

# What's the DDA (and who does it serve)?

"DDA" is short for the Department of Social and Health Services, Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA). It administers programs that support people with developmental disabilities across the lifespan.

Services help people keep, learn, or improve skills and functioning needed for daily living. They might include physical therapies, residential supports, speech pathology, assistive technology, or supports to keep a job.

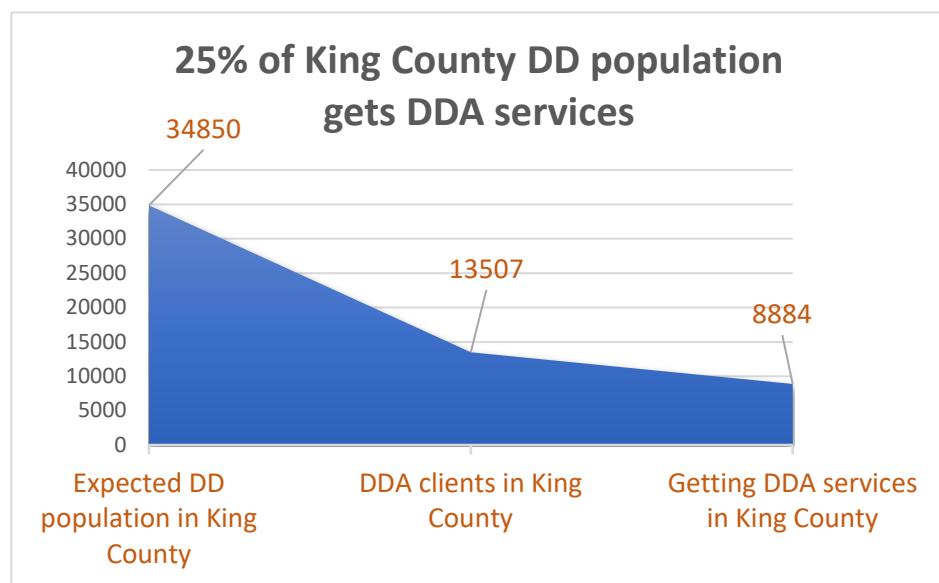
## Not all people who identify as having a developmental disability are DDA clients.

Enrollment is not automatic and the state limits who it will serve after age three. For instance, a child with autism could qualify for birth-to-three supports and special education services, but not qualify for DDA services if they do not meet Washington's specific DDA criteria for autism.

Generally, developmental disabilities originate at birth or during childhood and are characterized by impairments in intellectual functioning (reasoning, learning, problem solving) and adaptive behavior (social and practical skills), or a physical impairment, or a combination of intellectual, adaptive and physical impairments. They are substantial, likely to continue indefinitely, and result in substantial functional limitation in three or more major life activities. The term includes intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism, and others.

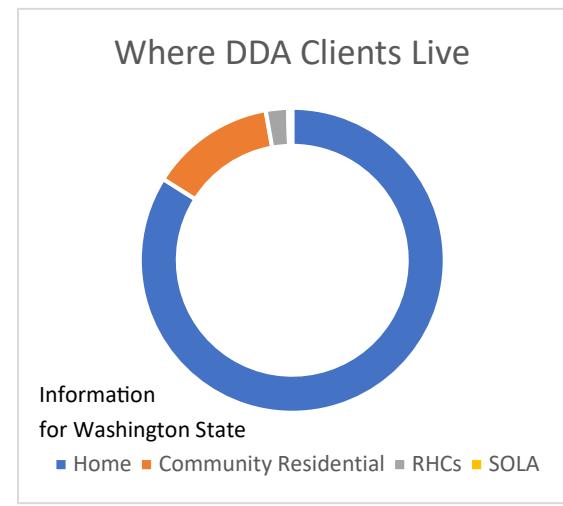
Most supports in Washington are delivered through Medicaid Home and Community Based Services. These are called "waiver services" because individuals waive the option to receive services in an institutional setting. DDA also oversees the Residential Habilitation Centers (RHCs), which provide services in an institutional setting.

**Of the 47,527 DDA clients, just 685 receive long-term services in the RHCs.**



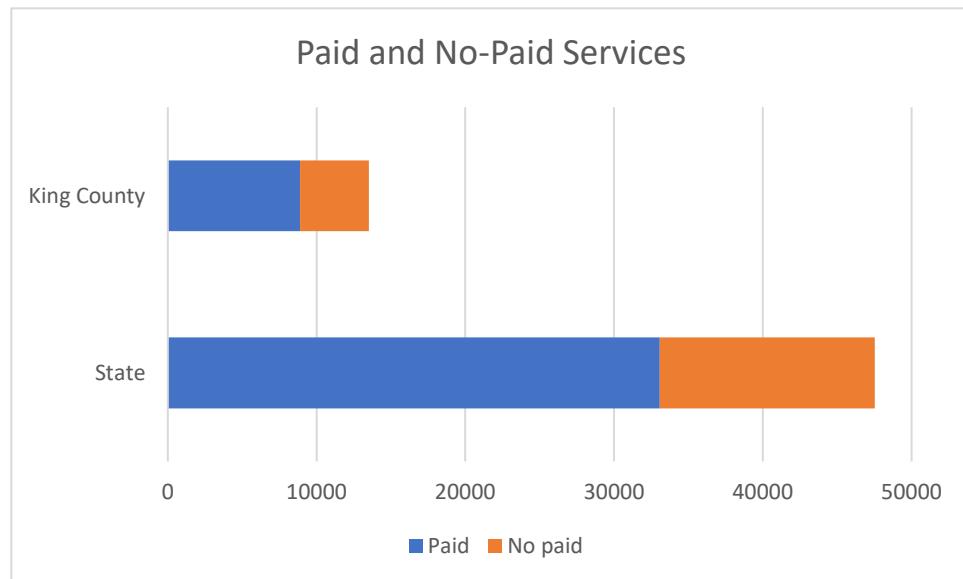
*In determining need for services, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services uses a prevalence rate of 1.58 percent. This figure comes from the National Health Interview Survey on Disability and meets the definition of developmental disability in the federal Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000. Using this rate, Washington should have about 117,000 people with developmental disabilities.*

**King County should have 34,850 residents with developmental disabilities.**



# Services administered by King County

Most services provided through the Department of Social and Health Services, Developmental Disability Administration (DDA) are funded by Medicaid using state and federal dollars. Some services flow through King County, and in some cases, King County braids in local funds to supplement support for people with developmental disabilities and their families.



SOURCE: CARE Source on 7/2018

## Being supported in the community is a federal, state and local partnership.

King County administers:

**Early Supports for Infants and Toddlers** build upon family strengths by providing coordination, supports, resources, and services to enhance the development of qualifying children with developmental delays and disabilities through everyday learning opportunities. Services can include occupational or physical therapy, speech-language pathology, feeding therapy, specialized instruction, assisted technology, hearing or vision services, and more.

**School-to-Work** offers transition services designed to help students leave school with a job. Employment providers support students in a discovery process to learn more about their skills and interests, then use this information to develop individualized job opportunities. While all students receiving special education services must have a plan for transition services, School-to-Work is only open to DDA clients.

## Individual Employment Services:

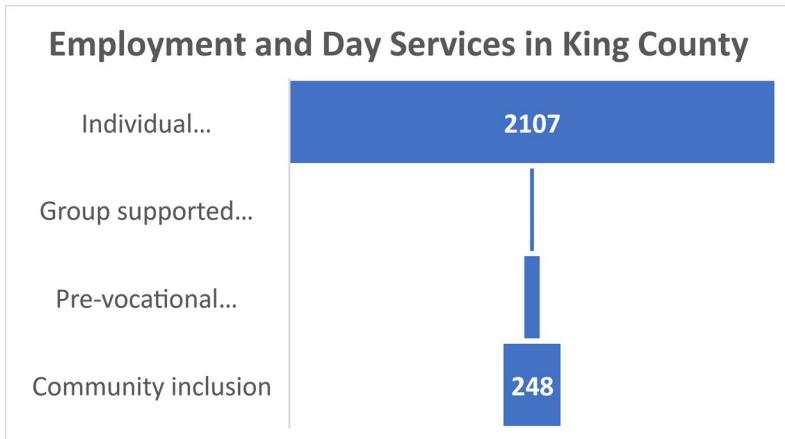
DDA clients are supported to earn minimum wage or better. Services are individually tailored with the goal that all individuals can work and contribute in their community.

**Community Inclusion Services** are available to DDA clients 62 or older, or those over 21 who have tried employment services for nine months or more. Services are individualized and designed to support development of relationships, skills and connections within participants' local community.

## Community Information & Outreach:

The county contracts out to provide information and advocacy for people with developmental disabilities and their family members; systems navigation to coordinate early childhood services; and training and technical assistance for early intervention and employment providers.

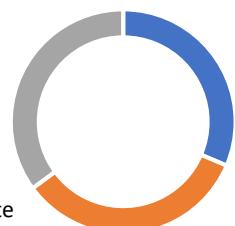
# Integrated employment is now the norm



\*DDA no longer places clients in pre-vocational settings, per CMS rules

SOURCE: CARE Source on 7/2018

### Average hours worked



- Individual employment
- Group Supported Employment
- Pre-Vocational Services\*

10.2 hours

10.9 hours

11.4 hours

Employment has changed for people with developmental disabilities. Where once individuals might have worked in a pre-vocational, or sheltered workshop, setting and earned subminimum wage, today **most people in Washington with developmental disabilities who work do so in an integrated environment earning minimum wage or better.**

The Department of Social and Health Services, Developmental Disabilities Administration stopped enrolling clients in pre-vocational services in September 2015. Those settings do not comply with Centers for Medicaid rules that services be provided in an integrated and supportive setting.

Most clients are now placed in individual employment, where minimum wage or better prevails. A smaller number are placed in group supported employment, where only 32 percent of workers earn minimum wage or higher.

Many disability rights groups are working to end the practice of subminimum pay, saying it is discriminatory. Federal and state law allows the practice, but employers must first determine a job standard and prevailing wage, and then evaluate the quantity and quality of the productivity of workers who have disabilities against that standard. Pay can be adjusted down depending on the evaluation.

Employees without disabilities are not subjected to a productivity test. Workers must be evaluated every six months.

# Who Qualifies for Services- DD Definitions

There are different definitions of “developmental disability” – the federal government created one for its Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000, and each state defines it for purposes of determining who is eligible for its Medicaid long-term services. The medical community has a definition, as do organizations that represent people with disabilities. In general:

- Developmental disabilities originate at birth or during childhood
- Are characterized by impairments in cognitive functioning - that is reasoning, learning, and problem solving
- And/or by adaptive behavior - that is social and practical skills
- Impairments are substantial and likely to continue indefinitely and result in functional limitations in major life activities

Key differences between federal and Washington law:

- Disabilities must manifest by age 22 in federal law, by age 18 in Washington law
- Federal law doesn't require impairments in both adaptive and cognitive functioning. Rather, it focuses on functional limitations in three or more areas. Those are: self-care; receptive and expressive language; learning; mobility; self-direction; capacity for independent living; and economic self-sufficiency
- Washington law looks for degrees of cognitive and adaptive impairments, based on diagnosis. Some conditions require significant limitations in both (such as autism); others require neither (such as cerebral palsy and some instances of epilepsy)
- Washington does not use the gauge of functional limitations in three or more areas.

**WHAT THIS MEANS:** Washington narrowly defines who can access Medicaid long-term services administered through the state Department of Social and Health Services Developmental Disability Administration (DDA).

- People may have a physical, adaptive or cognitive impairment stemming from childhood, with significant functional limitations, but in Washington that does not mean they qualify for DDA services.
- People who qualify for “DD” services in one state may not qualify in another, or may fit the federal definition but still not qualify for services

Policy makers should not assume someone with a developmental disability will access DDA services. Many do not. This means **services that serve the general population – such as education, employment support, housing and food assistance – must be accessible to people with significant limitations, especially adaptive limitations.**

## Revised Code of Washington

*The term "developmental disability" as used in this title means a disability attributable to intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism, or another neurological condition closely related to an intellectual disability or to require treatment similar to that required for persons with intellectual disabilities, which disability originates before such individual attains age eighteen, which has continued or can be expected to continue indefinitely, and which constitutes a substantial limitation to such individual.*

In its administrative code, Washington narrows who qualifies, depending on the diagnosis. Many people with autism, for instance, do not qualify for DDA services.