

Home & Community Based Services for People with Disabilities



- An estimated 1.5% of the population, or 68,000 Louisianans, have a developmental disability.
- Services to support people with developmental disabilities can be categorized as either “home and community-based services (HCBS)” or “institutional services.”

- HCBS are provided in someone’s own home and support the person to be a fully-included member of their community and to exhibit control over their daily lives and activities.
- Institutional services, in contrast, are provided in residential settings referred to as Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities (ICF/DD) that are often isolating and follow a group model for scheduling and decision making.

Average Annual Cost Per Person	
Public ICF/DD	\$259,463
Private ICF/DD	\$66,188
New Opportunities Waiver	\$51,195
Residential Options Waiver	\$25,182
Children’s Choice Waiver	\$10,106
Supports Waiver	\$7,428

- A shift toward HCBS is beneficial for both Louisiana and those seeking services as they are **more cost-effective** and offer a **higher quality of life** than an ICF/DD.
- Louisiana has done a good job of reducing its number of large public institutions, but the majority of savings were not invested in HCBS. Louisiana ranks first in the nation in the number of people per capita in an ICF/DD due to the number of people in private facilities.
- The overwhelming majority of individuals with developmental disabilities and their family members want HCBS as evident by ever-growing waiting lists. Unfortunately, when caregivers reach their limit financially, physically and/or emotionally, they have no other choice but to access services through an institutional placement.

Home and Community-Based Waiver Services

- Since Medicaid was set up to pay for institutions, states must seek a waiver from federal Medicaid rules to use Medicaid funding for HCBS.
- Louisiana has **four waivers** to serve individuals with developmental disabilities: New Opportunities Waiver (NOW), Residential Options Waiver (ROW), Children’s Choice Waiver, and Supports Waiver.
- Services provided differ from waiver to waiver but may include: direct support services (for assistance with daily activities like bathing, dressing, eating, etc.), respite, skilled nursing, various therapies, supported employment, home/vehicle modifications, etc.
- There are currently **over 14,400 people on the waiting list** for the NOW. Those at the top of the list have been **waiting over 12 years**.

Other Home and Community-Based Services in Louisiana

Individual and Family Support (IFS) provides immediate access to services (if funding is available) for people with developmental disabilities in crisis situations, most of whom are on the waiver waiting list. IFS is provided to those in the most desperate need, rather than first-come, first-served. IFS services are flexible to meet the needs of the individual. Examples include crisis intervention, respite care and specialized therapies such as assistance for challenging behaviors.

IFS is cost effective. Statewide, the average annual cost per person in FY15 for IFS was only \$2,578. It is funded and administered through the Human Services Districts/Authorities. Funding for IFS in almost all areas of the state is insufficient to meet the current demand. Without IFS, more individuals with developmental disabilities are at risk of out-of-home placement.

Flexible Family Fund provides assistance to families of children with the most severe disabilities to assist in meeting the extraordinary costs in caring for their children at home. A screening process is used to determine the severity of disability so only the children with the most severe disabilities qualify. This program is funded and administered by the Human Services Districts/Authorities and there is a long waiting list across the state.

Families Helping Families (FHF) Regional Resource Centers are family-directed resource centers providing information and referral, peer-to-peer support, and education and training to individuals with disabilities and their families. The centers are located throughout the state and are the only “one-stop shops” in LA providing support to all individuals with disabilities and their families. Over 34,000 contacts were made to the regional centers in FY16.

State Personal Assistance Services (SPAS) Program provides supports and services to individuals with adult-onset disabilities. SPAS enables these adults to live in their own homes, work, and fully participate in their communities. The supports provided are needed to assist individuals in getting out of bed, eating, bathing, getting dressed, and other activities of daily living. The average cost of SPAS is \$22,000/year compared to \$47,000/year in a nursing home. This program is funded by the Office of Aging and Adult Services, and services are provided by the Arc of LA.

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is a federally matched career development program under Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) designed to offer individuals with disabilities a variety of services needed to obtain and maintain employment. For every \$1.00 invested by the state of Louisiana, the federal government matches \$3.69. Services include job counseling, assessment and provision of assistive technology, and medical and therapeutic services.