

## Planning with Young Persons Referred to Adult State Agencies

Without question, adolescence is a challenging developmental period. Individuals with persistent mental health problems and developing abilities may face additional obstacles during this phase of development. With some extra understanding and practical supports, they can thrive.

According to recent survey PsychCentral, 20% of American teenagers are affected by a psychiatric disorder to the extent that they have difficulty functioning <https://psychcentral.com/lib/teen-with-intellectual-disability-have-it-harder#5>. Some transitional age youth leaving DCF care have serious and persistent mental health challenges and/or developing abilities need additional supports as they continue into their adult life. DCF has a process in place to refer appropriate youth to either the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Service (DMHAS) or the Department of Developmental Services (DDS).

**DMHAS** has a Young Adult Services (YAS) Division created to help young adults' transition successfully from DCF to the adult mental health system and to achieve the necessary skills for adulthood. For consideration for YAS, the youth must be between the ages of 18-25 and have a history with DCF. A history of major mental health problem is required for these services.

DMHAS has a continuum of community based mental health agencies throughout Connecticut to utilize. A trauma informed client center approach is used to find the best services available. Services and programs include clinical services, residential services, education employment services, case management and perinatal support program

**Referral:** Referrals occur as close to the youth's 16<sup>th</sup> birthday as possible. The Regional Resource Group (RRG) is to be consulted for a referral to DMHAS or DDS. The RRG serve as liaisons to facilitate screening and referrals to these agencies to ensure a seamless transition of youth. All TAY have unique needs, strengths, and challenges. Youth and family voice in the process is essential.

Resource: <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DCF/Policy/BGGuides/21-6-PG-RRG.pdf>

DCF form 787 - DMHAS Young Adult Services (YAS) referral form is completed as part of the referral process for DCF seeking eligibility to YAS. It is a detailed form and to assist with completing it, there is a DCF form 788 DMHAS YAS referral checklist.

DMHAS webpage: <https://portal.ct.gov/dmhas> for much more information.

### DDS

In order to be eligible for DDS, the person must be:

- a resident of Connecticut

- have intellectual disability as defined by Connecticut state statute. The definition of intellectual disability is, a significant limitation is intellectual functioning and defects in adaptive behavior that originated in the developmental years before the age of 18 years of age.
- **Or** be diagnosed with Prader-Willi Syndrome (PWS) disorder that must be diagnosed by a physician.

People who have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder but don't have an intellectual disability may still be eligible for services from the Autism Spectrum Disorder Program.

Once determined eligible for DDS services, a DDS region will be assigned to you to help access services and supports. However, eligibility for services does not assure that the request for services can be met immediately, DDS services are provided on a priority basis and within available appropriations.

DDS services can include case management, family supports, community living services, regional centers, employment and day services, health and clinical services and transportation.

DDS webpage: <https://portal.ct.gov/dds> includes more information.

Please contact Interagency Unit for guidance or more information.