

A guide to DDRC’s Family Support Services Program (FSSP) for use by families, staff, and community partners. Updated August 2022.

Family Support Services Program (FSSP)

The Family Support Services Program (FSSP) provides support for families who have children with developmental disabilities or delays with costs that are beyond those normally experienced by other families. The primary purpose of the FSSP is to support children and adults remaining within their own nurturing family setting and prevent out-of-home placements. FSSP provides funds to address disability related needs, as well as information, support, and case management services. **State rules governing the administration of the FSSP: Code of Colorado Regulations, Medical Services Board, 10 CCR 2505-10.8.600, Section 8.613.**

Overview of DDRC’s Family Support Services Program

DDRC administers the Family Support Services Program (FSSP) through the Children and Family Services Department. The Children and Family Services Director, Susan Johnson, is the primary contact for the overall implementation and coordination of the program and the staff liaison to the DDRC Family Support Council. DDRC’s service area is Jefferson, Clear Creek, Gilpin, and Summit Counties.

The DDRC FSSP program includes:

- FSSP state general funds
- Jeffco Children and Family Services Fund/mill levy (Jefferson County residents only)
- Donation funds

Families are **eligible** for FSSP if they have a family member with a developmental delay or disability living in the family home regardless of age.

Families are **prioritized** for FSSP funds and services based on 5 parameters assessed through the Most-In-Need (MIN) Assessment. The five parameters are described below.

- Child’s Disability/Overall Care Needs of the Child, including medical, personal care or other needed services, which are above and beyond what is typically needed for any child without a disability.
- Child’s Behavior, including consideration of the degree to which the child’s behavior is disruptive or impacts the day-to-day operation of the family, the level of supervision required to keep the child and others safe, and the type and number of services required to address these behaviors.
- Family Composition and Stability, including number of parents at home and working, number of siblings, disabilities of siblings or other family members with disabilities. The level of stability of the family, such as pending divorce, age of parents, and medical condition of parents. This parameter considers how family composition impacts the family’s ability to provide day to day care and support for the child with disabilities.
- Access to Support Networks, including the level of isolation or lack of support networks for the family, such as not having extended family nearby, living in a rural area, or availability of providers.
- Access to Resources, including the family’s access to other resources, such as family income, insurance coverage, and other public benefits.

DDRC, maintains a list of individuals and families likely eligible for FSSP. For DDRC, this includes individuals enrolled in other programs such as Early Intervention, and Medicaid Waivers, as well as those not enrolled in any other Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) funded program. DDRC does not have a wait list for FSSP. We provide an opportunity for all eligible families to submit a MIN Assessment and request funds.

Based on the individual/family's MIN Assessment score and identified needs, the family may or may not be prioritized for FSSP state general funds. According to state rule, individuals enrolled in Medicaid Waivers are not prioritized for FSSP state general funds, unless they meet the FSSP emergency criteria established by the CCB. Families who do not meet DDRC's FSSP state general fund prioritization, or emergency criteria, may be considered for funding through the Jeffco CFS Fund, or donation funds when available.

FSSP FUNDS

FSSP funds are authorized for specific services through a written Family Support Plan (FSP).

All expenses must be directly related to the family member with an intellectual or developmental disability/delay, or the impact of the disability on the individual or their family.

The Resource Coordinator must review the following elements prior to authorizing services in the Family Support Plan:

- 1) Necessary for the family to provide care to their family member with a developmental disability at home.
- 2) Above and beyond costs incurred for a child or adult family member without a developmental disability.
- 3) Not duplicative of other services funded through the DD system, private or public insurance, or trust fund.
- 4) Most cost-effective way to meet the identified need
- 5) Chosen by the family; and,
- 6) Within any limitations set by the Colorado Dept. of Health Care Policy and Financing, and the DDRC Family Support Council
- 7) Some services have funding limits, and may require additional documentation

Service Category Definitions, Limits, and Exclusions

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY—is equipment or upgrades to equipment, which are necessary for the individual with an IDD or developmental delay to communicate, move through, manipulate, or control their environment, or remain safe in the family home.

ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING- is home or vehicle modifications needed due to the individual's disability and is not a regular maintenance or modification needed by all owners. Modifications to the home or vehicle must be necessary due to the individual's IDD or developmental delay or needed due to health and safety; or to allow the individual to attain more independence and is done in a cost-effective manner. Cost-effective manner means the least expensive manner to meet the identified need. Home modifications are to be limited to the common areas of the home the individual with an IDD frequents, the individual's bedroom, and one bathroom. Other bedrooms and bathrooms shall not be modified. All devices and adaptations must be provided in accordance with applicable state or local building codes and/or applicable standards of manufacturing, design, and installation. Only homes or vehicles occupied and owned by the family where the eligible individual resides may be modified. Minor modifications may be made to rental units with the permission of the landlord. Rental modifications must be made in a way that the modifications can be removed if there is a change in residence. **DDRC also allows repair and replacement of items when damaged by the eligible individual because of their disability. Documentation is required, limit \$600 unless prior approved by CFS Director or designee).**

MEDICAL, DENTAL and VISION – items prescribed by a licensed medical professional qualified to prescribe such items and are needed to maintain or attain physical health. Out-of-pocket costs for medical, dental, and vision services, exams, and procedures are allowable when not covered by another source. (i.e., co-pays,

deductibles, and costs for uninsured care for the family member with a developmental disability). **Note:** Over the counter medications and vitamins are excluded except when prescribed by a licensed medical professional who is qualified to write such prescriptions. DDRC needs to receive a copy of the written prescription/recommendation which includes the purpose of the OTC medication or vitamin (i.e., addresses a specific disability need) prior to authorizing funds for that service. **DDRC limits OTC medications and vitamins to \$1000/year.**

PARENT/SIBLING SUPPORT—may include special resource materials, publications, disability specific conferences, and the cost of care for siblings while addressing the disability needs of the eligible family member, or behavioral services/ training, or counseling needed due to the impact of the disability on family members.

TRANSPORTATION—the direct cost to the family that is higher than costs typically incurred by other families because of specialty medical appointments or therapies. Specialty medical appointments or therapies are defined as appointments needed due to the individual's IDD or developmental delay. These costs may include **mileage reimbursement at the federal rate/mile**, other transportation, lodging, food expenses, and long-distance telephone calls to arrange for or coordinate medical services which are not covered by other sources.

RESPIRE—the temporary care of a person with an IDD that provides relief to the family. This is funding to pay for a provider of the family's choice to care for the family member with a developmental disability to give them a break from extraordinary care giving responsibilities. The age of the eligible individual, their specific disability needs, and the composition and stability of the family is considered when setting frequency and rates. Childcare while a parent works is excluded for children under 12 unless there is a documented additional cost due to the child's disability. In these situations, the added cost may be considered for funding

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES- are services which require licensure or certification to treat a human condition other than medical, dental or vision, and is provided to the eligible individual with a developmental delay or disability. Professional services must be provided by qualified, certified and/or licensed personnel in accordance with the standards and practices of the industry. Professional services may include **related support items or activities** which are recommended as part of therapy (e.g., specialized physical therapy equipment, visual schedules, sensory items) with supporting documentation from the treating professional.

Please Note: Toys and activities are excluded if there is no adaptation to the toy, or specialized instruction or support is needed for the eligible child to benefit, beyond what any child might need or use. **A therapist or other professional's recommendation is not sufficient to authorize typical toys or activities using state general funds.**

Exception: Toys and activities may be considered under local funds if recommended by the individual's therapist, or other qualified professional, and the family is otherwise unable to provide or purchase the needed items. Toys are limited to \$300 per year, and a combination of activities and toys is limited to a maximum of \$1000 per fiscal year.

OTHER- are specific to the individual/family, and are limited to:

- A consultant and/or advocate to assist a family with accessing services outside of the CCB (DDRC). Examples include an education advocate, fees for setting up guardianship or a special needs trust.
- **A family recreation pass is limited to \$650**, or one family pass, whichever is less, per fiscal year and is limited for use only at a community recreation center. No private gyms.
- Recreational needs of the eligible individual when the need of recreation is above and beyond the typical need due to the disability or delay. This includes adaptive recreational equipment and fees to help the individual have recreation in his or her community. **Recreational equipment** may include adaptive tricycles, bicycles, strollers, or switch adapted toys. A written recommendation from a qualified professional is required prior to authorization. **Recreation fees** for activities to address a specific disability need may include sensory gym, Special Olympics, or other therapeutic recreation requiring additional support or supervision due to the individual's disability. Swim lessons are allowed if needed to teach water safety. **DDRC limits individual recreation fees to \$600/fiscal year.**

- Specialized services as identified by the Family Support Council (FSC) and Community Centered Board (CCB), included in their written policy and are available to any family receiving ongoing Family Support Services Program assistance in the service area. A written recommendation is required from a qualified professional prior to authorizing services.

Note: DDRC may cover diapers, pull-ups, and wipes for children 3 or older (who do not have access to Health First Colorado/Medicaid benefits), as well as specialized diets and clothing to address specific disability needs. These items are limited to \$600 per year.

A tablet or computer for telehealth, or to address a specific documented disability need, is limited to \$600 for the device, and with a case, warranty, and disability related software not to exceed a maximum of \$1000.

The following recreation items are specifically excluded under FSSP rule: entrance fees for zoos, museums, butterfly pavilion, professional and minor league sporting events, movie, theater, concerts, memberships to non-community recreation centers/gyms, outdoor play structures, and batteries for recreational items.

Other Excluded Items –Examples of items that are NOT above and beyond the costs incurred for an individual without a developmental delay or disability include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Food, rent, utilities * ○ Typical clothing ○ Typical cost of childcare while a parent works (children under 12) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Vacations, out of state camps ○ School supplies, field trips, transportation to school, tutors, and other educational needs which are the responsibility of the school district
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***Financial assistance with housing and utilities is allowable with local funds, with documented financial need, up to a maximum of 3 months. Community resources must be accessed first.**

DDRC Funding Limits:

Funding amounts are based on the family’s MIN score priority level, the services they are requesting and available funds. The amount of available funds varies from year to year. **MIN score alone does not guarantee the maximum funding amount available for that prioritization level.** People enrolled in Medicaid Waivers are automatically considered low priority for FSSP funds regardless of their MIN Assessment score.

Low priority- up to \$2000 **Moderate priority-** up to \$4000 **High priority-** up to \$6000

The upper limit or higher funding amount(s) per prioritization level is intended for families who do not have access to Medicaid or other insurance that cover essential therapies or have health and safety issues related to the individual’s challenging medical or behavioral needs. Any exceptions to funding limits must be approved by the Children and Family Services Director, or designee. The maximum funding amount per fiscal year is \$10,000 and is reserved for environmental engineering or medical, professional or respite services that meet DDRC FSSP emergency criteria. Some funding limits may be lifted if funds remain, or become available, towards the end of the fiscal year.

DDRC FSSP Payment Options:

- **Receipt reimbursement-** family submits receipt, paid invoice, or approved service log for reimbursement of out-of-pocket costs for authorized services.
- **Advance-** funds are advanced to family to purchase authorized services, family submits receipt(s) following purchase. The amount of an advance will be the minimum amount necessary to start needed services, not to exceed \$1000 at any time.
- **Direct vendor payment-** DDRC purchases the item directly or pays an invoice or bill from the vendor. If DDRC does not already have an established relationship with the vendor, we will need the vendor’s W-9. If the service is provided in the family home, we also need a copy of their Certificate of Liability

insurance or Pinnacol form (general and workman's comp) prior to payment. DDRC must be listed as a certificate holder on the Certificate of Liability insurance (i.e., "DDRC named as an additional insured" in the description field.

Required receipts/documentation for payment must be legible and, in a format DDRC can access such as Word and PDF, or scanned, mailed, or faxed originals. No JPEG, or HEIC files.

Receipts, invoices, bills, and service logs must include:

- name of the family member who received the service,
- service provided,
- date(s) the service was provided
- name of the provider, and
- amount paid

A complete receipt may be a combination of documents such as the initial bill, or Insurance Explanation of Benefits (EOB) with the required information, and a copy of the payment receipt (such as online payment, cancelled check, new bill reflecting payment, or agency/provider letter verifying payment). Service logs are acceptable for respite, sibling sitter services, and mileage only. We have service logs available for your use.

- **Travel mileage expense log-** date(s) of trip(s), provider name/purpose of trip, number of miles, other expense, signed agreement from parent that the information is accurate.
- **Respite / Sibling Sitter services log-** date(s) of service, number of hours, cost, provider/agency name, reason sitter services are needed, and signed agreement from parent that the information is accurate. If using both respite and sibling sitter services; separate service logs are required.

Fiscal Year Timelines and Required Documents

- The FSSP fiscal year runs from July 1st through June 30th each year.
- Families must complete a MIN Assessment each fiscal year to be considered for funds.
- Services and dollar amounts must be authorized by DDRC through a Family Support Plan (FSP)
- Funds can only be used for authorized services provided within the fiscal year the funds are available. Funds can't cross fiscal years. Any unused funds are forfeited and must be returned to DDRC.
- If a family's needs or priorities change, they may request a revision to their FSP, limited to once per quarter-due to high demand, processed in the order in which it is received.
- Families may request additional funds during the fiscal year. Decisions about additional funds, above the MIN score limit, are typically made towards the end of the fiscal year if funds are still available. Emergency funds are available throughout the year for those who meet DDRC FSSP emergency criteria.
- Families must submit their MIN Assessment, and request for services, including any needed revisions or additions to their FSP, on or before May 31st to be considered for funds within that fiscal year. This allows time for DDRC to develop, or revise, the Family Support Plan (FSP), issue checks, and collect receipts prior to the end of the fiscal year (June 30th).
- Families are responsible for submitting receipts for all funds received. Receipts must be received by DDRC on or before June 30th.

If a family does not submit the required receipts by the due date, they won't be able to receive future advances. In addition, DDRC may recoup any advanced funds from the family, if they do not submit supporting documentation verifying the actual amount spent on authorized services.

If you have concerns regarding the FSSP process, or your funding decision, please contact Susan Johnson, Children and Family Services Director at 303-462-6612 or susan.johnson@ddrcco.com

Recruiting new members for the DDRC Family Support Council. If interested, contact Susan Johnson.