

 <p>NORTH Dakota Health & Human Services Be Legendary.</p>	Youth Social Supports & Community Integration Grant General Overview
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The North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is offering grants to qualifying agencies to facilitate community integration for youth ages 12-21, who are eligible for Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) or program/case management. The purpose of the grant(s) is to provide meaningful and age-appropriate activities in the community for youth that require care and supervision while their primary caregiver works, seeks employment, pursues education, or volunteers.

Through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Section 9817, and in conjunction with the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), HHS was approved to dispense about \$31.7 million through grants and pilot programs through a spending plan submitted to CMS in June of 2021.

Eligibility to Apply

HHS is seeking proposals from existing licensed Developmental Disability (DD) providers or Autism Medicaid providers who are in good standing and interested in expanding their service delivery options.

Funding

HHS will award no more than four grants, not to exceed \$150,000 each. Each application will be evaluated separately and awarded based on the feasibility of their plan to provide services that promote community integration.

Grants are one-time only and will not be renewed.

Program Summary

- Grant period is May 19th, 2025, through August 31, 2025, and the provider must have the program operational no later than June 2nd, 2025, for a total of 11 weeks during this period.
- Maximum number of youth per pilot program per day cannot exceed 30 children.
 - Staffing ratios must be at a minimum of 1:5.
 - All staff working in this service must have a background check completed and CPR and First Aid training. All medications must be administered by someone who has been medication-certified per DD policy.

- Services must be provided separate from any DD day service setting. There should not be interactions between youth in the pilot and those in DD day services, if provided at the same physical location.
- Services must be provided at the provider site and in the community.
- Activities must be meaningful, age-appropriate, and based upon skill development with community integration daily.
- Activities must assist youth in achieving personally defined outcomes and community integration, ensuring delivery of services in a manner that reflects personal preference and choices, and contribute to the assurance of health and welfare.
- This service may not be used to substitute for or supplant special education and related services that are included in a child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) under the provisions of Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA).

Allowable Activities

1. Exploration of community resources and natural supports and development of methods to access additional resources and supports to ensure the youth is integrated in and has full access to the community to pursue interests and activities of his or her choosing.
2. Participate in preferred activities of community life, such as shopping, going to restaurants, museums, movies, and community events.
3. Develop personal interests, such as hobbies, appreciation of music, and other experiences the person enjoys or may wish to discover.
4. Communicate with providers, caregivers, family members, friends, and others face-to-face, and through the use of the telephone, correspondence, the internet, and social media.
5. Learn and develop practices that promote good health and wellness, such as regular exercise, carrying through prescribed therapies and exercises, awareness and avoidance of risk, including environmental risks, exploitation, or abuse; responding to emergencies, such as fire or injury; and knowing how and when to seek assistance.
6. Maximize independence for youth in the program, which include supporting emotional wellness, self-care tasks, and carry out activities of daily living, such as personal grooming and hygiene.
7. Participate in the individual service plan, if requested.

Requirements for Youth Participating in Pilot

- Must be enrolled in a North Dakota HCBS waiver (Intellectual Disabilities (ID)/DD Traditional Waiver, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Waiver, Children's Hospice Waiver, Medically Fragile Children's Waiver) or receiving case/program management.
- This service cannot take place at the same time as any other waiver service.
- Service hours will be identified in the youth's overall service plan in the ISP section.

Payment Structure

Providers that are awarded a grant will be paid a per day stipend of \$75 per eligible youth, with a maximum of 60 days per youth. Census data will be required monthly to determine stipend amount. Agencies can provide services to youth who do not meet the eligibility requirements; however, reimbursement is only available to those eligible.

Agencies may use no more than \$15,000 of the \$150,000 for program support costs. Examples of program support costs include: rent, modification of space, equipment, transportation or passes for activities (zoo, water park, pools, movies). To request program support costs, a minimum of five youth must be enrolled in the pilot throughout the grant period.

Note: payment is for approved expenses already incurred; funds will not be distributed as an advance.

Application Process

Agencies may apply for these funds by submitting the Youth Social Supports & Community Integration Grant Application (Attachment A) that outlines their business plan, location of pilot, timeline, feasibility to start by June 2, 2025, and a project budget utilizing the Youth Social Supports & Community Integration Grant Budget Template (Attachment B). The budget should outline any program support costs expected during the grant period.

Approval Criteria

Upon receipt of the Youth Social Supports & Community Integration Grant Application, HHS will review the application to determine whether the application is responsive to all requirements as described in this Youth Social Supports & Community Integration Grant General Overview and the accompanying application documents.

HHS reserves the right to work with the applying agency(ies) during the approval process to modify its grant proposal to ensure that funds are being spent on approvable items.

Expectations of Grantee

- Meet with HHS representatives before the grant begins to review work plan, budget, and timelines.
- Provide evidence of approved costs incurred as documentation for grant funds, as part of each request for reimbursement.
- If grantee fails to maintain its status as an active provider of HCBS during the grant period, all grant funds must be returned.
- Submit a final report that identifies the community and social skill building activities that occurred during the pilot, and participation census data.
- Conduct a participant survey provided by HHS at the end of the pilot.

Schedule

Applications are **due** by **May 1, 2025, at 8:00 AM CT**. Applications must be submitted electronically to Tina Bay, DD Director, at tbay@nd.gov.

HHS will notify applicants of their grant award status by May 12, 2025, for an approximate contract start date of May 19th, 2025.

Questions

Submit questions about the grant to tbay@nd.gov.

Required Application Documents

Attachment A: Grant Application

Attachment B: Budget Template

Reference Documents

Attachment C: Evaluation Tool