



## **Family Support Services Program (FSSP)**

### Services Available and Program Stipulations

January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025

#### **ELIGIBILITY:**

As delineated in its Annual Plan and as specified in Ohio Revised Code 5126.11, and the Ohio Administrative Code 5123-4-01, the Portage County Board of Developmental Disabilities (Board) offers a Family Support Services Program (FSSP) which provides various services and supports to individuals eligible for services from the Board and living at home with their family. The Family Support Services Program assists families who have a member with a developmental disability living in the home. The program promotes the unity of the family by assisting it to meet the special needs of the individual with a developmental disability.

Individuals living independently, enrolled on an Individual Options (IO) or Level One waiver or SELF waiver, or living in an ICF/DD or in foster care are **not eligible** for services and supports through the FSSP. Persons requesting to participate in the FSSP should not have similar services and supports available through other means.

Denials of FSSP requests may be appealed through Policy 4.49 Resolution of Complaints and Appeals of Adverse Actions Proposed or Initiated by the Board.

#### **INCOME GUIDELINES:**

### **SUSPENDED FOR THE 2025 PROGRAM YEAR**

~~Family co-pay is based on sliding scale per state rule and is based upon the family's taxable income as verified by submission of the most current year 1040 document. The family is responsible for reporting any changes in income. Family taxable income shall be based on Federal taxable income (after applicable deductions) and is the sum total of all individuals' income in the household, exclusive of the individual with the developmental disability.~~

**Income Guidelines continued**

<u>Annual Taxable Income</u>	<u>Co-Payment</u>
\$27,258 or less	0%
\$27,259 to \$37,759	10%
\$37,760 to \$48,260	30%
\$48,261 to \$62,261	50%
\$62,262 to \$79,762	75%
\$79,763 and above	100%

**ALLOWANCE:**

The FSSP operates on a calendar year cycle beginning on January 1 of each year through December 31. **The FSSP is not an entitlement.** If requests for FSSP services exceed the annual budget allocation, families' requests shall be assigned to a waiting list. To be eligible for reimbursement, the family must obtain the estimated cost and **prior approval** of the expenditure before agreeing to services or signing a contract with a provider.

Maximum level of service per family may vary from year to year based on the availability of funds. Allowances for families joining the program in mid-year will be pro-rated. Currently the annual allocation is \$2,000.00 per individual per calendar year which starts on January 1. In addition to the annual allocation, there is a lifetime allocation, currently set at \$7,500.00 per family, for home modifications.

- 1 individual - \$2,000.00 per year
- 2 individuals - \$3,000.00 per year
- 3 individuals - \$4,000.00 per year
- 4+ individuals - \$5,000.00 per year

**COMMUNICATION:**

The Board's FSSP is administered by the Northeast Ohio Network (NEON), a Council of Governments established in 1996 by six northeast Ohio County Boards of Developmental Disabilities, one of the six being the Portage County Board of Developmental Disabilities. Any questions related to the Family Support Services Program are to be directed to Portage FSSP at NEON at 1-800-237-6828. If you leave a voice message please state and spell your last name, the individual's name, the reason for your call, and a phone number where you can be reached or you can email portageFSS@neoncog.org.

**All requests will only be open for ninety days (90 days) from the date of receipt, for all correspondence/material and review to be completed.** After the ninety days (90 days) with no response to requests for additional information, your request will not be considered, and resubmission of your request will need to be completed.

## **FSSP ELIGIBLE REQUESTS INCLUDE:**

### **INCONTINENCE SUPPLIES/DIAPERS:**

- Disposable diapers/wipes/bed pads are available for children and adults over the age of three (3) who are not eligible for them through Medicaid with a physician's prescription
- A physician's prescription certifying that the individual is incontinent is required on an annual basis. Diapers can be delivered directly to your home.
- The cost of diapers will be deducted from your total annual allocation and ~~applicable co-payment~~, in this instance the family shall be responsible for payment of the remaining balance of the cost.

### **DIETARY ITEMS: (Special Diet)**

- Specialized dietary items are available for children over age one (1) and adults who are not eligible for them through Medicaid.
- A physician's prescription certifying that the special dietary items' necessity is required on an annual basis.
- Vitamins/regular items from the grocery store are not eligible. Diets will be reviewed on a case by case basis. (see parental responsibilities section below)
- The cost of special dietary items will be deducted from your total annual allocation and ~~applicable co-payment~~, in this instance the family shall be responsible for payment of the remaining balance of the cost.

### **SPECIAL EQUIPMENT:**

- Special equipment is available upon the written recommendation of any of the following people: Physician, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, or Speech and Language Pathologist and/or a licensed therapist.
- The therapist is required to fill out a service request form as well as attach a picture and description of the specialized piece of equipment.
- If the piece of equipment is over your allocation you have the option of sending a check to PCBDD for the portion that is above your allocation.
- Typical toys will not be purchased under this program.
- The amount of special equipment will be deducted from your total allocation and ~~applicable co-payment~~, in this instance the family shall be responsible for payment of the remaining balance of the cost.

## **RECREATIONAL THERAPIES & FAMILY TRAINING:**

- Traditional therapies such as Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech Therapy, Behavior Therapy/Applied Behavior Analysis, & Audiology are not funded by the FSSP.
- Recreational therapies, such as music therapy, therapeutic horseback riding, adaptive aquatics, etc. maybe funded as long as the program is within the State of Ohio.
- Please note that any of these therapies or classes must be **adaptive** classes.
- Typical classes are not able to be funded under this program.
- Prior approval and written documentation are required; in this instance the family shall be responsible for payment of the remaining balance of the cost.
- This program may also fund registration costs for conferences for families on issues related to the eligible individual (e.g., siblings conference, self-advocacy) that are being conducted within the county.
- An exception may be granted for specialized training within the State of Ohio.
- Prior approval and written documentation are required.
- The cost of these programs will be deducted from your annual allocation and ~~applicable co-payment~~, in this instance the family shall be responsible for payment of the remaining balance of the cost.

## **CAMP ASSISTANCE:**

- Allocations may be used to pay for the cost of camp but please note that these funds may only be used to cover the cost of a specialized camp **or a typical camp that the individual or family feels will meet the needs of the individual. Camps should be located in the State of Ohio.**
- The cost of camp will be deducted from your total allocation and ~~applicable co-payment~~, in this instance the family shall be responsible for payment of the remaining balance of the cost.

## **HOME MODIFICATIONS:**

- Home modifications such as ramps, grab-bars, bathroom alterations, etc. may be funded through the FSSP program. **Modifications must be adaptive in nature**
- Requests for home modifications will require the recommendation and evaluation of a physician, physical or occupational therapist and any modifications must conform to all applicable housing, zoning and building codes.
- **You must provide a minimum of three (3) quotations.**
- **Verification of home ownership is requested.**
- **If you live in a rental home, and are in good standing, with letter from landlord, the committee may consider a home modification.**
- **If you have a land contract and are in good standing, with letter from landowner, the committee may consider a home modification.**
- **Please note that typical household repairs are not funded through the FSSP.**
- After home modification you must live in the home one (1) year
- The amount for any adaptive home modification will be deducted from your lifetime home allocation and ~~applicable co-payment~~, in this instance the family shall be responsible for payment of the remaining balance of the cost.
- All fencing requests will be reviewed for the least costly alternative (chain link) along with reduction in possible areas that will be covered.

- Safety devices will be reviewed for the least costly alternative.

## **RESPITE CARE:**

- Respite care provides support on a short-term basis to the person served in the family home or out of the family home and is intended to provide relief to families or to aid families in crisis.
- Respite can be provided by a certified and approved provider or by a family chosen provider.
- Families can negotiate a rate that is fair to the service provider and them.
- The maximum amount that the Board will pay per hour is \$20.00 for family/friend.
- Agency or private provider rates will vary depending upon the service requirements.
- ONDECARE is also available for pre-vetted qualified infant care, childcare, special needs care and elder care. Go to [Ondecare.com](http://Ondecare.com) for online reservations available 24/7. This is a pre-paid service and available for reimbursement with FSSP funds for those that are eligible.
- Under special circumstances, additional respite care is available up to \$4,000.00, after regular FSSP funding for respite has been exhausted. This approval will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine eligibility.
- The cost of respite will be deducted from your annual allocation and ~~applicable co-payment~~, in this instance the family shall be responsible for payment of the remaining balance of the cost.

## **TYPICAL PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY DEFINITION**

The following items are considered to be things that parents typically provide for their children and will **NOT** be supported by the Board's Family Support Services Program.

- Tuition for school & extracurricular activities
- Tutoring
- Fine arts fees (e.g., music, dance)
- Household goods (e.g., appliances (including washers/dryers/microwaves), furniture (including mattresses)
- Household repairs and maintenance (e.g. painting, flooring, roofs and equipment (HVAC, etc.))
- Spending money for social activities (e.g. souvenirs, posters, t-shirts, hats, etc.)
- Typical toys and other typical items (e.g., bikes, riding toys, computers, IPADS)
- Utilities payments (e.g. electric, gas, phone, water, etc.)
- Clothing
- Fines (e.g. parking, traffic, court costs, etc.)
- Automobile purchase & repairs
- Gasoline for the family vehicle
- Therapies without scientific evidence (e.g., chelation therapy, ionic cleansing, nutritional)
- Diapers for children under the age of three (3)
- Swimming pools, pool supplies, hot tubs, thera-pools and saunas
- Costs for recreational activities/events (e.g., admission prices to concerts, sporting events or theatre performances, etc.)

- Gym/exercise memberships
- Eyeglasses
- Daycare Services
- Medical bills, medical co-pays, dental, testing, experimental treatments, etc.
- Vitamins, diabetic, lactose and gluten free diets and other various specialties and diets are not guaranteed to be approved.

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list. There may be the need for consideration of very special situations which will be done on an individual basis.

Effective: January 1, 2025