

Post-secondary Services for Students with Mental Retardation

FAQ provided by Dennis Brown

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The following FAQ may help to understand the current situation for students with mental retardation preparing to transition from school into post-secondary services.

Are post-secondary services mandated by law?

Post-secondary services provided or purchased by the CSB are NOT mandated by federal, State or local law. They are not included in IDEA legislation. Mandated special education services end when a student is 22 years old. The only requirement of post-secondary partners such as the CSB is to participate in transition planning but not to fund any required post-secondary services.

Can you help me understand the roles of DRS and CSB for day services?

DRS: the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services, a State agency

CSB: the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board, a local agency

A simple explanation is that DRS provides short term intervention specifically focused on employment goals for eligible consumers. The CSB meanwhile provides broader-based long term supports which vary for each individual based on need and also can vary over time for a specific individual based on the changing needs of each person. The CSB also participates in Medicaid funded programs and services.

How do I know if my family member is eligible for CSB services?

Very simply, the individual must have an IQ of 70 or below with significant limitations in 2 functional areas and the onset of the diagnosis of mental retardation must be prior to age 18. Case management provides service coordination of all services such as day services, residential services and transportation services.

Do the CSB and DRS directly provide employment or day support services?

Both DRS and CSB work extensively with over a dozen private provider agencies and purchase services from those agencies through a fee for service arrangement. The only public program in Fairfax is the Cooperative Employment Program (CEP) which is actually directed operated by both DRS and the CSB where staff persons are either DRS or CSB employees. Most consumers (about 1,100) work for private providers which are under contract with the CSB to provide those services. In addition, these private providers may also be under contract with DRS or with Medicaid. Even consumers who work at local businesses may be supported by these private providers who in turn sell these support services to both DRS and the CSB.

How are these purchased services funded?

The CSB has a budget approved by Fairfax County. This budget includes revenues from the following sources: public funding from Fairfax County, Fairfax City, Falls Church City, Commonwealth of Virginia as well as Medicaid reimbursement from the Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS). For many years the CSB had requested additional funding from Fairfax County each year to serve new graduates. In recent years, the Fairfax Board of Supervisors has not approved additional funding and has directed the CSB to locate alternative funding sources. Medicaid funding provides the bulk of alternative funding. The CSB recently reviewed the possibility of charging user fees to individuals served but deferred that decision based on citizen input. In addition to CSB funding, private providers accept funding from DRS, Medicaid and private payment from individuals and families served.

What about federal benefits such as SSI, SSDI or Medicaid?

These benefits may be available but the CSB does NOT determine eligibility.

- **Social Security benefits** can be explored through the Social Security office. Apply for SSI through the Social Security Administration at www.ssa.gov or call 1-800-772-1213.
- **Medicaid insurance** can be explored through the local Department of Social Services office. Apply for Medicaid at the Fairfax County Department of Family Services at 703-324-7500. The Medicaid Waiver is a specific program for people with significant disabilities and this program can be explored through the CSB office.

Generally, these services are available to recipients age 18 and older and **the CSB strongly recommends that ALL students apply for these benefits at age 18**. The exploration of these benefits can also be addressed through school staff and the ITP.

Are all services available to non citizens?

Students who intend to be employed after graduation must have a Social Security number or other required legal documentation.

Will there be funding in June 2007 for graduates?

YES. While the CSB has not received any additional funds from Fairfax County for the purchase of services for students leaving school for the past two years, the CSB has been able to identify funding to support the graduates. This identification of funding was made possible through additional State funding support as additional Medicaid Waiver slots have been authorized effective July 1, 2007. In the past two years, the CSB has been able to fund graduates through the receipt of additional Medicaid revenues which enabled the CSB to redistribute existing funding to new graduates.

There is NO funding available for transportation. The CSB will attempt to find transportation for the neediest students but families should be prepared to provide transportation to their student's day program.

What are my transportation options if FASTRAN is not available?

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a Federal law which offers protection to people with disabilities. One of the components is transportation. MetroAccess is the local paratransit service designed to comply with the ADA. To enroll in MetroAccess, apply online at www.wmata.com (look under accessibility) or call 301-562-5360.

Will there be funding in future years for upcoming graduates?

At this time it is unlikely that there will be additional funds provided from Fairfax County to the CSB for the purchase of services for students leaving school in June 2008 or future years. Advocates continue to advocate for additional Medicaid revenues to reduce the burden on local funds. The ARC can be contacted at 703-532-3214 for additional information on advocacy.

What are the "self directed services I have heard about?"

Quite simply, this means that the family can access funding to purchase highly individualized services rather than participation in a traditional day support or employment program. For additional information on self directed services, please contact Joel Friedman at the CSB. He can be reached at Joel.Friedman@Fairfaxcounty.gov or at 703-324-4433.

I still may have questions. Who can help me?

CSB staff are available to help you with your questions.

- Contact Dennis Brown at Dennis.Brown2@Fairfaxcounty.gov or at 703-324-4413 or
- Shelia Peters-Lee at Shelia.Peters-Lee@Fairfaxcounty.gov or 703-324-4435 with any specific questions.

Dennis can help with budget and funding questions while Shelia can help with eligibility and consumer-specific clinical questions.