

Distribution of waiver “slots”

The Bureau of Autism Services will allocate waiver slots on a regional basis to ensure access across the Commonwealth. The Bureau will allocate the number of waiver slots for each region based on the percentage of Pennsylvania’s population age 20 or older in each region, according to the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2006 Current Population Estimates. The regions are divided as follows:

- West: Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Fayette, Forest, Greene, Indiana, Jefferson, Lawrence, McKean, Mercer, Potter, Venango, Warren, Washington, and Westmoreland Counties
- Central: Adams, Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Centre, Clinton, Columbia, Franklin, Fulton, Huntington, Juniata, Lebanon, Lycoming, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Perry, Snyder, Somerset, Union, and York Counties
- Southeast: Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties
- Northeast: Berks, Bradford, Carbon, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Luzerne, Monroe, Northampton, Pike, Schuylkill, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, Wayne, and Wyoming Counties
- Capitol: Cumberland, Dauphin, and Lancaster Counties

Initial Application Process

The Bureau of Autism Services will accept requests for services using a publicized, toll-free telephone number. Callers will receive a voice mail message asking for basic information about the caller and the person for whom services are requested. The Bureau will determine whether the applicant meets basic program eligibility requirements (such as age and diagnosis) and if so, check the DPW information systems to determine whether the individual for whom services is sought is currently receiving state or federally funded “long- term care services” such as through other waivers (e.g. PFDS, Consolidated, OBRA) or in an ICF-MR. If so, that individual will be eligible for a waiver slot- if any remain- only when all other applicants without services are given slots.

During the initial 6 weeks of the waiver’s operation, applicants without current services will be randomly assigned a place on their region’s intake list and applications will be processed in that order. If there are any slots left, applicants already receiving services will be randomly assigned a place on their region’s “Priority 2” intake list and the remaining slots will be distributed in that order. The application process will include a “level of care assessment” as the waiver is limited, under federal law, to persons with significant care needs.

If the waiver capacity in a region is filled, individuals requesting services will be placed on a waiting list until capacity is available. If waiver capacity becomes available in a region, persons on the waiting list will be assessed for level of care and financial eligibility.

After the initial 6 weeks, slots will be given to persons without other services on a first-come first-serve basis and then, if any slots remain, to persons who have other services.

