

**Urgent:** The person is at risk for meeting the criteria for "crisis" OR meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Aging or failing health of caregiver and no alternate available to provide supports;
- Living situation presents a significant risk of abuse or neglect
- Increasing behavioral risk to self or others
- Stability of current living situation is severely threatened due to extensive support needs or family catastrophe
- Discharge from other service system (e.g., Dept. of Children's Services, mental health institute) is imminent.

**Active Request:** The person or the person's family or guardian/conservator is requesting access to services but does not have the intensive needs which meet the urgent or crisis criteria above.

**Deferred Request:** The person and/or family/guardian wants services but not within the next year.

#### **Waiting List Settlement**

If you were on the DMRS waiting list before July 1, 2004, you should be contacted by your regional office and assigned a state case manager. You will also be eligible to receive Consumer Directed Supports, a limited amount of funding (under \$2,000 annually) until you receive waiver services. If you are already receiving Family Support funds, you will have to choose between the two programs. You will not be able to receive funds from Family Support and from Consumer Directed Supports at the same time.

## **Who can I call for information and to get an application?**

Regional offices of the **Division of Mental Retardation Services:**

**East Tennessee** (Knoxville)  
888-531-9876 (toll free) or 865-588-0508  
**Middle Tennessee** (Nashville)  
800-654-4839 (toll free) or 615-231-5080  
**West Tennessee** (Memphis)  
800-308-2586 (toll free) or 901-745-7019  
**Central Office** (Nashville)  
800-535-9725 (toll free) or 615-532-6530

**Tennessee Early Intervention System**  
(TEIS) - 800-852-7157

Regional offices of the **Division of Rehabilitation Services:**

**East Tennessee - Johnson City**  
423-434-6934  
**East Tennessee - Knoxville**  
423-594-6054  
**Southeast Tennessee - Chattanooga**  
423-634-6700  
**Middle Tennessee - Nashville**  
615-741-1606  
**Middle Tennessee - Columbia**  
615-380-2563  
**West Tennessee - Jackson**  
901-423-5620  
**Southwest Tennessee - Memphis**  
901-543-7301

#### **TennCare**

Hotline - 1-800-669-1851  
Hispanic - 1-800-254-7568  
TDD - 1-800-772-7643



## **Wants You to Know...**



## **An Introduction to the Division of Mental Retardation Services (DMRS)**

The Arc of Tennessee developed this brochure to let you know about the services available for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. This provides a general description of the services and supports, how to apply, and who to call.

The Arc of Tennessee values diversity and does not discriminate based on race, ethnicity, religion, age, geographic location, sexual orientation, gender or level of disability.

The Division of Mental Retardation Services (DMRS) provides funding for residential services, day services/supports, employment supports, respite, personal assistance and therapies. To request an application for these services, you must contact your local DMRS Regional Office. DMRS can also give you information about how to apply for Family Support services.

For future assistance from The Arc of Tennessee, call:

1-800-835-7077  
615-248-5878  
Fax 615-248-5879  
151 Athens Way, Suite 100  
Nashville, TN 37228

Website: [www.thearctn.org](http://www.thearctn.org)  
E-mail: [thearctn@thearctn.org](mailto:thearctn@thearctn.org)

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## WHAT ARE THE SERVICES AND SUPPORTS THAT DMRS

There are many different kinds of services and supports that the Division of Mental Retardation Services offers for infants, children and adults. Some of the services have special names (like STRAP or INDEPENDENT SUPPORT COORDINATION), so ask for a complete list of services and descriptions and ask how you can receive the services you want. You may apply for any services for which you are eligible even if they are not available now.

Eligibility for services is based on how services are funded. Most services require a primary diagnosis of mental retardation prior to the person's eighteenth birthday. Some services also have financial limitations. To qualify for Medicaid Waiver funding you must meet the same criteria as required to receive SSI (Supplemental Security Income) benefits.

Some of the services DMRS offers are described below.

### LIVING SUPPORTS

DMRS offers help to find a variety of places to live, provide staff to help you to live in your community, adapt the home for special equipment, pay for rent, and help people learn how to live on their own.

### WORKING SUPPORTS

You may ask for assistance to find, apply for, learn, and keep a job. These supports may last as long as you have a job.

### DAY SUPPORTS

**Community Based** supports is a service that enables an individual to participate in typical activities of community life, including:

- volunteer activities
- retirement activities
- opportunities to build relationships and natural supports in the community
- leisure activities
- community events

**Facility Based** services provide individual training and support to help people with mental retardation acquire, retain, or improve skills. Facility Based programs include sheltered workshops, day centers and other services serving only people with disabilities. The service can take place in a variety of settings.

### OTHER SUPPORTS

Families may get short-term help with caregiving (**respite**). Respite may be used to meet each family's needs so that parents and caregivers can work, have free time, or spend time with other family members.

DMRS also offers assistance with difficult behaviors, personal care, and guardianship fees. You may request a person to help you plan for, find and coordinate services.

The **Family Support Program** helps to fund the purchase of services and equipment needed by qualified families who have children with disabilities, and adults with disabilities who live with their families or by themselves.

Family support services should be sensitive to the unique needs, strengths, and values of the individual and the family, and should be responsive to the needs of the entire family. These funds are limited and you may be placed on a waiting list.

To find the family support agency that serves your county, call the Division of Mental Retardation Services Office in your region.

### HEALTH AND THERAPEUTIC SUPPORTS

You may qualify for nursing services; occupational, physical, and speech-language therapy; dental and eye care; and special equipment.

## HOW DO I APPLY?

The Regional Office will send you an application for services. You must complete the application and return it to the Regional Office before your request can be considered. If you need help completing the application or if you do not receive an application after requesting one, you can contact The Arc of Tennessee for assistance.

After DMRS receives your application, you will receive services if funding is available. If not, you will be assigned a "Category of Need" and your name will be added to the Waiting List for the services you have requested. You do not have to accept any service you do not want at any time, so it is a good idea to get on the waiting list for ANY service you might want in the future.

## HOW SOON WILL I RECEIVE SERVICES?

You may receive services within weeks of applying. How quickly you receive services depends on whether there is money for services, what kind of services you want, and your "category of need." Sometimes you will be on the waiting list for several years.

If your situation is not a "crisis," be prepared to be on the waiting list.

## WHAT CAN I DO IF I DON'T AGREE WITH THE DECISION OF DMRS?

When you disagree with DMRS about your category of need, you should contact the Regional Office first and talk to the intake coordinator. If you still disagree with DMRS, you should contact the Director at the Regional Office.

People with needs meeting the criteria of "crisis," "urgent" and "active" will be placed on the **waiting list** for services. The waiting list functions as a "register" for services. People with needs meeting the criteria of "deferred" will be placed on the **planning list** for services.

### CATEGORIES OF NEED

**Crisis:** The person needs services immediately for the following reasons:

- Homelessness of the individual:
  - ~The individual is currently homeless; or
  - ~The individual will be homeless within 30 days; or
- Death, incapacitation, or loss of primary caregiver and lack of an alternate primary caregiver:
  - ~The primary caregiver died; or
  - ~The primary caregiver became mentally or physically incapacitated (permanently or expected to last more than 30 days); or
  - ~The primary caregiver serves as primary caregiver for one or more other individuals with serious mental, physical, or developmental disabilities and is unable to provide an acceptable level of care for the enrollee; or
  - ~The primary caregiver must be employed to provide the soul or primary income for the family; or
- Serious and imminent danger of harm to self or others by the individual:
  - ~The individual's current pattern of behavior poses a serious or eminent danger of self-harm which cannot be reasonably or adequately managed by the caregiver; or
  - ~The individual's current pattern of behavior poses a serious or eminent of harm to others which cannot be reasonably or adequately managed by the caregiver.