



## Family Support 101

### What is it?

The Family Support Program is funded by state dollars and is designed to financially assist individuals with severe disabilities and their families to remain together in their homes and communities. Family Support Services are meant to be flexible and responsive to the needs of the family.

### Services might include but are not limited to:

- Respite Care
- Personal Assistance
- Child Care
- Homemaker
- Minor Home Modifications and Vehicular Modifications
- Specialized Equipment and Maintenance and Repair
- Specialized Nutrition and Clothing and Supplies
- Transportation Services
- Health-related costs not otherwise covered
- Licensed Nursing and Nurses Aid Services
- Family Counseling, Training, and Support Groups

The current maximum amount is **\$6,000 per individual** with a severe disability in a family. However, depending on Family Support resources and Local Council priorities, **you may get less than \$6,000**. Eligibility for families/individuals shall be determined each year (July 1st – June 30th).

### Who is eligible?

1. Individuals with a severe or developmental disability (such as Autism, Genetic Disorders, Cerebral Palsy, etc).
2. Individuals who live with their family, in the community, or in unsupported housing. (Unsupported is defined as not a state or federally-funded program.)
3. Individuals who are **NOT** on a home and community-based services (HCBS) waiver (including but not limited to Employment and Community First Choices (ECF), Katie Beckett (KB), or Choices).
4. Individuals **CAN** have this program and the MAPS program
5. An individual who needs support in **three or more** of the following major life activities:
  - a. self-care
  - b. receptive and expressive language
  - c. learning

- d. mobility
- e. self-direction
- f. capacity for independent living
- g. economic self-sufficiency

## **Selection:**

The selection process is different from the process of determining eligibility, and in many ways is more challenging. There is a great deal of flexibility in the selection process, which relies on consumer councils to assist in establishing priorities for services and addressing other issues. Selection must be open to all individuals each year, and prior selection cannot be considered as a priority. Selection shall not be determined on a first-come, first-served basis.

At all times, it is important to maximize the use of limited funds available to the program. The State Council has reached a consensus that the following are primary priorities and issues that shall be considered in selection determination:

- family needs, including services currently available and in use, informal support systems available to the family, and the condition of family members.
- the immediacy of need, e.g., crisis or emergency,
- the severity of the family problems, time awaiting services, and the impact of the disability on the activities of everyday life for the whole family.

Each Local Council shall establish priorities for selection that agencies shall consider in addition to the primary priorities established by the State Family Support Council and listed herein.

## **How do you apply?**

There is a Family Support agency for every county in the state. You must contact the Family Support agency in your county to apply for the Family Support program. To find the agency in your county you can click [here](#).

## **Documentation needed to apply:**

- Proof of residence (examples: utility bill, mortgage statement, etc. within the last 60 days)
- Proof of disability (examples: Individual Education Plan (IEP), letter from Social Security Administration)
- Proof of citizenship (examples can be found in [Appendix F, starting on page 62 in the Family Support Guidelines](#).)

## **Got questions?**

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You can learn more about the program here:

<https://www.tn.gov/disability-and-aging/disability-aging-programs/family-support.html>