



STATE OF VERMONT  
DEPARTMENT OF DISABILITIES,  
AGING AND INDEPENDENT LIVING

**DIVISION OF DISABILITY AND  
AGING SERVICES**

# **FLEXIBLE FAMILY FUNDING PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

Revision Date: August 1, 2002



**Please note that wherever Division of Developmental Services is referenced,  
the new name is the Division of Disability and Aging Services.**

For additional information, or to obtain copies of this report in this  
or other formats, contact:

**The Division of Disability and Aging Services  
Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living**

103 South Main Street  
Waterbury, VT 05671-1601

**Phone: 802-241-2648**

Fax: 802-241-4224

[www.dail.state.vt.us](http://www.dail.state.vt.us)

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Eligibility</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Record Keeping</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Agency Reporting</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Attachment A: Flexible Family Funding Data Sheet</b>	
<b>Attachment B: Flexible Family Funding Sliding Scale</b>	

**STATE OF VERMONT  
DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES**

**FLEXIBLE FAMILY FUNDING PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Flexible Family Funding Program reflects an acknowledgement that families, as caregivers, offer the most natural and nurturing home for children and many adults with disabilities. When families provide care and support, individuals benefit and the public benefits by avoiding the need for more intensive and costly out-of-home services.

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Flexible Family Funding Program is to offer support to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families to enhance their ability to live together. These funds are used at the discretion of the family for services and supports that benefit the individual and family. For adults, it is important that the individual have a voice in the use of the FFF allocation. Examples of acceptable uses of FFF include family respite, assistive technology, individual and household needs (e.g., clothing, heating oil, rent, etc.), and recreational services. These funds can be used for any legal good or activity that the family and individual choose.

## ELIGIBILITY

### *Developmental Services Eligibility Determination:*

The designated agency is responsible for determining eligibility for developmental services. An individual must be eligible for developmental services to be considered for FFF.<sup>1</sup> The staff member who coordinates the FFF program at the designated agency meets with the family and together with the applicant fills in the information required on the Flexible Family Funding Data Sheet (see Attachment A) and DS application, if requesting additional services/supports. The original, completed FFF datasheet must be forwarded to the Division of Developmental Services.

If the individual is determined not to have a developmental disability, the family/individual must be informed of the developmental services appeals procedure. This must be done in writing as well as by a method the family/individual understands if different than in writing.

### *Criteria:*

To receive Flexible Family Funding, a recipient must be:

- ✓ A person with a developmental disability who lives with his/her family. For the purposes of the FFF program, family members are defined as unpaid biological, adoptive and/or step-parents, adult siblings, grandparents, aunts/uncles, nieces/nephews and legal guardians. **OR**
- ✓ A family member who lives with and supports a person with a developmental disability.

---

<sup>1</sup> Eligibility is determined according to the standards set in the *Regulations Implementing the DD Act of 1996*.

### ***Exclusions:***

- ✓ Individuals receiving home and community-based waiver supports are not candidates for the Flexible Family Funding program.<sup>2</sup>
- ✓ Applicants whose income exceeds the upper limit of the sliding scale are not candidates for the FFF program (See Attachment B).
- ✓ Individuals living independently, or with their spouse, are not candidates for the Flexible Family Funding Program.

### **RECORD KEEPING**

At the time of enrollment into the program, the Division of Developmental Services requires a Flexible Family Funding Data Sheet be submitted. A family shall not receive a FFF allocation prior to the submission of the required data sheet. It is important that the information contained on the data sheet be as accurate as possible and is ***updated*** as necessary, but at least annually. Items requiring further explanation are noted below:

- ✓ **Description of Disability and/or Diagnosis**—Description of disability applies to young children under first grade; a diagnosis is required for children first grade and older and adults.
- ✓ **Gross Annual Household Income**—This includes parental or guardian income, child support payments, and SSI of minor children. For individuals over 18, count only the income of the adult with developmental disabilities. Income for individuals 18 and over includes public monetary benefits (e.g., SSI, Social Security, etc.) and any earned income. “Gross income” means total earnings prior to any deductions or taxes. Income is subject to verification.

---

<sup>2</sup> Prior to February 1, 2002, individuals who received home and community-based waiver funding without respite or cash assistance/goods funding lines are grandfathered and are allowed to access both funding sources for the normal levels of FFF. No duplications between home and community-based waiver funding and enhanced FFF are allowed.

*Individuals with incomes in excess of the sliding scale should complete a FFF datasheet and be placed on the applicant list with a notation of “exceeds income limits”.*

- ✓ **Number in Family**—Count household members claimed as a dependent by parents or guardian. If the person with developmental disabilities is over 18, the number in the family is one (1). If more than one minor child is eligible, the household income for the family is counted in total, not divided by the number of children.
- ✓ **Level of Support Authorized**<sup>3</sup>—Determined by the designated agency, based on the FFF Sliding Scale (see Attachment B) and funding available. For families with more than one family member with a disability, the scale amount is given for each child. Depending on need, Enhanced Flexible Family Funding (EFFF) may be authorized.
- ✓ **Enhanced Flexible Family Funding (EFFF)**—Any allocation above what the family/individual is eligible for according to the sliding scale, up to \$3,000/individual/year. Need is determined by the designated agency as whether the provision of EFFF will delay or prevent the need for home and community-based waiver services. Allocations of EFFF are made on a case-by-case basis, and the agency representative should consider the following variables in making a decision:
  - Single parenthood
  - Illness/disability in other family members
  - Risk of out-of home placement

A family/individual may not receive both EFFF and home and community-based waiver services. Need for EFFF is redetermined annually. Any “enhanced” dollars (beyond what the family/individual is eligible for according to the scale) must be used for respite.

In rare situations, a family’s EFFF allocation may exceed the \$3,000 limit; however, prior approval by the Division is required. Additionally, any ongoing allocation beyond the \$3,000 level needs Division approval on an annual basis.

---

<sup>3</sup> It is the responsibility of the Designated Agency to inform the family about the potential tax implications of this funding for workers. It is the responsibility of the family to share information regarding the tax implications of such wages with the worker. If FFF or EFFF is used to pay respite workers, the family must adhere to the State minimum wage rate for hourly respite services. Individual rates may be agreed upon for daily and overnight respite.

EFFF is allocated only if funds are available. The Division of Developmental Services will periodically issue notices regarding the availability of funding.

- ✓ **Resource Availability**—The designated agency must determine whether the level of FFF or EFFF authorized is within its budget appropriation. If some resources are present but insufficient to meet the total need, the designated agency may prorate the authorized allocation until resources are available to meet the full allocation. If no resources are available, the family/individual must be placed on the waiting list until resources become available.

Regardless of resource availability, a FFF Data Sheet must be completed for each family requesting service, including those applicants whose income exceeds the sliding scale. This data sheet shall be maintained at the designated agency. This will result in accurate FFF waiting and applicant lists if sufficient resources are not available to serve every person requesting Flexible Family Funding or if people do not meet current eligibility for the program.

At times, the availability of one-time funding enables families/individuals on the waiting list to receive temporary FFF. If this is the case, the family/individual remains on the waiting list until permanent funding is received.

- ✓ **Signatures**—The applicant must co-sign with the designated agency's FFF coordinator.

## **AGENCY REPORTING**

The designated agency is required to submit the following reports according to the frequency outlined below:

- ✓ **Flexible Family Funding Data Sheet**—this is required for the original allocation of Flexible Family Funding. The Division's FFF liaison will forward a compilation to the designated agency's staff to update and return on an annual basis.

- ✓ **Financial/Service Utilization Report**—this is required quarterly within thirty (30) days of the end of the quarter. The report must detail the individuals served by name, amount paid to each family broken out by category (respite, assistive technology, individual needs, household needs, recreation, other), and a total administrative charge.
  
- ✓ **Administrative Charge**—The administrative charge must be calculated using the designated agency’s Department-approved administrative rate and is subtracted out of the total allocation, not taken from each individual.
  
- ✓ **Families/Individuals Receiving One-Time Funded FFF**—Individuals receiving FFF through one-time funding should be so noted on the report forwarded to the Division.

**DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES**  
**FLEXIBLE FAMILY FUNDING DATA SHEET**

Individual's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Soc. Security #: \_\_\_\_\_

Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents/Guardians: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Disability/Diagnosis: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Statement of Family Situation (Required Only for Continued Approval of EFFF):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Would you like information regarding family &/or peer support organizations?  Y  N

Would you like to be put in contact with other families in the area?  Y  N

Personal Care Services:  Y  N Other services? If yes, please list:  Y  N

\_\_\_\_\_

Gross Annual Household Income: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Number in Family: \_\_\_\_\_

We, the undersigned, certify that the above information is true and accurate to the best of our knowledge.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/ Guardian FFF Coordinator Date

FOR DESIGNATED AGENCY USE ONLY

Amount of FFF Authorized: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Continued EFFF Approval at DS by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Resource Availability:  Allocated  One-time Funding/Wait List  Wait List

**DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES**  
**FLEXIBLE FAMILY FUNDING SLIDING SCALE**

FAMILY SIZE/GROSS ANNUAL INCOME/MAX. DOLLAR AMOUNT								
% of Maximum Allotment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
100	<15,000	<20,000	<25,000	<30,000	<35,000	<40,000	<45,000	<50,000
	\$1,122	\$1,122	\$1,122	\$1,122	\$1,122	\$1,122	\$1,122	\$1,122
90	<20,000	<25,000	<30,000	<35,000	<40,000	<45,000	<50,000	<55,000
	\$1,010	\$1,010	\$1,010	\$1,010	\$1,010	\$1,010	\$1,010	\$1,010
80	<25,000	<30,000	<35,000	<40,000	<45,000	<50,000	<55,000	<60,000
	\$898	\$898	\$898	\$898	\$898	\$898	\$898	\$898
70	<30,000	<35,000	<40,000	<45,000	<50,000	<55,000	<60,000	<65,000
	\$785	\$785	\$785	\$785	\$785	\$785	\$785	\$785
60	<35,000	<40,000	<45,000	<50,000	<55,000	<60,000	<65,000	\$70,000
	\$673	\$673	\$673	\$673	\$673	\$673	\$673	\$673
50	<40,000	<45,000	<50,000	<55,000	<60,000	<65,000	<70,000	<75,000
	\$561	\$561	\$561	\$561	\$561	\$561	\$561	\$561
0	>40,000	>45,000	>50,000	>55,000	>60,000	>65,000	>70,000	>75,000
	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Note: For children under age 18, income is defined as gross household income including earned income, child support payments and SSI of minor children. Individuals 18 and over should be considered as a single household, regardless of residency with family. Income for individuals 18 and over includes public monetary benefits (e.g., SSI, Social Security, etc.) and any earned income. Income is subject to verification.