The Individual and Family Support Program

IFSP-Funding Program Guidelines

Version Date: 9/14/2021

Contents

> If you have questions or need additional assistance, please contact My Life, My Community operators at **(844) 603-9248**.

I.   Program Description

The Individual and Family Support Program (IFSP) Funding assists individuals on Virginia's Developmental Disability (DD) Waiver Waiting List and their families with accessing resources, supports, and services. The program supports the continued residence of individuals with developmental disabilities in their own home or the family home.

II.   Program Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible, the applicant must meet all of the following criteria when funds are requested:

1. The applicant must be on the Virginia DD Waiver Waiting List, and

2. The applicant must be living in his or her own home or in a family home.

Applications may be submitted either by the individual who is on the DD Waiver Waiting List or a Responsible Party applying on behalf of the individual(s) on the DD Waiver Waiting List.

Individuals on the DD Waiver Waiting List who also receive assistance through other programs like the Commonwealth Coordinated Care Waiver (CCC Plus)[1] or the Early and Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment Program (EPSDT) may apply for funds if the request is for items that are not available through the similar program. IFSP encourages all applicants to maximize their assistance through accessing other supports and resources.

III.   Program Implementation

The maximum amount an applicant may request is $1,000 and the minimum request amount is $200.

This year, the program expects to provide no less than approximately $3 million in direct assistance to individuals on the DD Waiver Waiting List.

The schedule for the funding application, including application deadlines, are posted on the My Life, My Community website at **https://mylifemycommunityvirginia.org**.

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[1] This program serves individuals previously served by the Elderly or Disabled with Consumer Direction Waiver (EDCD) or the Technology Assisted Medicaid Waiver (Tech).

All applications must be submitted via the IFSP Online Application Portal located at https://ifsponline.dbhds.virginia.gov.

Applications will be reviewed by the Department on a first-come, first-served basis.

IV.   Covered and Non-Covered Services and Supports

The following items/services are eligible for funding under the IFSP-Funding Program.

Please note: IFSP funds are one-time funds and are not guaranteed to be awarded the following year.

Safe Living

- Backup generator
- Furniture, including beds, sofa, chairs, tables, lamps, and dressers
- Adaptive furniture
- Mattresses and bedding
- Handrails and grab bars
- Home modifications to improve accessibility, including door widening, additional flooring, kitchen or bathroom remodels, and driveway installations and window installation
- Appliances
- Heating, cooling, and plumbing systems conversion, installation, and repairs
- General home repairs
- Location devices and GPS trackers, including Project Lifesaver and AngelSense, personal alarms, locator services, and associated trainings
- Respite
- Fencing
- Home security systems, including home alarms and cameras
- Wheelchair ramp and other ramps
- Stairlifts
- Legal fees, including fees to establish

Improved Health Outcomes

- Attendant care
- Behavior therapy/applied behavioral analysis
- Communication and assistive technology, including computers, tablets, laptops, iPads, apps, mobile phones, mobile phone services, warranties and repairs, internet services, speech applications, speech products
- Telecommunication services that enhance community access and involvement, including SIM cards, internet, mobile phone service, and applications that link individuals to community activities.
- Assistive technology repair
- Dental care and procedures
- Hearing care
- Medical care copays
- Medication
- Equipment, including bikes, wheelchairs, strollers, car seats, and high chairs
- Sensory items, including toys
- Nutritional supports, including nutritional drinks like Boost, Ensure, formula, adult formula for feeding tubes, etc.

Safe Living

> guardianship, power of attorney, microboards, trusts, etc.

Community Integration

- Companion services, peer support, and mentoring
- Childcare and afterschool care
- Community activities/recreation
- Conferences, family education, and trainings
- Day support programs
- Self-advocate education or training
- Summer camp
- Supported employment
- Therapeutic activities and copays
- Transportation services including Uber, Lyft, cabs, buses, etc.
- Sports activities and lessons, including tournaments
- Recreational and entertainment activities that support community integration
- Recreational activities, including art classes, music lessons, dance lessons, gym memberships, etc.
- Recreational equipment, including swings and playset equipment
- In-state vacations
- Passes for recreational activities
- Tuition
- Modifications to a vehicle, including wheelchair lifts
- Reimbursement for transportation costs including gas, tolls, etc.

Improved Health Outcomes

- Therapies, including occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, massage therapy, and chiropractic therapy
- Personal hygiene items, including incontinence supplies, skin ointments, wipes, specialized toothbrushes, and costs associated with professional grooming services such as haircuts, manicures, and pedicures
- Therapeutic horseback riding/ hippotherapy
- Vision care
- Durable medical equipment, including clothing and compression garments and apparel that simplifies self- dressing and offers solutions to meet a multitude of physical challenges. Eligible clothing items include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - bibs and clothing protectors,
  - soft clothing for sensory sensitivity,
  - clothing with Velcro, snaps, or zipping closures, and
  - orthopedic shoes.

IFSP Funds may NOT cover the following costs:

- Clothing not related to the applicant's disability[2];

- Food (not related to special dietary needs associated with the disability or as part of a recreational experience);

- Purchase of vehicles or general vehicle repairs[3];

- Vacations outside of Virginia; or

- Installment payments for automobiles and auto insurance.

V.   Application for Funding

The application and supporting materials can found on the IFSP Application Portal at
https://ifsponline.dbhds.virginia.gov/.

IFSP Funds may not be used to cover expenses incurred prior to the applicant receiving the award.

All program funds will be issued by debit card, and applicants are expected to register the card immediately upon receipt. Failure to register the card may affect the applicant's eligibility for future funds.

By applying, the Responsible Party agrees to the following:

1. To maintain all receipts documenting items and/or services purchased with IFSP Funds and, upon request, provide to the Department for auditing[4];

2. Acknowledgement that failure to comply with the program's policies may result in recovery of awarded funds and denial of subsequent funding requests.

VI.   Application Review Criteria

Upon receipt of a completed application, the Department shall:

1. Verify that the individual is on the statewide Medicaid DD Waiver Waiting List,

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[2] This does not exclude accessible clothing items (e.g., adaptive clothing or footwear, weighted vests, etc.). These items are covered under the Improved Health Outcomes section.
[3] This does not exclude vehicle adaptations, as these items are covered under the Community Integration section.
[4] IFSP stopped requiring receipts in 2020. However, applicants are still expected to maintain receipts documenting expenditures for eligible items and providing them as requested as part of a program audit.

2. Confirm that the services or items for which funding is being requested are eligible, and

3. If applicable, confirm that the applicant has complied with past program requirements. Failure to provide all the requested application information shall result in an application denial.

VII.   Funding Decision-Making Process

The Department shall provide a written notice to the individual or Responsible Party who submitted the application indicating whether the application was approved or denied.

Denials

Applications may be denied if the Department determines that:

- The request individual or Responsible Party has not complied with IFSP policies or regulations for previously awarded funds. This includes failure to register debit cards with prior year's awards or failure to provide receipts for previously received IFSP funds, as requested.
- The total annual IFSP-Funding annual appropriation has been expended.

VIII.   Requests for Consideration

For applications denied for the previously listed reasons, the Department will provide written notice via email stating the reason(s) why the requested services, supports, or other items were denied, or approved at a reduced amount, and information on how to appeal the decision.

Application appeals must be submitted in writing using the directions provided in the denial message. Reconsiderations must be submitted no later than 30 days after receiving the denial notice. A determination will be made within 30 days of receipt of the request and provided to the Responsible Party in writing. This decision will be final.

IX.   Post-Funding Review

The Department staff may request documentation or verification that funds have been used in accordance with the program guidelines. By receiving IFSP funds, recipients agree to provide all information requested by the Department. Failure to provide information when requested may

result in recovery of such funds by the Department, and/or prohibition from receiving future funds.

X.   Termination of Funding

Funding through the Individual and Family Support Program shall be terminated if the applicant moves outside of the Commonwealth of Virginia or is deceased before the annual fund issuance.

If you need answers to IFSP-related questions, please visit the My Life, My Community website at **https://mylifemycommunityvirginia.org**.

The Individual and Family Support Program

IFSP-Funding
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Version Date: 9/10/2021

Contents

If you have questions or need additional assistance, please contact My Life, My Community at **(844) 603-9248**.

Application and Submission

Q. What is the maximum amount of money I can request? Is there a minimum amount?
A. The maximum amount an applicant may request is $1,000. The minimum amount is $200. Please review the IFSP-Funding Program Guidelines on the My Life, My Community website at **https://tinyurl.com/mlmc-funding**.

Q. I would like to apply for IFSP-Funding. Where is the application located?
A. All applications must be submitted using the online application. ***There are no paper applications.*** When the application is open, you will be able to access it on the IFSP-Funding Portal at **https://ifsponline.dbhds.virginia.gov**.

Please check the My Life, My Community website at **https://tinyurl.com/mlmc-funding** for timelines. If you are signed up for the IFSP Listserv, you will receive an email with important information. If you are not signed up for the IFSP Listserv, click on the following link to sign up: **https://tinyurl.com/IFSPList**.

Q. I am signed up for the emails, so will I receive the application by email?
A. No, you will not receive the application by email. If you are signed up for the IFSP Listserv, you will receive an update telling you how to access the IFSP-Funding Portal where you can apply for funds.

Q. How do I log into the IFSP-Funding Portal to fill out an application?
A. Specific instructions on how to navigate and complete an application are in the IFSP-Funding Portal User Guide. Applicants can also review a step-by-step video guide for completing the application. All materials can be found on the My Life, My Community website at **https://tinyurl.com/mlmc-funding**.

Q. Do I really need to save a draft?
A. Yes! New this year, you must save a draft before the submission period. Saving a draft will not be available on the day of submission and all drafts must be saved by 11:59 p.m. on October 4, 2021. Don't wait until the last minute to save a draft since you may need to confirm information with your CSB. Find out how to create one by watching the application training video. You can find it at the My Life, My Community website at **https://tinyurl.com/mlmc-funding**.

Q. When will the application be available?
A. Please check the My Life, My Community website at **https://tinyurl.com/mlmc-funding** for IFSP-Funding timelines. If you are signed up for the IFSP Listserv, you will be notified via email. If you are not signed up for the IFSP Listserv, click on the following link to sign up: **https://tinyurl.com/IFSPList**.

Q. When can I submit my application?
A. Please check the My Life, My Community website at **https://tinyurl.com/mlmc-funding** for IFSP-Funding timelines.

Q. When will I hear that my application has been accepted into the system?
A. After you submit your application, you will immediately receive a confirmation email. If you do not see the message, please check your junk mail or spam folders. Please remember all communication about your application will be sent via email.

Q. How long will it take before a funding decision is reached after I submit my application?
A. IFSP will communicate all award decisions to you via email after applications have been submitted. We expect to notify applicants of an award decision within 2-3 months after the application submission period closes.

Q. Your eligibility checker is saying that I am not on the Waitlist, but I am. What do I do?
A. The eligibility checker verifies that the applicant is currently active on the Virginia DD Waiver Waiting List. If you receive a message that says you are not eligible, you should contact your case manager or support coordinator at your local CSB to verify your Waiver Waiting List status.

Q. What is WaMS? How do I know if my information is correct in it?
A. WaMS stands for Virginia Waiver Management System. It is the system that DBHDS uses to store information about individuals who are seeking or receiving Waiver services. Please contact your case manager to confirm your information is correct in WaMS.

Q. In the past, I had issues with the information I submitted on my application not being properly matched in WaMS. How can I ensure the same thing does not happen this year?

A. It is possible that your information was entered incorrectly in WaMS. Information about the person on the Waiver Waiting List was entered by your CSB when they were placed on the Waiver Waiting List. You must contact your case manager to make updates to the information in WaMS.

Since IFSP uses information from WaMS to verify the IFSP applicant's Waiver Waiting List status, it is important that the information that you have entered on your IFSP application matches the information that is in WaMS. If you have checked with your CSB and confirmed that your information is correct in WaMS, you may have incorrectly entered your information on the IFSP application. Please check your application to make sure that you have entered your information correctly.

Q. What if my need changes after I have completed the application?
A. If you are trying to revise a submitted application, please note, IFSP does not allow changes to the application once it is submitted. This is because applications are reviewed in the order that they are received. If you feel that you need to withdraw an application, you will need to contact My Life, My Community to request a help ticket.

Please remember, you do not have to spend your IFSP funds on the service or support you applied for, but you do have to use it on an allowable expense. Covered and non-covered services and supports are explained in the IFSP-Funding Program Guidelines which can be found on the My Life, My Community website at **https://tinyurl.com/mlmc-funding**.

Q. My application was pended. What happens now?
A. Applications may be pended for several reasons. The primary reason an application may be pended is if the applicant is not active in the WaMS system. All pended applications will be reviewed by IFSP Staff. Please make sure that you enter your contact information correctly as IFSP Staff may need to contact you for additional information or provide you with additional steps to address the reason causing a pended application.

Q. Will funds be issued via debit card?
A. IFSP will continue to provide IFSP funds via the Way2Go debit card.

Q. When is the best time to apply?
A. Since applications are screened in the order they are reviewed, applicants should submit as soon as possible on the first day that applications can be submitted. To see the schedule for this year's Funding Program, please visit the My Life, My Community website at **https://tinyurl.com/mlmc-funding**.

Q. Why are you limiting the amount of time that people can submit an application? It seems like people should have more time.
A. IFSP-Funding is awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Traditionally, we have received all of the application that we are able to fund within the first day the application opens. We have always had more requests for assistance than funds. That said, we are confident that the time we have established for the application submission period will allow us to collect an adequate number of requests to fund while also allowing us to quickly move towards screening and funding applications.

Q. Will the site crash again?
A. In response to the IFSP performance issues in 2019 and 2020, IFSP has worked with our technology partners to load test the Portal and further enhance the capacity and security.

Q. I need the IFSP application translated into another language.
A. The IFSP-Funding Portal has a translate function. Please see the IFSP-Funding Portal User Guide for instructions on how to translate the application. It can be found on the My Life, My Community website at **https://tinyurl.com/mlmc-funding**.

Allowable Costs

Q. What can I purchase and not purchase with these funds?
A. You can find a complete list of covered and non-covered expenses in the IFSP-Funding Program Guidelines section titled *Covered and Non-Covered Services and Supports*.

The IFSP-Funding Program Guidelines are located on the My Life, My Community website at **https://tinyurl.com/mlmc-funding**.

Q. Can I buy groceries or clothing with these funds?
A. IFSP funds can be used to purchase medical supplements and foods prescribed as part of a treatment plan. Also, funds can be used to cover the cost of meals related to recreational activities and events. Specialty clothing that addresses a medical need, like weighted vests and incontinence-related clothing, are allowable expenses. General clothing and footwear are not covered.

For more details, please review the IFSP-Funding Program Guidelines, located on the My Life, My Community website at **https://tinyurl.com/mlmc-funding**.

Q. Do you make exceptions for emergencies to pay for non-covered items?
A. No, the IFSP program does not pay for non-covered items, even if it is an emergency.

Q. Can I be reimbursed for things I have already paid for before my award notification was received?
A. The IFSP-Funding Program does not reimburse for items purchased before funds are awarded.

Q. Are cost reimbursements okay after receiving funds or after receiving approval?
A. As in the past, costs must be incurred after the funds are received. Each applicant's approval notification will provide a date that will specify when costs may be incurred for IFSP-Funds.

General Information

Q. What is IFSP?
A. IFSP is the acronym for the Individual and Family Support Program. To learn more about all of the parts of the IFSP, please watch our informational video or download our "IFSP: First Steps" document. Both are posted on the My Life, My Community website at **https://mylifemycommunityvirginia.org/taxonomy/mlmc-menu-zone/resources-families**.

Q. Who is eligible for this money?

A. Only individuals who are living on their own or in a family home and are on the DD Waiver Waiting List are eligible for IFSP-Funding. For more details, please review the IFSP-Funding Program Guidelines, located on the My Life, My Community website at **https://tinyurl.com/mlmc-funding**. It includes details regarding Program Eligibility Requirements.

Q. Is there an age limit in order to apply for IFSP-Funding?
A. No, there is no age limit.

Q. If I am the responsible party for more than one person can I apply more than once?
A. IFSP-Funding applications are connected to the individual on the DD Waiver Waiting List. Applicants can only apply for assistance once during the funding period. However, one person can be the responsible party for multiple people. Each applicant will receive a separate award issued by debit card.

For example, a father of twins, both of whom are on the DD Waiver Waiting List may submit an application for each child and be the responsible party listed on each of the two submitted applications. When the application is approved, the father would receive two debit cards, one for each child.

Q. I have an EDCD (Elderly and/or Disabled with Consumer Direction Waiver) or the Assisted Technology Waiver (Tech Waiver) or participate in CCC Plus. Am I still able to apply for IFSP-Funding?
A. Yes, you are still eligible to apply for and receive IFSP Funds. If you receive one of these waivers, you should use your IFSP funding to purchase services, supports, or goods that are not covered by one of these programs.

Q. I never got the funds in the past. Does that make me eligible for IFSP-Funding?
A. You are eligible for IFSP-Funding as long as you are on the DD Waiver Waiting List, regardless of whether or not you received funding in the past.

Please review the IFSP-Funding Program Guidelines, located on the My Life, My Community website at **https://tinyurl.com/mlmc-funding** for details regarding eligible applicants.

Q. Whenever I apply for IFSP-Funding, I never get selected to receive funding. Why?
A. IFSP funds are available on a first-come, first-served basis. The IFSP-Funding Program has always had more interest than funds. So, unfortunately, we do not have enough money to serve everyone who needs assistance.

Q. English is not my primary language, and I need help. Who can help me?
A. We recommend contacting your case manager for translation assistance with understanding general information. As previously mentioned, the IFSP-Funding Application can be translated using the Google Translate function on the Portal. If you continue to need assistance with translation services, please contact Senior Navigator.

Q. I live in a rural area and my Wi-Fi is unreliable. I do not have a computer. How can I apply? Is there someone who can help me?
A. All applications must be submitted online. In addition to using a computer, you can complete the application using a smartphone or a tablet. If you do not have access to any of these devices, please consider using a computer at a local public library.

To find a library where you live, please search online at **https://www.lva.virginia.gov/public/libraries.asp**. Also, consider contacting your case manager at the CSB where you signed up for the DD Waiver Waiting List.

Your case manager can also provide assistance with completing the application. To find your CSB, please search online at **https://tinyurl.com/mlmc-csbbha**.

If you need assistance with completing the web application, please review the application training materials. They can be found at the My Life, My Community website at **https://tinyurl.com/mlmc-funding**.

Q. What should I do if I don't know who my case manager is?
A. You should contact your local CSB.

Q. If I do not have a case manager, will my application be delayed?
A. No, IFSP takes applications directly from the applicant.

Q. If I am signed up for the IFSP Listserv, do I have to sign up again after each funding cycle?
A. No, you only need to sign up once for the IFSP Listserv.

Q. Does the Funding Program end when the Settlement agreement ends?
A. IFSP-Funding is available as long as the General Assembly allocates funds for the program.

Q. Since you all did not give out money last year, will you give out double this year?
A. For each funding period, IFSP announces the total dollar amount it plans to award in the published IFSP-Funding Program Guidelines. Please review the Program Implementation Section of this year's Guidelines to see how much we plan to award for the current application period. The award amount is the amount allocated to IFSP for the current fiscal year. In the past, IFSP has been able to access additional funds to support requests. We hope since funds were not expended last year that we may be able to provide the additional funds this year.

Returning Applicants

Q. I applied online in the past. Can I use the same login to complete this year's application?
A. Yes, if you applied last year as the Responsible Party for someone, you can use the same email address to create a new Funding application. You do not need to register again. The email address that you used to register will be the one that the IFSP staff uses to communicate with you about your application. If you previously registered with an email address that you no longer have access to, you should create a new login.

The IFSP-Funding Portal User Guide provides instructions on how to create a login. It can be found on the My Life, My Community website at **https://tinyurl.com/mlmc-funding**.

Q. I completed an application last year, but I don't remember the email address I used. What should I do?

A. Please register with a new email address. If you need help creating a new registration, follow the steps in the IFSP-Funding Portal User Guide.

Q: If I received the funding on a debit card last time we received funds, will I be able to use the same card this year?
A: No, a new card is issued for each IFSP-Funding cycle. Funds for a new year cannot be put on a card from a previous year.

Receipts

Q. Where can I send my receipts for the most recent funding cycle?
A. Receipts are not required for IFSP-Funding. As part of our ongoing quality improvement process, IFSP may contact recipients in the future to learn more about how you used your funds. While IFSP-Funding recipients do not need to submit receipts, funds must be spent on allowable services or supports. Please refer to the IFSP-Funding Program Guidelines for a list of allowable expenses.

Q. How do families submit receipts from the previous funding period? Are they not able to log into the website to upload them like before?
A. We are no longer accepting receipts for previous funding cycles.

IFSP Data Breach

Q. How do I know if my information was breached when I submitted an application for funding during the last funding cycle?
A. We have already reached out to individuals regarding the IFSP Data Breach. If you did not receive an email from us, your information was not breached. If someone saw your personal information, we would have notified you. Please refer to the FY 2020 Breach Information located on the My Life, My Community website at **https://tinyurl.com/mlmc-funding** for more details.

DD Waiver Waiting List and Eligibility

Q. How can I find out if I am on the DD Waiver Waiting List? How do I get on the DD Waiver Waiting List? How do I find out who my case manager is?

A. You must be on the DD Waiver Waiting List in order to receive IFSP funds. If you have questions about your DD Waiver Waiting List status, please contact your local CSB. They can also help you with getting on the DD Waiver Waiting List and identifying your case manager. To find your local CSB, visit **https://mylifemycommunityvirginia.org**.

Q. What if the applicant that is on the DD Waiver Waiting List has a part-time job?
A. We do not take income into consideration for eligibility. An individual who is working can still apply for IFSP-Funding.

Q. How long does an individual have to be on the DD Waiver Waiting List before they can apply for IFSP-Funding?
A. There is no time requirement. You must be on the DD Waiver Waiting List at the time of application submission in order to receive IFSP funds.

Q. What makes someone active on the DD Waiver Waiting List?
A. Please contact your case manager for details regarding the DD Waiver Waiting List.

Q. Do I have to have a case manager in order to apply for IFSP-Funding?
A. No, you do not need to have a case manager to apply for IFSP-Funding.

> If you need answers to IFSP-related questions, please visit the My Life, My Community website at **https://mylifemycommunityvirginia.org**.