



Ohio DODD Waiver Services

A Family's Guide

From your first call to a County Board of Developmental Disabilities, through Medicaid eligibility and a functional needs evaluation, to service approval.

Featuring County Boards of Developmental Disabilities for
Cleveland (Cuyahoga) · Canton (Stark) · Akron (Summit) · Columbus (Franklin)
and 17 surrounding counties across Northeast & Central Ohio

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August 2026

Understanding Your Path

Ohio's Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) funds home and community-based services waivers so people with developmental disabilities can live, work, and receive support in their own communities rather than in an institutional setting. Getting from a first phone call to approved services generally means clearing three milestones — a Waiting List Assessment, Medicaid eligibility, and a functional needs evaluation — all coordinated through your local County Board of Developmental Disabilities (CBDD). This guide walks through each step in order, then provides direct contact information for county boards across Northeast and Central Ohio.

The Three Ohio DODD Waivers

All three are Medicaid-funded home and community-based services (HCBS) waivers administered through your county board; which one fits best is decided during service planning after eligibility is confirmed.^W

Waiver	Best fit for
Level One Waiver	For people who need modest, occasional paid support — a few hours of help with things like meals, bathing, or transportation — and rely on family or other informal supports for the rest. Annual cost cap applies.
Individual Options (IO) Waiver	For people who need a more comprehensive package of daily, in-home paid support and services, with a higher funding limit than the Level One Waiver.
Self-Empowered Life Funding (SELF) Waiver	For people who want to self-direct their own services — hiring and managing their own support staff and controlling their own service budget.

W. Ohio Dept. of Developmental Disabilities, "Waiver Comparison" — <https://dodd.ohio.gov/waivers-and-services/waivers/waiver-comparison>

The Four Milestones at a Glance

- 1

Request a Waiting List Assessment

Call your county board to start the intake and needs-assessment process.
- 2

Complete Medicaid Eligibility

Apply through the County Job and Family Services office or Ohio Benefits portal.
- 3

Undergo a Functional Needs Evaluation

Your SSA coordinates a review confirming a developmental disability and ICF/IID level of care.
- 4

Service Approval & Enrollment

An SSA is assigned, a waiver is selected, and a person-centered service plan begins.

The Process, Step by Step

1

STEP 1

Request a Waiting List Assessment (WLA)

Start here — contact your County Board of Developmental Disabilities

The Waiting List Assessment, formally the Ohio Assessment for Immediate Need and Current Need, is the front door to Ohio's home and community-based services (HCBS) waivers.¹ Every County Board of Developmental Disabilities (CBDD) uses this same statewide tool, standardized under Ohio Administrative Code 5123-9-04.¹

What to do: Call the intake or Service and Support Administration (SSA) line at your county board (see the Directory beginning on page 7) and ask to begin the Waiting List Assessment / eligibility process. If your family member is under age 3, start instead with Ohio's Help Me Grow line at 1-800-755-GROW (4769).

What the assessment determines: The county board evaluates whether the person has an immediate need — a situation that could create risk of substantial harm within 30 days without action — or a current need, meaning an unmet need for HCBS within the next 12 months that county board or other community services cannot meet.¹ If needs cannot be met through existing services, the person is placed on the waiver waiting list according to that need level.

Good to know: Questions about the assessment itself can be sent to wla@dodd.ohio.gov, DODD's statewide Subject Matter Expert email.¹

WHAT TO HAVE READY

- ☐ Legal name, date of birth, and Social Security number of the person needing services
- ☐ A description of current daily support needs and any safety concerns
- ☐ Diagnosis records or a doctor's evaluation, if available
- ☐ Proof of Ohio residency (utility bill, lease, or similar)

1. Ohio Dept. of Developmental Disabilities, "Ohio Assessment for Immediate Need and Current Need" — <https://dodd.ohio.gov/county-boards/assessments/assessment-immediate-current-need>

2

STEP 2

Complete Medicaid Eligibility

Financial eligibility is determined separately from the disability/functional review

Ohio's DODD waivers are Medicaid programs, so the person must be determined financially and categorically eligible for Medicaid before waiver services can begin, and must keep that Medicaid eligibility current every month while enrolled.²

How to apply: Medicaid financial eligibility is handled by the County Department of Job and Family Services (CDJFS) — a different office from the county DD board. Families can apply online through the Ohio Benefits

Self-Service Portal at benefits.ohio.gov, by phone through the Ohio Medicaid Consumer Hotline at 1-800-324-8680 (Mon–Fri 7am–8pm, Sat 8am–5pm), or in person / by mail at the local CDJFS office.²

What's required: U.S. citizenship or qualifying immigration status, a Social Security number (or application for one), Ohio residency, and meeting the program's financial (income and, for some waivers, asset) requirements verified by the CDJFS caseworker.²

Timing tip: The Waiting List Assessment (Step 1) and the Medicaid application (Step 2) can generally be started at the same time — you do not need to wait for one to finish before beginning the other. Your county board's SSA can point you to the right CDJFS contact.

WHAT TO HAVE READY

- ☐ Photo ID and Social Security card (or number) for the applicant
- ☐ Proof of Ohio residency
- ☐ Proof of income (pay stubs, benefit award letters, or tax return)
- ☐ Any current health insurance or Medicare information

2. Ohio Dept. of Medicaid, "Apply for Benefits" / Related Content — <https://medicaid.ohio.gov/families-and-individuals/support>

3

STEP 3

Undergo a Functional Needs Evaluation

Confirming a developmental disability and an ICF/IID level of care

To qualify for an HCBS waiver, the individual must also be determined to have a developmental disability and to need an Intermediate Care Facility for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ICF/IID) level of care — the same level of clinical need required for that institutional setting, confirmed under Ohio Administrative Code 5123-8-01.³

What this looks like: Your county board's Service and Support Administrator (SSA) coordinates this functional / level-of-care evaluation, which reviews the person's abilities across major life-activity areas (such as self-care, learning, mobility, and communication) against federal and state criteria.³ A qualifying developmental disability must generally be diagnosed by a medical professional and have originated before age 22.

Where it fits: This step usually happens alongside or shortly after the Waiting List Assessment and while the Medicaid application is being processed — your SSA will let you know what records or appointments are needed.

The result: Once a developmental disability, an ICF/IID level of care, and Medicaid eligibility are all confirmed, and a waiver slot is available, the person can be enrolled in one of Ohio's three waivers (see the comparison on page 3) and services can begin.⁴

WHAT TO HAVE READY

- ☐ Medical / diagnostic records supporting a developmental disability
- ☐ School records or IEP (for school-age individuals), if applicable
- ☐ Any prior evaluations (psychological, developmental, or ICAP-type assessments)
- ☐ A list of current supports and any provider or therapist contacts

3. Ohio Administrative Code, Rule 5160-42-01 (Level One Waiver eligibility criteria) — <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-administrative-code/rule-5160-42-01>

4. Ohio Dept. of Developmental Disabilities, "Waiver Comparison" — <https://dodd.ohio.gov/waivers-and-services/waivers/waiver-comparison>



AFTER APPROVAL

What Happens After Approval

Your Service and Support Administrator (SSA) and the person-centered plan

Once eligibility is confirmed and a waiver slot is offered, the county board assigns a Service and Support Administrator (SSA) to work directly with the family. The SSA helps select a waiver type, builds a person-centered Ohio Individual Service Plan (ISP), and helps identify and coordinate qualified service providers.⁴

The SSA remains the family's ongoing point of contact — for annual waiver renewals, changes in needed services, and any questions about the individual service plan going forward.

4. Ohio Dept. of Developmental Disabilities, "Working with Providers and County Boards" — <https://dodd.ohio.gov/your-family/all-family-resources/working-with-providers-county-boards>

County Board of DD Directory

Every step in this guide starts with a call to your County Board of Developmental Disabilities (CBDD). Below are direct intake contacts for the four featured metro-area counties, followed by a full directory of surrounding counties across Northeast and Central Ohio. Contact details were verified directly against each board's official website in August 2026 — phone extensions and staff contacts can change, so if a number doesn't connect, ask to be transferred to "intake" or "Service and Support Administration (SSA)."

Featured Metro Counties

Cleveland	Cuyahoga County
Cuyahoga County Board of DD Intake phone: 216-736-2673 (Getting Started/Eligibility) · Main 216-241-8230 Email: Intake@cuyahogadd.org Website: https://www.cuyahogadd.org/ Apply / start intake: https://www.cuyahogadd.org/eligibility/overview Address: 1275 Lakeside Ave E, Cleveland, OH 44114	
Canton	Stark County
Stark County Board of DD (Stark DD) Intake phone: (330) 479-3582 (Intake & Eligibility) Email: ssaintake@starkdd.org Website: https://www.starkdd.org/ Apply / start intake: https://www.starkdd.org/intake-form Address: 2950 Whipple Ave NW, Canton, OH 44708	
Akron	Summit County
Summit DD (Summit Co. DD Board) Intake phone: 330-634-8676 (Intake/Eligibility) · Main 330-634-8000 Email: intake@summitdd.org Website: https://www.summitdd.org/ Apply / start intake: https://www.summitdd.org/supporting-people/eligibility/ Address: 2355 Second St, Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44221	
Columbus	Franklin County

Franklin County Board of DD (FCBDD)

Intake phone: (614) 342-5490 (Intake Dept.)

Email: Not publicly listed — call intake line

Website: <https://fcbdd.org/>

Apply / start intake: <https://fcbdd.org/enrollment/applying-for-services/>

Address: 1650 Watermark Dr, Columbus, OH 43215

Full Directory — Northeast Ohio

Cuyahoga (Cleveland), Stark (Canton), Summit (Akron) and their surrounding counties. ★ marks the featured metro-area boards.

County	County Board of DD	Intake Phone	Email	Address
Cuyahoga (Cleveland)	Cuyahoga County Board of DD ★ https://www.cuyahogadd.org/ Apply: https://www.cuyahogadd.org/eligibility/overview	216-736-2673 (Getting Started/Eligibility) · Main 216-241-8230	Intake@cuyahogadd.org	1275 Lakeside Ave E, Cleveland, OH 44114
Stark (Canton)	Stark County Board of DD (Stark DD) ★ https://www.starkdd.org/ Apply: https://www.starkdd.org/intake-form	(330) 479-3582 (Intake & Eligibility)	ssaintake@starkdd.org	2950 Whipple Ave NW, Canton, OH 44708
Summit (Akron)	Summit DD (Summit Co. DD Board) ★ https://www.summitdd.org/ Apply: https://www.summitdd.org/supporting-people/eligibility/	330-634-8676 (Intake/Eligibility) · Main 330-634-8000	intake@summitdd.org	2355 Second St, Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44221
Lake	Lake County Board of DD (Deepwood) https://lakebdd.org/ Apply: https://lakebdd.org/eligibility/	(440) 350-5145 (SSA/Eligibility)	info@lakebdd.org	8121 Deepwood Blvd, Mentor, OH 44060
Geauga	Geauga County Board of DD https://www.geaugadd.org/ Apply: https://www.geaugadd.org/services/	440-729-9406 (Main line)	metz@geaugadd.org	8200 Cedar Rd, Chesterland, OH 44026
Medina	Medina County Board of DD https://www.mcbdd.org/ Apply: https://www.mcbdd.org/eligibility/	330-725-7751, opt. 2 (Eligibility/SSA)	eligibility@mcbdd.org	4691 Windfall Rd, Medina, OH 44256
Lorain	Lorain Co. Board of DD (Murray Ridge Center) https://www.murrayridgecenter.org/ Apply: https://www.murrayridgecenter.org/eligibility-and-intake/	(440) 324-2366 (SSA Intake)	intake@murrayridgecenter.org	9740 Murray Ridge Rd, Elyria, OH 44035
Portage	Portage County Board of DD https://www.portagedd.org/ Apply: https://www.portagedd.org/services/eligibility-requirements/	330-297-4100 (SSA/Eligibility)	intake@portagedd.org	2606 Brady Lake Rd, Ravenna, OH 44266

County	County Board of DD	Intake Phone	Email	Address
Mahoning	Mahoning County Board of DD https://www.mahoningdd.org/ Apply: https://www.mahoningdd.org/community-services/eligibility	330-799-2824 (Intake & Eligibility)	karen.fitzgerald@mahoningcountyoh.gov	4791 Woodridge Dr, Austintown, OH 44515
Columbiana	Columbiana County Board of DD https://www.ccbdd.net/ Apply: https://ccbdd.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/blank-intake-packet.pdf	330-424-0404 (SSA/Intake, ext. 164)	n.a.	35947 SR 172, Lisbon, OH 44432
Carroll	Carroll County Board of DD http://carrollcbdd.org/ Apply: https://carrollcbdd.org/CarrollCBDD_information.php?Services-and-Support-Eligibility-Information-32	330-627-6555 (Eligibility Intake)	jhilliard@carrollcbdd.org	540 High St NW, Carrollton, OH 44615
Tuscarawas	Tuscarawas County Board of DD https://www.tuscbdd.org/ Apply: https://www.tuscbdd.org/TuscBDD_information.php?Eligibility-Information-32	(330) 308-7172 (Intro & Eligibility)	bstarkey@tuscbdd.org	610 Commercial Ave SW, New Philadelphia, OH 44663
Holmes	Holmes County Board of DD https://www.holmesdd.org/ Apply: https://www.holmesdd.org/services	(330) 674-8045 (Main — ask for SSA Dept.)	n.a.	8001 T.R. 574, Holmesville, OH
Wayne	Wayne County Board of DD https://www.waynedd.org/ Apply: https://www.waynedd.org/services-support/eligibility-services	330-264-4086 (SSA Dept.)	scarter@waynedd.org	266 Oldman Rd, Wooster, OH 44691

Full Directory — Central Ohio

Franklin (Columbus) and its surrounding counties. ★ marks the featured metro-area board.

County	County Board of DD	Intake Phone	Email	Address
Franklin (Columbus)	Franklin County Board of DD (FCBDD) ★ https://fcbdd.org/ Apply: https://fcbdd.org/enrollment/applying-for-services/	(614) 342-5490 (Intake Dept.)	n.a.	1650 Watermark Dr, Columbus, OH 43215

County	County Board of DD	Intake Phone	Email	Address
Delaware	Delaware County Board of DD https://www.dcbdd.org/ Apply: https://www.dcbdd.org/eligibility/	740-201-3601 (Intake & Eligibility)	Intake.Eligibility@dcbdd.org	7991 Columbus Pike, Lewis Center, OH
Fairfield	Fairfield County Board of DD https://www.fairfielddd.com/ Apply: https://www.fairfielddd.com/eligibility/	(740) 652-7230 (Intro & Eligibility)	eligibility@fairfielddd.com	795 College Ave, Lancaster, OH
Licking	Licking County Board of DD http://lcountydd.org/ Apply: http://lcountydd.org/make-a-referral/	740-349-6588 (Admissions Coordinator)	n.a.	116 N. 22nd St, Newark, OH
Madison	Madison County Board of DD https://www.themcbdd.com/ Apply: https://www.themcbdd.com/eligibility.html	740-852-7050 ext. 1848 (Intake & Info Coord.)	n.a.	500 Elm St, London, OH 43140
Pickaway	Pickaway County Board of DD https://pickawaydd.org/ Apply: https://pickawaydd.org/services/where-to-start.html	740-248-8237 (Eligibility questions)	n.a.	200 East High St, Circleville, OH 43113
Union	Union County Board of DD https://www.ucbdd.org/ Apply: https://www.ucbdd.org/about-us/eligibility	(937) 537-7766 (Intake & Referral, ages 6+)	lledley@ucbdd.org	1280 Charles Lane, Marysville, OH 43040

Sources: each board's official website, linked above; verified August 2026. Early Intervention for children under age 3 statewide: Help Me Grow, 1-800-755-GROW (4769).

Statewide Resources & Hotlines

Resource	Contact	Link
Ohio Dept. of Developmental Disabilities (DODD)	1-800-617-6733	https://dodd.ohio.gov
DODD Waiting List Assessment questions	wla@dodd.ohio.gov	https://dodd.ohio.gov/county-boards/assessments/assessment-immediate-current-need
Ohio Medicaid Consumer Hotline	1-800-324-8680	https://medicaid.ohio.gov
Ohio Benefits Self-Service Portal (apply for Medicaid)	benefits.ohio.gov	https://benefits.ohio.gov
Help Me Grow (Early Intervention, ages 0-3)	1-800-755-GROW (4769)	https://helpmegrow.ohio.gov
Ohio Dept. of Medicaid — Bureau of State Hearings (appeals)	1-866-635-3748	https://medicaid.ohio.gov

A Note From United Living Services

This guide is intended to help families take the first confident steps toward Ohio DODD waiver services. Every county board, phone number, and web link in this guide was verified against the county board's own official website. Because staff, extensions, and web pages change over time, please confirm details when you call, and don't hesitate to ask your county board's Service and Support Administration team for help navigating any step in this process.

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