



DOWN SYNDROME GUILD
OF DALLAS

What is a Medicaid Waiver?

A Medicaid waiver allows the state to be more flexible in how it allocates money to provide long-term services for some people with disabilities or elderly citizens who are eligible for Medicaid. In the past, people had to be in nursing homes or other large institutions for Medicaid to pay for long-term services.

Important facts about a Medicaid waiver:

- It is an array of support services available to recipients in the communities where they live rather than in institutions or in the traditional 6- person group home.
- **It is *NOT*** an entitlement program – meaning that the number of “slots” available is dependent on the funding from the state legislature. The amount of money appropriated by the state is matched by federal funds.
- Historically, the number of slots available has been fewer than the number of people requesting services, resulting in a “waiting list” or “interest list”.
- “Waiver” indicates that certain Medicaid requirements and restrictions do not apply to these programs.
- When services through another government program other than the waiver are available to meet an identified need, those resources must be used first.
- Funding received through a Medicaid waiver program will follow you if you move, unlike General Revenue funding, which may be lost if you move to a different county.

In Texas, there are several different waiver programs that offer a range of home and community-based services to people with disabilities. The most commonly used by those with Down syndrome are HCS and CLASS. There are different rules and funding amounts for each of the different waivers. In general, though, their purpose is to provide funding to help people get the supports they need in the community.

****It is important to note that the HCS program is the only program that offers residential options.**