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Applicability: DDSN Eligibility Division, Intake Providers

INTRODUCTION

The following Departmental Directive sets forth the policy, process and procedures used in the determination of eligibility for services and supports through the South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (DDSN).

Criteria designated within South Carolina Code of Laws indicate seven (7) different categories of eligibility under the authority of DDSN:

Intellectual Disability (n/k/a, Intellectual Developmental Disorder) (ID);
Related to Intellectual Disability (RD);
High Risk Infant;
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD);
Head Injury (i.e., Traumatic Brain Injury); (TBI); Spinal Cord Injury (SCI); and
Similar Disability (SD).

Some individuals may meet DDSN eligibility criteria under more than one (1) category. In such situations, DDSN will consider which category will offer the most appropriate resources and service models to address the needs of the particular person. Individuals with primarily medical conditions such as Diabetes, Hypertension, Multiple Sclerosis, Parkinson's Disease, Cancer, etc., will not necessarily meet DDSN eligibility criteria under any category. To be determined eligible, the criteria described herein must be met.

DDSN services are available to those who meet the specific criteria described herein and meet residency requirements in at least one of the following categories:

1. The applicant or his spouse, parent, with or without legal custody, or legal guardian is domiciled in South Carolina.
2. The applicant or his/her spouse, parent, with or without legal custody, or legal guardian lives outside South Carolina, but retains legal residency in this State and demonstrates to DDSN's satisfaction his/her intent to return to South Carolina.
3. The applicant or his spouse or parent, with or without legal custody, or legal guardian is a legal resident of a state which is an active member of the Interstate Compact on Mental Health and qualifies for services under it.

Eligibility for DDSN services is determined in four (4) phases. Those phases are:

1. Screening;
2. Intake;
3. Determination of eligibility, and
4. Notification of Decision and Right to Appeal.

I. SCREENING

Screening is used to ensure that those interested in DDSN services are likely to qualify under one of the eligibility categories established by the South Carolina Code of Laws. During screening, questions are asked of the applicant or someone who knows the applicant well in order to identify those who are likely eligible from those with other non-qualifying disabilities. If an individual's needs may be met by another entity, he/she will be referred elsewhere.

The applicant, his/her legal guardian or someone familiar with the applicant must call DDSN's call center at 1-800-289-7012 to answer questions about the applicant.

If determined by the responses to the questions that the applicant is not likely to be eligible for services (i.e., they are screened out), the applicant/legal guardian will be informed of other community resources or providers from whom assistance may be sought.

If determined by the responses to the questions to likely be eligible for services (i.e., screened in) in the categories of Intellectual Disability (ID), Related Disability (RD), High-Risk Infant/At Risk Child, Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) or Similar Disability (SD), the screener will refer the applicant to the provider of their choosing for Intake.

If determined by the responses to the questions to likely be eligible for services (i.e., screened in) in the category of Autism Spectrum Disorder, the screener will refer the applicant to the DDSN Autism Division for Determination of Eligibility.

II. INTAKE

Intake is defined as the collection and submission of an accurate and complete set of documents in order for DDSN to determine if the applicant is eligible for DDSN services. The document set includes a properly executed "Permission to Evaluate" form; the current, appropriate psychological, medical, social, and/or educational records/reports required in order for DDSN eligibility to be determined.

For children who have a diagnosis, as recognized by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C program (BabyNet) Established Risk Condition List, confirmed by a medical professional and are actively receiving Early Intervention services through Baby Net, Intake will be conducted in one of the two following ways:

1. For a child who is actively receiving Early Intervention services through BabyNet from a DDSN-qualified provider, the DDSN-qualified Early Intervention provider may begin Intake for the child when the child's legal guardian so requests. "Actively receiving" is defined as having received Early Intervention services within six (6) months prior to the submission of the set of Intake documents. Intake ends when the accurate and complete set of documents is submitted to DDSN for Determination of Eligibility.
2. For a child who is actively receiving Early Intervention services through BabyNet, but not from a DDSN-qualified provider, Intake begins when the child is determined to likely be eligible for services (i.e., screened in) under the ID or RD category and the child's legal guardian either:
 - a) Chooses to personally collect and submit the complete set of documents needed to determine eligibility to DDSN; or
 - b) Chooses a DDSN-qualified Intake provider to collect and submit the complete set of documents to DDSN on behalf of the applicant.

Intake ends when the complete set of documents is submitted to DDSN.

When a child who is actively receiving Early Intervention services through BabyNet, but not from a provider that is not affiliated with DDSN, has been determined to likely be eligible for services (i.e., screened in) under the ASD category, Intake is not required.

For applicants determined to likely be eligible for services (i.e., screened in) under the categories of ID or RD, TBI, SCI or both or SD, Intake begins when the applicant/legal guardian either:

1. Chooses to personally collect and submit the complete set of documents needed to determine eligibility to DDSN; or
2. Chooses a DDSN-qualified Intake provider to collect and submit the complete set of documents to DDSN on behalf of the applicant.

Intake ends when the accurate and complete set of documents is submitted to DDSN for Determination of Eligibility.

For applicants determined to likely be eligible for services (i.e., screened in) under the category of ASD, Intake is not required.

III. DETERMINATION OF DDSN ELIGIBILITY

In accordance with S.C. Code Ann. § 44-20-390 - 430 (2018), no individual believed to have Intellectual Disability, a Related Disability, Head Injury, Spinal Cord Injury, Similar Disability or Autism Spectrum Disorder may be admitted to the services of DDSN until he/she has been

determined eligible by DDSN on the basis of acceptable data to have Intellectual Disability, a Related Disability, Head Injury, Spinal cord Injury, Similar Disability or Autism Spectrum Disorder unless he/she is an infant at risk of a developmental disability and in need of DDSN services. The Determination of Eligibility for DDSN services is made by DDSN following the procedures outlined in S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 88-505-520 (2022).

IV. NOTICE OF DECISIONS AND RIGHT TO APPEAL

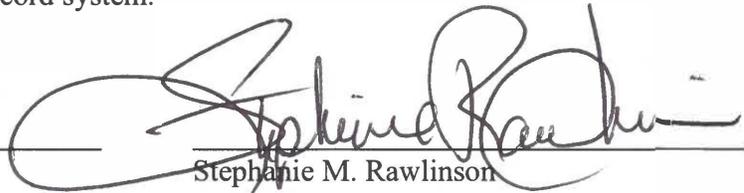
Following the Determination of Eligibility by DDSN, written notice of the results of the Determination will be provided to the applicant/legal guardian. If the applicant is determined to not be eligible for DDSN services, the notice will outline the basic reasons why the applicant did not meet eligibility criteria. Upon request of the applicant/legal guardian, a DDSN Eligibility Division staff member will read or explain the eligibility decision and appeal process to the applicant/legal guardian.

The notice of the decision will also include information on the applicant's right to appeal the eligibility determination and the process for doing so in accordance with S.C. Code Ann. Regs 88-705-715. As established by the SC Code of Laws, the State Director of DDSN or his/her designee has the final authority over applicant eligibility.

Eligibility information for applicants and those determined eligible is available to providers through DDSN's electronic health record system.



Barry D. Malphrus
Vice Chairman



Stephanie M. Rawlinson
Chairman

To access the following attachments, please see the agency website page "Current Directives" at: <https://ddsn.sc.gov/providers/ddsn-directives-standards-and-manuals/current-directives>

Attachment: DDSN Intake and Eligibility Process Flow Chart