Frequently Asked Questions: Texas Medicaid Waivers

**Q:** What are Medicaid Waivers?

**A:** Waivers are federally funded programs that allow states to provide long-term home and community-based services to people with disabilities or who have special health care needs.

**Q:** What Waiver Programs Does Texas Offer?

**A:** Waiver programs differ by state and are specifically designed to meet the needs of an individual. Texas offers seven different waiver programs. This includes:

1. **Community Living Assistance and Support Services (CLASS)**
   - Offers home and community supports to children and adults with similar conditions.

2. **Deaf Blind with Multiple Disabilities (DBMD)**
   - Offers services to children and adults who are deaf-blind or have a similar condition and who have another disability.

3. **Home and Community-Based Services (HCS)**
   - For children and adults with an intellectual disability (ID) or a similar condition who live with their families, independently, or in small group homes consisting of no more than 4 people.

4. **Medically Dependent Children Program (MDCP)**
   - Provides services to individuals who are medically fragile as an alternative to receiving services in a nursing facility. Individuals must be 20 years of age or younger.

5. **STAR+PLUS Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS)**
   - Offers services to adults over the age of 21 with the intent of keeping them within their community and not in a nursing home facility.

6. **Texas Home Living (TxHmL)**
   - Provides services to children and adults with an intellectual disability (ID) or a similar condition who live in their own home or their family’s home.

7. **Youth Empowerment Services (YES)**
• Offers services to children under the age of 19 who require psychiatric inpatient care or whose parents would turn to state custody for care.

**Q: What Services Can I Access with a Waiver?**

*A:* Each type of waiver can provide a range of services dependent on the needs of the individual. Services can/may include: nutritional counseling; case management; behavioral health services; day habilitation; supported living; community integration; personal care services; respite care; transportation; occupational therapy; physical therapy; and speech therapy. *This list is not exhaustive and individuals should speak with a specialist for further consultation of services.*

**Q: Why Are They Called Waivers?**

*A:* The term “waiver” refers to Medicaid requirements being “waived,” allowing individuals and families to access services without having to exhaust their income to do so.

**Q: How are Waivers Managed in Texas?**

*A:* All waivers are managed by the [Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC)](https://www.hhsc.texas.gov/) and the [Department of State Health Services (DSHS)](https://www.dshs.texas.gov/).

**Q: How Do I Access a Waiver for Myself or My Child?**

*A:* Waiver recipients must be added to the specific waiver “interest list”. Once added, they will wait until an available waiver slot is open before being considered for eligibility.

- Individuals and families seeking CLASS, DBMD, and MDCP waivers should contact 1-877-438-5658 to learn more about the desired waiver and to be added to the interest list.

- Individuals and families seeking YES waiver should contact your Local Mental Health Authority. Visit the DSHS website to locate in your area.

- Individuals and families seeking HCS and TxHmL waivers should contact the [Local Intellectual and Developmental Disability Authority (LIDDA)](https://apps.hhs.texas.gov/contact/search.cfm/).

**Q: Do I Have to Choose One Waiver?**

*A:* No. Individuals can be added to as many waiver interest lists as possible and are encouraged to do so as soon as there is a diagnosed disability or special health care need. Individuals can also be added to interest lists without a diagnosis if there is reason to believe they will require special health care needs or have a long-term disability.

**TIPS:**

- Ask for email confirmation or mailed letters once added to an interest list.
• Keep your address and phone number updated to ensure your status remains active on interest lists.

• Call to update or confirm your contact information at least once per year.

**Q: What Happens When My Child Moves to the “Top” of the Interest List?**

**A:** A service coordinator, case manager, or nurse will contact you to schedule a home visit and discuss eligibility and next steps.

**Q: What are the Eligibility Requirements in Texas?**

**A:** All individuals must meet the following criteria:

a. Must be a current resident in the state of Texas

b. Must have a Social Security Number (SSN) or apply for one.

c. Must be a citizen of the United States or qualify for alien status.

*Financial Eligibility:* This is determined by the applicant’s household income in comparison to the federal poverty level (FPL).

**Q: Where Can I Gather Additional Information about Texas Medicaid Waivers?**

**A:** Additional resources and information can be found here:

- **Comprehensive chart that compares each waiver program:** [https://www.hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/doing-business-with-hhs/providers/resources/ltss-waivers.pdf](https://www.hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/doing-business-with-hhs/providers/resources/ltss-waivers.pdf)

- **Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS):** [https://www.dshs.texas.gov/](https://www.dshs.texas.gov/)

- **Texas Health and Human Services (HHS):** [https://www.hhs.texas.gov/](https://www.hhs.texas.gov/) or call 1-855-937-2372 to speak with a trained professional.

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