDD regional offices perform NOW/COMP waiver functions at the regional level, including intake and evaluation, preauthorization of NOW/COMP waiver services, utilization management, crisis resolution, and quality management. Individuals access the NOW/COMP Program through the DBHDD regional offices. A diagnosis of developmental disability includes intellectual disability or other closely related conditions, such as cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism or neurological problems. These disabilities require a level of care provided in an intermediate-care facility (ICF) for people diagnosed with I/DD. There are more than 12,000 people with developmental disabilities who are served by the NOW/COMP programs in Georgia.

Purpose of the NOW Program

The NOW waiver program offers services and supports to individuals to enable them to remain living in their own or family home and participate or live independently in the community.



NOW/COMP Waiver Program Services

- Adult Occupational Therapy Services
- Adult Physical Therapy Services
- Adult Speech and Language Therapy Services
- Behavioral Supports Consultation Services
- Behavioral Supports Services
- Community Access Services
- Community Guide Services
- Community Living Support Services
- Community Residential Alternative Services (COMP only)
- Environmental Accessibility Adaptation Services
- Financial Support Services
- Individual Directed Goods and Services
- Natural Support Training Services
- Nursing Services
- Pre-vocational Services
- Respite Services
- Specialized Medical Equipment Services
- Specialized Medical Supplies Services
- Support Coordination Services
- Supported Employment Services
- Transportation Services
- Vehicle Adaptation Services

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NOW and COMP Waivers

Goals for participants in the NOW program, which serves individuals with less intensive needs than those in the COMP program, include:

- Avoiding the need for more intensive services.
- Increasing independence and quality of life of individuals with I/DD.
- Increasing the flexibility of service planning and delivery to meet exact individual needs.
- Providing the opportunity for all participants to elect to direct their services to the extent that they choose.
- Ensuring the health, safety and welfare of NOW participants.

The COMP waiver program, which serves individuals with more intensive needs, primarily provides residential care for individuals with I/DD. These individuals require comprehensive and intensive services and need out-of-home residential support and supervision or intensive levels of in-home services to remain in the community.

Purpose of the COMP Program

The purpose of the COMP Program is to offer comprehensive and extensive waiver services to enable individuals with urgent and intense needs to avoid institutional placement. The COMP Program provides the level of services needed by individuals transitioning from institutions to community living.

Goals for participants in the COMP program include:

- Avoiding the need for institutional placement.
- Increasing independence and quality of life of individuals with ID/DD who have intensive or comprehensive support needs.
- Facilitating the transition of institutionalized individuals to community living.
- Offering opportunities statewide for participant direction by waiver participants who have intensive or comprehensive support needs.
- Ensuring the health, safety and welfare of COMP program participants.

Eligibility for Both Programs

Individuals who meet the level of care that would be required in an intermediate-care facility for people with intellectual disabilities (ICF-ID) may be eligible for home- and community-based services as an alternative through Georgia's Medicaid NOW and COMP waiver programs.

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NOW and COMP Waivers

To qualify for these waiver programs and be offered the choice of community-based services instead of institutional care, the individual must first meet the criteria for Medicaid payment in an institution and certain other criteria.

Specific qualifications:

- Are categorically eligible Medicaid recipients; and
- Have a diagnosis of an intellectual disability and/or a closely related condition; and
- Are currently receiving the level of care provided in an ICF-ID that is reimbursable under the State Plan, and for whom home- and community-based services are determined to be an appropriate alternative; or,
- Are likely to require the level of care provided in an ICF-ID that would be reimbursable under the State Plan in the absence of home- and community-based services that are determined to be an appropriate alternative.

For More Information

Visit the DCH website at: www.dch.georgia.gov/aging-special-populations.