



**STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
Developmental Disabilities Administration
PO Box 45310, Olympia, WA 98504-5310**

Community Access Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What are Community Access services?

Community access is an individualized service that provides individuals with opportunities to engage in community based activities that support socialization, education, recreation and personal development for the purpose of: building and strengthening relationships with others in the local community who are not paid to be with the person and learning, practicing and applying skills that promote greater independence and inclusion in their community.

It is provided by agencies contracted with the Counties.

Who is eligible for Community Access services?

Community Access is available to individuals 62 years and older. It is also available to individuals who have participated in nine months of Employment services and choose Community Access services instead of continuing in Employment services. It is available for those individuals on the Basic Plus and Core Waivers and individuals in Skilled Nursing Facilities (PASRR). An Exception to Rule can be requested through your case manager if you have not or do not want to participate in 9 months of employment services.

Can I have Community Access and Employment services at the same time?

No, but you can choose to go back to Employment services at any time.

How many hours of support will I receive in Community Access?

Your monthly Community Access service hours are determined by your annual assessment completed by your case manager from the Developmental Disabilities Administration. Monthly service hours range from 3-20.

What can I expect from my Community Access service?

Your Community Access provider will meet with you and through a process of Discovery and person centered planning identify your individual interests to develop a Community Access plan with strategies to access community opportunities consistent with your interests in your local community. The activities will be integrated and provide opportunities to contribute and develop relationships with people in your community who are not paid staff.

Will I always have a staff person with me in the community?

You will always have appropriate supports to participate safely in community activities; however, your Community Access staff may not always be present. The ideal outcome of the service is that you develop relationships with other community members with similar interests who will support you in the activity so that the Community Access staff can fade from that activity and look for additional opportunities for you to participate in community activities of interest.

What if I don't know what I want to do in the community?

Your Community Access provider is trained to help you identify areas of interest through a process of Discovery where you are provided various opportunities in the community to see what you most enjoy or show interest in. In addition, they will seek input from those who know you best.

What activities are available to participate in as part of Community Access services?

Community activities are as varied as your interests (e.g., club memberships, volunteering, etc.) as long as they meet four simple criteria:

1. Individualized based on **your** interests
2. Integrated with other individuals without disabilities in the community
3. Activities that are typically experienced by the general public in your local community; accessible by public transit or a reasonable commute from your home
4. Ability to contribute and develop relationship with community members who are not paid staff.

What activities are NOT available to participate in as part of Community Access Services?

Community Access services cannot be used to support you in some community activities. These activities include: specialized and/or segregated activities with only individuals with disabilities, isolating activities with no opportunities to develop relationships with community members who are not paid staff, or activities that don't occur in your local community.

Can Community Access services be provided to more than one individual at a time?

Although Community Access is an individualized service, it can be provided for 2 to 3 individuals at the same time; **IF** the activity is a shared interest of all participants and meets the guidelines of integrated setting, local community and ability to contribute and develop relationships with other individuals without disabilities in the community who are not paid staff.

What other services are available to help me access my community?

Community Engagement is a service similar to Community Access but is only available to individuals on the Individual and Family Services (IFS) Waiver or individuals in Skilled Nursing Facilities (PASRR). It is provided by individual providers and or agencies contracted directly with the Developmental Disabilities Administration.

Community Guide is a short-term service intended to identify and connect you to resources in your local community. It is available to individuals on the Basic Plus, and CORE Waivers and individuals in Skilled Nursing Facilities (PASRR). It is provided by individual providers and or agencies contracted directly with the Developmental Disabilities Administration.

Respite can also be provided in the community. It may be available to individuals on the Individual and Family Services (IFS), Basic Plus and CORE Waivers. It is provided by individual providers and or agencies contracted directly with the Developmental Disabilities Administration.