



Division of Developmental Disabilities Services



CHILDREN'S SERVICES

P.O. BOX 1437, SLOT S-380 LITTLE ROCK, AR 72203 501-682-2277 Fax: 501-682-8247 TDD: 501-682-1332

August 24, 2009

Re: Special Needs Autism

Dear Parent:

The Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDS) has dedicated funds that are available this year for one time only to assist individuals diagnosed with Autism through Special Needs Autism funds. The Special Needs Autism funds are available with a short application through the DDS Service Coordinator. **The Special Needs Autism funds are available only until the funding is exhausted. The program will not be available in future years.**

Services covered under this program include both respite care and family support for families of individuals diagnosed with Autism. Respite services provide temporary relief, allowing the primary caregiver for an individual with a disability and special health care need to have an occasional break. Family Support is defined as any service related to the individual's disability that would directly or indirectly improve the well being of the individual. Some examples of family support considered under the Special Needs Autism program include: adaptive equipment, therapeutic recreation, alternative therapies, parent education and behavior management.

Individuals who have previously presented DDS with medical documentation of the diagnosis of Autism will not be required to do so again. If acceptable medical documentation of the Autism diagnosis has not been received by DDS previously, it must accompany the application for funds. Acceptable medical documentation includes a report from a physician, a copy of Psychological testing, and a Speech Language report all giving the diagnosis of Autism or Autistic Spectrum Disorder. Individuals with other diagnoses that frequently carry the diagnosis of Autism (such as Asperger's Disorder; Pervasive Developmental Disorder, Not Otherwise Specified; Childhood Disintegrative Disorder; Rett's Syndrome; and Fragile X) must present the same type of documentation listed above showing documentation of Autism.

The following program guidelines apply:

- **The following individuals are excluded from this program:** Individuals who have Division of Developmental Disabilities Services Home and Community Based Waiver (DDS Waiver); individuals who are institutionalized or in a Human Development Center (HDC) respite bed; and children in DCFS custody are ineligible for the program.
- Maximum of two individuals per family may apply.
- Each application will be reviewed and evaluated on its own merit, so be sure to complete the entire application. Individual awards will be based on need.
- Parents/guardians must provide receipts showing how the family support/respite funds were used. Failure to provide receipts will prevent the child from receiving further regular DDS Special Needs program assistance.

If you are interested in applying for the Special Needs Autism funds, complete the attached application and other forms and submit them to the address below. In addition, we must have a copy of the Payee's (who the check will come to if approved) Driver's License and signed Social Security card. If you have questions, contact the DDS Service Coordinator named below.

DDS Service Coordinator

Phone

CBO Address 1
CBO Address 2