



**DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES
AUTISM DIVISION**

1000 Washington Street | Boston, MA 02118

MESSAGE TO FAMILIES OF YOUNG CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

**An Important Message to Massachusetts Families
With Children Under Age 10**

Diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder

Open Request Application Period October 16, 2023 to October 31, 2023

The Autism Division of the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) runs the Children's Autism Waiver Program that provides one-to-one interventions to help children with autism who exhibit severe behavior, social and communication problems through a service called **Expanded Habilitation, Education** (intensive in-home services and supports). This service occurs in the child's home or other natural settings under the supervision of trained clinical staff and is available for a total of three years. The program also provides related support services such as community integration activities, family training, and respite. At the conclusion of the three years of intensive services, a child may access supplemental services that meet the child's needs and help with the transition out of the intensive portion of the Children's Autism Waiver Program until the child's 10th birthday.

Eligibility: the following requirements are necessary for participation in this waiver program:

1. The child must have a **confirmed diagnosis** of an Autism Spectrum Disorder, subject to verification by the Department of Developmental Services.
2. The child has not yet reached his/her 10th birthday. Children birth through age 9 may participate.
3. The child is a resident of Massachusetts.
4. The child meets the level of care required for services in an Intermediate Care Facility for persons with an Intellectual Disability (ICF/ID) as assessed by DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES.
5. The family chooses to have the child receive services in the home and community.
6. The child must be able to be safely served in the community.
7. The child must have a legally responsible representative able to direct the services and supports of the program.
8. The child must be found by the MassHealth agency to be eligible for MassHealth Standard coverage, based on family income. **For families who have not yet applied for MassHealth, this must be done at the time of the filing of the Children's Autism Waiver Program Open Request Form.** (Instructions on how to apply for MassHealth are on the next page)

All services require that the child continues to meet the financial and clinical eligibility requirements for the Children's Autism Waiver Program throughout their enrollment.

The Children's Autism Waiver Program will continue to serve children with an autism spectrum disorder who meet the eligibility criteria for the Program, up until their 10th birthday. At this time the program may serve approximately 500 children a year. The Children's Autism Waiver Program maintains reserved capacity (45 statewide slots) for children who are age 3 and transitioning out of Early Intervention. There is a high rate of turnover in the program every year, therefore, we pull from this Open Request list to fill open slots. The Autism Division is offering an opportunity to apply for the current applicant pool through an open request application period. The Autism Division held its last open request in October 2022.

The 2023 Open Request period runs from October 16, 2023 - October 31, 2023. Please be sure to MAIL or EMAIL the *Open Request Application* between October 16th and October 31st. The Autism Division will discard submissions outside of this timeframe. If you submitted an application during the last open request application period in October 2022, YOU MUST RESUBMIT AN APPLICATION FOR 2023.

How to Participate in the Open Request Process:

1. Get a copy of the *Open Request Application*

- a. Please contact your local Autism Support Center (attached) to request the *Open Request Application*.
- b. Autism Support Centers are available to help you complete the application.
- c. All forms are also posted on the DDS website www.mass.gov/DDS under ‘DDS Autism Waiver Services’

2. Complete the *Open Request Application*. You will need your:

- a. child’s date of birth
- b. child’s social security number
- c. child’s MassHealth ID number

3. Submit the *Open Request Application*:

- a. Applications must have a Postmark or Date Stamp between October 16, 2023 and October 31, 2023.
- b. Applications received outside of this designated time period will be discarded.
- c. Complete the application in pen and print clearly.
- d. Sign the application in pen.
- e. ONLY ONE APPLICATION PER CHILD—The Autism Division will discard multiple applications

4. The Autism Division is NOT accepting hand delivered applications, applications must be mailed to:

**Department of Developmental Services
Autism Division
Attn: Children’s Autism Waiver Program Open Request
1000 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02118**

It is a priority of the Autism Division of DDS to ensure that the process for requesting participation for the Children’s Autism Waiver Program is fully accessible to families and children with autism who are from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds. Materials are available in Arabic, Burmese, Chinese (Mandarin & Cantonese), Haitian Creole, Cape Verdean Creole, Portuguese (European), Spanish, Khmer, Vietnamese, Nepali and Somali

Translation and interpretation are available free of charge to all participants.

How to Apply for MassHealth: You can apply for MassHealth in any of the following ways:

- If you have an account, sign into mahealthconnector.org and apply for MassHealth
- If you do not have an account, the quickest way is to apply online and create a secure online account at mahealthconnector.org.
- Fill out and sign the [Massachusetts Application for Health and Dental Coverage and Help Paying Costs](#) and mail to:

**Health Insurance Processing Center
P.O. Box 4405
Taunton, MA 02780
or Fax to 1-857-323-8300**

- Call the MassHealth Member Customer Service Center at 1-800-841-2900 (TTY: 1-800- 497-4648 for people who are Deaf, hard of hearing, or speech disabled) or 1-877-MA ENROLL (877-623-6765).
- Visit one of the 4 MassHealth Enrollment Centers (MEC) listed below and apply in person.

MassHealth Enrollment Center – Chelsea

45 Spruce Street Chelsea, MA 02150
#1-800-841-2900 TTY 1-888-665-9997

MassHealth Enrollment Center – Tewksbury

367 East Street Tewksbury, MA 01876
#1-800-841-2900 TTY 1-888-665-9997

MassHealth Enrollment Center-Springfield

88 Industry Avenue, Suite D Springfield, MA 01104
#1-800-841-2900 TTY 1-888-665-99

MassHealth Enrollment Center- Taunton

21 Spring Street, Suite 4 Taunton, MA 02780
#1-800-841-2900 TTY 1-888-665-9997

For additional information about the Autism Waiver Program, contact your local Autism Support Center below or email AutismDivision@mass.gov. Or call the Autism Division at DDS at 617-624-7778.

Western Massachusetts**Pathlight: Autism Connections**

220 Brookdale Drive
Springfield MA 01104 | 413-732-0531

Norfolk County**Lifeworks: The Family Autism Center**

789 Clapboardtree Street
Westwood, MA 02090 | 781-762-4001

Central Massachusetts**HMEA: Autism Resource Central**

712 Plantation Street
Worcester, MA 01605 | 508-835-4278

Southeastern Massachusetts**Community Autism Resources (CAR)**

40-A Dean St,
Taunton, MA 02780 | 508-379-0371

Metro West of Boston**Autism Alliance of MetroWest (AAMW)**

1881 Worcester Rd, # 100A
Framingham, MA 01701 | 508-652-9900

Northeastern Massachusetts**Northeast ARC (NEARC) The Autism Support Center**

100 Independence Way-Suite D3
Danvers, MA 01923 | 978-777-9135

Greater Boston**Vinfen**

1208A VFW Parkway
West Roxbury, MA 02132 | 617-206-5038

www.mass.gov/DDS-autism-waiver-services

Information is also available in:

Arabic, Burmese, Chinese (Mandarin & Cantonese), Haitian Creole, Cape Verdean Creole, Portuguese (European), Spanish, Khmer, Vietnamese, Nepali and Somali