

OPWDD's Front Door

Opening the door to a richer, fuller life - that is the goal of the New York State Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) Front Door, a person-centered approach to planning supports for people with developmental disabilities.

The Front Door process will guide you through the steps involved in finding out if you are eligible for services with the OPWDD, identify your needs, and help you work on a plan for getting those services. The Front Door process seeks to provide culturally competent services that are inclusive of language, ability and traditional values to support individuals and family members.

Ask our Intake and Outreach Coordinator, Ted Seeley, for a copy of OPWDD's Front Door Guide or call 1-800-487-6310 to request one directly.

Chart your own course—the first step is going through OPWDD's Front Door!

- Family Support Supports -

Medicaid Service Coordinators work for you to help make choices and find supports. Allegany Arc understands that it can be difficult navigating a complex system of supports and services for people with developmental disabilities. A service coordinator can help you and your family understand all of the available supports and guide you through the decision making process.

Family Education and Training assists with the decision making capacity of the family unit, provides orientation regarding the nature and impact of developmental disabilities upon the individual and his or her family and teaches them about service alternatives. Provided only to families with children under the age of 18.

The **Family Reimbursement Program** is a Family Support Service provided by Allegany Arc. Many families who have a family member with a developmental disability living at home have special expenses that the typical family does not have because of the developmental disability. This program is designed to assist the family caring for the family member with the developmental disability with increased expenses, and thereby enhance family stability and preserve family unity.

Family Respite is temporary relief designed for primary caregivers of an individual with a developmental disability. Family Respite can range from a few hours of care provided on a one-time basis to overnight or extended care sessions. Family Respite can be utilized on a regular or irregular basis and can be provided by family members, friends, skilled care providers or professionals.



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- Certified Residences -

The **Family Care** program provides community-based residential housing in certified private homes for individuals with developmental disabilities. By providing the support, guidance and companionship of a family, the Family Care program fosters a caring and stable home environment for children, adolescents and adults. Family Care uses certified private homes to provide residential services to individuals of all ages who are developmentally disabled and unable to live independently in the community.

Individualized Residential Alternatives (IRAs) provide room, board and individualized service options. IRAs are designed to provide a home-like atmosphere where individuals with developmental disabilities can acquire the skills necessary to live as independently as possible.

Supportive Apartments provide individuals who are able to live more independently with the responsibility of maintaining an apartment while receiving periodic support from staff.

- Assistive Technology -

Adaptive Devices are aids, controls, appliances or supplies (of either a communication or adaptive type) which are necessary to enable a person to increase or maintain his or her ability to live at home and in the community with independence and safety (i.e. adaptive aids and devices, augmentative communication aids and devices, vehicle modifications, etc.).

Environmental Modifications (E-Mods) are physical adaptations to the home that can increase or maintain an individual's ability to live at home with independence. Environmental modifications include ramps, lifts, hand rails, bathroom modifications, etc. In addition to these physical types of modifications to the home, E-Mods can include modifications that address the individual's sensory deficits, such as Braille identifications systems, strobe light, smoke detectors, alarm devices and modifications that promote a safer environment for individuals with challenging behaviors.

- Community Supports -

Community Habilitation & Supplemental Group Day Habilitation (SGDH) helps individuals with developmental disabilities that live independently, or at home with family, to learn and experience community-based activities. Learning is often focused on the areas of social skill building, developing skills for daily and community living, behavior stabilization and health education. Community Habilitation services are available to individuals who do not reside in a residence which is certified or operated by OPWDD.

Self-Directed Supports and Services empowers you and your family to determine the supports and services that best fit your needs. Individuals who self-direct their services are afforded a great amount of flexibility, and pay for those services with funds from a Personal Resource Account (PRA). The PRA is a resource level determined by the individual's assessed needs, and the dollar amount varies for each person. You can self-direct some or all of your services.

If you self-direct your services, you will be assisted by a group of people who advocate for your best interests and support your success, called a circle of support. Family members, staff, friends and others can participate in the circle of support, along with your service coordinator. Circles of support can be as small as a few people, or they can be large. You are at the "center" of the circle, and members communicate on an ongoing basis to discover, discuss, and plan the best way to meet your needs and fulfill your personal goals.

Individual Supports and Services (ISS) assists adults with developmental disabilities to live independently by providing housing subsidy funds to assist with rent and utilities in community-based apartments. ISS is only available to individuals living independently.

Age-appropriate **Recreation Programs** for children and adults are offered by Allegany Arc to build communication skills, improve behavior and improve social competence among participants; enhancing participants' overall well being and quality of life.

Individualized Community Services (ICS) is an individualized skill-building program tailored to provide assistance, training and supervision to individuals in the environment of their choice. Participants are given encouragement, oversight and guidance to help regain and maintain a variety of skills (i.e. household management, self-care, shopping, transportation and socialization).

Respite (day and weekend) is available both out-of-home and in-home, ranging from a period of a few hours to a few days, to adults and children with developmental disabilities who reside at home with their families.

- Employment & Day Supports -

Day Habilitation services can assist individuals to acquire, retain or improve their self-help, socialization and adaptive skills, including communication and activities of daily living. Activities are provided at either a site-based location or directly in the community (which is referred to as day habilitation without walls).

Prevocational Services are services that provide learning and work experiences, including volunteer work, where the individual can develop general, non-job-task-specific strengths and skills that contribute to employability in paid employment in integrated community settings.

Pathway to Employment is a person-centered employment planning and support service that provides assistance for individuals to obtain, maintain or advance in competitive employment or self-employment. The Pathway to Employment service offers an individualized planning process that helps individuals identify a career or vocational direction, and then provides instruction and training in job readiness skills and develops a plan for achieving competitive, integrated employment at or above the New York State minimum wage.

The Employment Training Program (ETP) offers individuals an opportunity to work in a paid internship that will lead to permanent employment in a community business. ETP participants have enhanced job coaching and attend job readiness classes that cover topics like conflict resolution and how to dress for work.

Supported Employment (SEMP) provides support to assist individuals to obtain and maintain paid competitive jobs in the community. Individuals with developmental disabilities will typically transition to SEMP after they have received intensive supported employment services funded by the Adult Career and Continuing Education Services Vocational Rehabilitation Office (ACCES-VR), and require extended job coaching to successfully maintain their employment.

- Additional Supports -

Allegany County Special Olympics offers year-round sports training and competition in different sports (basketball, bocce, softball and bowling) for individuals, age eight and up, with developmental disabilities in Allegany County. Green Machine athletes compete in local, regional and state competitions while building skills, making friends and having fun. Special Olympics is an additional service offered by Allegany Arc - not waiver/program supported. Special Olympic coaches and volunteers are not paid by Allegany Arc. Participating athletes must have their own transportation to and from practices. Transportation is provided for competitions.

