

Transition Planning: Guardianship/ Social Security SSI / Medicaid When and How to Apply? What is the Process?

Guardianship:

Every person in the State of Connecticut who is 18 years of age and older is considered to be an adult that is legally capable of directing his personal decisions. Some individuals with intellectual disabilities might be totally or partially impaired in making these decisions. Full/ plenary or limited guardianship can be appointed by the court, to assist others in decisions.

- The family needs to go to their town's Probate Court to file an application for guardianship.
 - (www.ctprobate.gov/)
- The family can file the request 180 days prior to the individual turning 18 years of age.
- Law requires that the court hearing be set within 45 days.
- The fee is \$225. Or you can request to have this fee waived based on your income.
- Once the request begins to be processed, the court will contact DDS to complete a guardianship assessment. DDS will then contact you to schedule the assessment.
- There are 5 areas that are assessed: residence, educational/vocational, release of records, emergency medical/dental and any other specific services necessary to develop or regain to the maximum extent possible the individual's capacity to meet essential requirements.
- A plenary or full guardian will be given all powers set forth in the above assessed areas. Limited guardian will be given only those powers deemed necessary by the Court
- The Court will appoint an attorney to meet with the individual and provide legal counsel during this process to protect their rights. If the individual cannot afford to pay for an attorney, one will be appointed without charge.
- DDS sends the completed assessment to the court. They do not need to be present at the hearing unless requested by the court.

At age 18, an individual should apply to the Social Security Administration (SSA) for SSI (Supplemental Security Income) and once the SSI has been approved, then apply to the Department of Social Services (DSS) for Medicaid. It is mandatory that your son/daughter be eligible for Adult Medicaid- Husky C, in order to be eligible for an assigned DDS Case Manager and consideration for any adult funded services, including those for employment, day or residential supports. Individuals on other types of Medicaid are not eligible. Any and all funding is subject to availability and is not an entitlement.

Social Security/ Supplemental Security Income (SSI): 1-800-772-1213

- Income-based eligibility program through the Federal Social Security Administration www.ssa.gov In order to be eligible for SSI, an individual must meet certain asset, income and disability status criteria. Please contact the Social Security Administration for more information.
- An SSI application can be made at any time. Usually, it is best to apply when the individual turns 18 years of age. This way the person is considered an adult and it is their income that will be considered versus the families. You can apply before the age of 18; however the parent's income is considered when SSI benefits are provided to a minor child.
- Applying for SSI first, makes the entitlement process go more smoothly. The SSI establishes your son's/daughter's disability and if found eligible, they will be found eligible for Title 19 if they meet the asset limit. **You will still need to apply for Medicaid Husky C eligibility.**

Some tips:

- Make an appointment for an intake meeting with the Social Security Administration. (In person is best)
- You can download the application and start working on it before your appointment. It can take several weeks before you are seen and **it can be a 3-6 month process.**
- Be sure to answer questions, as if your son/ daughter is filling out the information. (Example: When asked about "family income", you should be referring to your son/ daughter's income. After age 18, your family income should not be documented in the application.)
- Consult with a DDS Regional Helpline Case Manager if you need assistance.

Medicaid/ HUSKY C:

- Income-base eligibility health insurance program through the **Department of Social Services (DSS)**. www.ct.gov/dss
- **Important: You need to be enrolled in "HUSKY C" Medicaid, in order to be eligible to receive any DDS funding. When an individual turns 18, they are determined to be an adult and their eligibility for Title 19 is determined by their own assets and income. To be eligible, their assets cannot exceed \$1,600, unless they are working.**
- Students could still use parent's insurance as primary insurance.
- If found eligible for SSI, most individuals will be found eligible for Medicaid Husky C. You still need to apply and complete the paperwork. Be sure to answer questions, as if your son/ daughter is filling out the information on the form. After age 18, your family income should not be documented on the application.
- There are different ways to apply:
 - You can go to the website:
<https://www.connect.ct.gov/access/jsp/access/Home.jsp> and apply online.
 - Your Department of Social Services worker can give you the forms or you can go online to download Medicaid application (W-1E), click:
<http://www.ct.gov/dss/lib/dss/pdfs/applications/w-1e.pdf>. Once completed, you can mail the application to the DSS Connect Scanning Center, P.O. Box 1320, Manchester, CT 06045-1320 or drop it off at any DSS office.
 - In exceptional situations, DSS will grant an interview to process the application.

Some Tips

- A suggestion to ensure DSS counselor is working on the correct Medicaid Program for your son or daughter is to write on top of the application: **"HUSKY C"**
- You can check the status of the application by calling the DSS Client Information and Benefits Center at 1-855-626-6632.
- If your son / daughter is working in a competitive job with competitive wages, but needs to be on Husky C to be eligible for DDS waiver services, you can request to be on the DSS "S05 Program", which is MED-Connect. This will allow an individual who is employed to earn up to \$6,250 per month or up to \$75,000 per year and still maintain Medicaid health insurance.

Do you have questions regarding your benefits, work incentives and how work will allow you to have more money and become more independent? Contact your local DORS Benefits Specialist.

There is a specialist assigned to specific local BRS districts and offices. They can assist with:

- Specific information on the work incentives available to Social Security recipients
- Examples of how you can achieve a greater income through a combination of earnings and benefits, or earnings alone
- Review your benefits and services to help maximize your independence.
- Follow up services after you return to work.

To find out which benefits specialist can assist you locally. Please call the Connect to Work Central Office Toll Free Number: 1-800-773-4636.

It is strongly recommended that you make copies of all application paperwork and documentation for your records, for both SSI and Medicaid.

Important!

If you are eligible for DDS, DDS Case Managers can assist you with entitlements and the guardianship process. If you do not have a Case Manager assigned, you are assigned to the DDS Helpline in your Region. Case Managers assigned to the Helpline will assist you with your needs when you call the toll free number below.:

DDS North Region Helpline Location: East Hartford Office 1-877-437-4577

DDS South Region Helpline Location: New Haven Office 1-877-437-4567

DDS West Region Helpline Location: Cheshire Office 1-877-491-2720

If you are not yet eligible for DDS and need to apply, you can obtain an application online at the DDS website at: www.ct.gov/dds [Select "eligibility services"] or call our Statewide Eligibility Unit at 1-866-433-8192