



autism speaks®

**Supporting the Maryland Autism Community
During COVID-19 Through Advocacy**

May 5, 2020

our mission

Autism Speaks is dedicated to promoting solutions, across the spectrum and throughout the life span, for the needs of individuals with autism and their families. We do this through advocacy and support; increasing understanding and acceptance of people with autism; and advancing research into causes and better interventions for autism spectrum disorder and related conditions.

Autism Speaks does not provide medical or legal advice or services. Rather, Autism Speaks provides general information about autism as a service to the community. The information provided in this email is not a recommendation, referral or endorsement of any resource, therapeutic method, or service provider and does not replace the advice of medical, legal or educational professionals. Autism Speaks has not validated and is not responsible for any information or services provided by third parties. You are urged to use independent judgment and request references when considering any resource associated with the provision of services related to autism.

Challenges the Autism Community is Facing

- Abrupt discontinuation of educational services
- Closure of day programming
- Closure of clinics
- Shift to telehealth
- Mental health supports for parents
- Lack of connection to community opportunities and supports
- Severe disruption of community employment
- Discontinuation of respite relief for families
- Disruption of much-needed routines
- Loss of income for families
- Challenging behaviors
- Access to healthcare with appropriate supports



Contact our Autism Response Team

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1-888-AUTISM2 (1-888-288-4762)

En Español: 1-888-772-9050

help@autismspeaks.org



Agenda

Welcome

- Kisha James,
Executive Director,
National Capital

Federal Advocacy Update

- Stuart Spielman,
Senior Vice
President
Advocacy

State Advocacy Update

- Judith Ursitti,
Director State
Government
Affairs

Community Outreach

- Janet Williams,
Director
Community
Outreach



Federal Advocacy Response

Federal COVID Legislation

MARCH 6: COVID 1

Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations

Provides \$8.3 billion in emergency funding for federal agencies to respond to the coronavirus outbreak

MARCH 18: COVID 2

Families First Coronavirus Response Act

- Provides emergency paid sick and family leave
 - DOL has provided Q&A regarding these provisions of the law
- Tax credits
- Free COVID-19 testing (where available)
- Expands food assistance and unemployment benefits
- Increases Medicaid funding

MARCH 27: COVID 3

Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act

Provides \$2 trillion in funding for provisions, including:

- Economic impact payments to most Americans
- Increased unemployment benefits
- Hundreds of billions of dollars to address the public health response
- Assistance for small businesses and other employers to retain employees and keep their businesses operating
- Billions of dollars for schools
- Extends the Money Follows the Person program through November

Federal COVID Legislation

APRIL 24: COVID 3.5

Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act

Interim bill to replenish small business assistance program and address other issues:

- Limited scope to address Paycheck Protection Program and funding for hospitals and testing.

COVID 4/5

Additional Relief and Stimulus

Timeline still TBD – House will likely introduce/pass bill first – not back in session until at least next week.

What will be contained in these bills: ???

- Examples of potential items:
 - \$ for the public health response
 - Additional economic relief for individuals and small businesses
 - \$ for state and local governments
 - \$ for education
 - Additional nutritional assistance
 - Housing assistance
 - USPS finances
 - Infrastructure investment

Implementation of the COVID bills - A few issues of note

- Economic Impact Payments and SSI
- Distribution of education dollars
- IDEA Waiver Report
- Emergency Paid and Family Leave

Our advocacy priorities during the COVID crisis

- Additional funding for home and community-based services (HCBS)
- Additional funding to meet the educational needs of students with autism
- Protecting the [rights of students under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](#) (IDEA) and other laws
- Expanded access to telehealth services for health care needs
- Eligibility for \$500 economic impact payments for dependents over age 17
- According caregivers of adults with disabilities the [same emergency paid sick and family medical leave](#) policies accorded caregivers of children
- [Preventing discrimination](#) in treatment decisions and care allocation based on disability



State Advocacy Response



HEALTHCARE

Maryland was approved for an 1135 emergency waiver by CMS, the federal Medicaid agency. This allows for a great deal of flexibility related to authorizations/benefits in Medicaid health plans including the ability to:

- Waive certain provider screening requirements
- Postpone deadlines for revalidation of providers
- Allow certain out-of-state providers
- Allow service provision in alternate settings, including unlicensed settings
- Suspend FFS prior authorization requirements
- Extend existing prior authorizations

Additional information can be found [here](#).



HEALTHCARE - Telehealth Services

Maryland Medicaid Bulletin Requiring Telehealth

Applies to

- All Medicaid Provider Types
- Medicaid Managed Care Organizations
- Optum Behavioral Health ASO

Governor Larry Hogan issued an [amended executive order](#) on April 2 authorizing health care practitioners:

- through telehealth and audio-only calls or conversations, perform clinical evaluations, refer patients to health care services, provide treatment, and issue prescriptions;
- to use telehealth and audio-only calls or conversations under appropriate circumstances so Marylanders can continue to receive needed health care services during the catastrophic health emergency

HOME AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is providing emergency flexibilities for Home and Community Based Waiver Services through Appendix K.

Maryland's Appendix K Application was approved by CMS on April 22, 2020. You can find the applications [here](#) and [here](#). You can also find a comprehensive summary [here](#). Some of these flexibilities include:

- Telephonic/Remote Services
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Reimbursement
- Behavioral Support Services (No Preauthorization)
- Alternative Service Sites/Out of State Service Setting
- Site Capacity (Exceed Maximum)
- Staff Training and Onboarding Flexibilities
- Legal guardians and relatives may be paid for greater than 40-hours per week
- Exceed 82 hours per week within the authorized budget
- Exceed current DDA authorization within person's overall authorized funding budget
- Services can be provided any day of the week and exceed eight hours a day and 40 hours per week within a person's authorized budget
- Suspension of minimum of six hours of services be provided during a single day

DDA APPENDIX K PROVISIONS At a Glance

DDA's Appendix K Provisions Highlights	DDA Preauthorization Required	Community Living - Group Home	Meaningful Day Services (Employment Services, Supported Employment, Career Exploration, Community Development)	Behavioral Support Services	Nursing Services (Consultation, Health Case Management, Delegation)	Personal Supports	Shared Living	Supported Living	Self Direction*
Telephone/Remote Services			X	X	X	X		X	X
Respite Payment		X	X			X		X	
Residential Day Time Shared Service Hours		X						X	
Increased Rate		X			X	X	X	X	X
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Reimbursement		X			X	X	X	X	X
Behavioral Support Services (No Preauthorization)		X	X			X	X	X	X
Nursing Services (Consultation, Health Case Management, Delegation) (No Preauthorization)		X	X			X	X	X	X
Reggie Services (No Preauthorization)									X
Acute Care Hospital & Short-term Institutional Stay Supports		X	Day Hab and CDS only			X		X	X
Alternative Service Sites		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Out of State Service Setting		X	X			X		X	X
Site Capacity (Exceed Maximum)		X	X			X	X	X	
Staffing Ratio - 1:10:1 Exception	X	X	X			X	X	X	
Staffing Ratio (Exceed Maximum)		X	X			X	X	X	
Staff Training and Ongoing Activities		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Legal guardians and relatives may be paid for greater than 40 hours per week		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Exceed 80 hours per week within the authorized budget						X			X
Exceed current DDA authorization within person's current authorized funding budget						X			X
Services can be provided any day of the week and exceed eight hours a day and 40 hours per week within a person's authorized budget			X						X
Suspension of minimum of six hours of services be provided during a single day			X						X

*Note: Refer to DDA guidance for additional information.

Special Education/Early Intervention

Maryland's Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services Bulletin

SERVING CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES UNDER IDEA DURING SCHOOL CLOSURES DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

As local public agencies submit to the MSDE plans for providing educational services to all students, they must also address concerns related to the provision of services to students with disabilities. The United States Department of Education (DOE) has issued multiple guidance documents that are clear that the national health crisis does not abridge the rights of students with disabilities to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and equal opportunity to educational services as their non-disabled peers, as required under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504), and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Special Education/Early Intervention

The state of Maryland is receiving funds from the COVID-3 stimulus package through the Education Stabilization Fund.

K-12	\$ 199.2 million
Post-secondary	\$ 201.6 million
Governor's Discretionary	\$ 44.0 million

It is critical that advocacy occur so that Maryland students with autism receive appropriate supports and services, including but not limited to:

- Acquisition and dissemination of hardware, software, communication devices, and other assistive technology
- Appropriate transition from early intervention to special education
- Services not received during the time of school closures and remote learning
- Appropriate transition out of special education to adulthood

Connect with us!

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Follow our advocacy profiles



| [Autism Speaks Advocacy](#)



| [@AutismVotes](#)



| [@AutismVotes](#)





Community Outreach

COVID-19 Information and Resources

These are particularly challenging times for the autism community:

- Disrupted routines, changes in access to services and the uncertainty is taxing for people with autism and their families.
- Parents and caregivers are taking on roles of teacher, service provider and therapists.
- Adults with autism are cut off from services face loss of jobs.
- Autism Speaks is making resources and support available to help our community weather this storm. We are in this together.



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Utilize our Videos

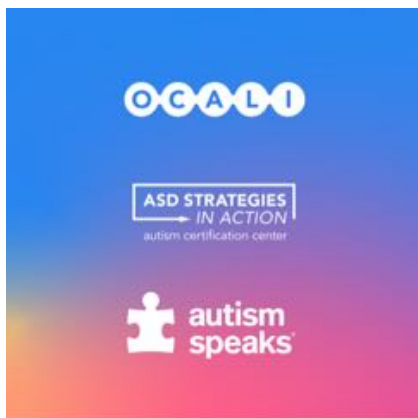
How to handle school closures and services for your child with autism

March 13, 2020



Information and Resources

- [Dealing with School Closures](#)
- [How to handle clinical care during social distancing and school/program closures](#)
- [What should the autism community know about the coronavirus outbreak?](#)
- Visit our [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) channels, where we will regularly share the ideas we're hearing from throughout the community. For local information, join an [Autism Speaks Facebook Group](#) in your area.
- NEW April 9 - Autism Certification Center (ACC) and Autism Speaks are teaming up to make 30+ hours of [online video learning resources](#) available at no cost for the autism community.



Information and Resources

[What Is Autism?](#)[Help & Information](#)[Our Work](#)[Get Involved](#)[Que es el autismo?](#)[Donate >](#)

Information by Topic

Autism Speaks is committed to providing the autism community with resources to meet each person and family's unique needs throughout every stage of life. To help with your search for support, we have organized our resources, information, expert advice and personal stories by category.

[Financial Planning](#) | [Safety](#) | [School](#) | [Technology](#)

[Health and Wellness](#) | [Behavioral Challenges](#) | [Medical Resources](#) | [Transition to Adulthood](#)

[Adults](#) | [Family Support](#) | [Community Life](#) | [Miscellaneous](#)



Thank You