

Developmental Disability Services in Louisiana

Facts First

- **An estimated 67,000 people in Louisiana have a developmental disability, roughly 1.6 percent¹ of the population.**
- **Many individuals with developmental disabilities and their families continue to wait for critical supports and services.**
- **Although the overwhelming majority of people want to receive services in their own homes and communities, Louisiana continues to lead the nation in institutional spending for people with developmental disabilities.**



What is a Developmental Disability?

A developmental disability is a severe, chronic intellectual or physical impairment that occurs before a person is 22 years old and is likely to continue indefinitely. The disability results in substantial functional limitations in three or more areas of life activity, reflects the person's need for a combination of individually planned services and is not attributed solely to mental illness.

Services and Programs

The State Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) serves as the Single Point of Entry into the Developmental Disabilities Services System. The OCDD community services regional offices and human services authorities/districts are the entry point at the regional level, determining eligibility and offering services to a limited number of individuals and families. Depending on the service, it can be provided through private provider agencies or through individualized agreements with individuals and families who obtain their own service providers.

Supports and services that *may* be available to an individual with a developmental disability in Louisiana include the following, however many have extensive waiting lists:

The **Individual and Family Support Program** provides resources to people to allow them to live in their own homes or with their families. These state general funds can provide services such as respite, personal assistance, equipment, supplies and crisis intervention.

Developmental Disability Services in Louisiana (continued)



The **Flexible Family Fund Program** provides a monthly stipend to families of eligible children with severe disabilities until the age of 18.

Home and Community-Based Waiver Services are offered through the **New Opportunities Waiver (NOW)**, the **Children's Choice Waiver**, the **Supports Waiver** and the **Residential Options Waiver (ROW)**. These waivers offer a variety of services and supports to allow individuals to reside in the community and vary in intensity from minimal supports to very intensive 24-hour one-to-one supports.



The **EarlySteps Program** is Louisiana's early intervention system for children with disabilities and developmental delays, ages birth to three, and their families. Family service coordination and various services are available.

Community Support Teams are located in various regions throughout the state and provide support and services to people with developmental disabilities who need intensive treatment intervention, thus allowing them to remain in their community living setting.



Intermediate Care Facilities for Persons with Developmental Disabilities (ICFs/DD) are 24 hour residential facilities, both public and private. ICFs/DD in Louisiana range in size from six bed community homes to the large publicly operated supports and services centers with a census of up to 450.

¹ Larson, S.A., Lakin, K.C., Anderson, L., Kwak, N., Lee, J., & Anderson, D. (2001). Prevalence of mental retardation and developmental disabilities: Estimates from the 1994/1995 National Health Interview Survey Disability Supplements. *American Journal on Mental Retardation*, 106(3), 231- 252.