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**CHAPTER 43: SUPPORTS WAIVER**

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## **OVERVIEW**

The Supports Waiver (SW) is a 1915(c) waiver designed to enhance the home and community-based supports and services available to recipients with developmental disabilities who require the level of care of an Intermediate Care Facility for the Developmentally Disabled (ICF/DD). The SW is funded by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), a federal agency, and matching state dollars. The waiver is operated by the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) under the authorization of the Bureau of Health Services Financing (BHSF), both of which are under the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH).

The mission of the SW is to create options and provide meaningful opportunities for those individuals, 18 years of age and older who have a developmental disability, through vocational and community inclusion. The SW is available to provide the supports necessary in order for individuals to achieve their desired community living and work experience by providing the services needed to acquire, retain, and/or improve self-help, socialization and adaptive skills as well as providing the recipient an opportunity to contribute to his/her community.

The objectives of the SW are to:

- Promote independence for recipients through the provision of services, which meet the highest standard of quality and are based on national best practices, while ensuring their health and welfare through a comprehensive system of safeguards;
- Offer an alternative to institutionalization and costly comprehensive services through the provision of an array of services and supports that promote community inclusion and independence by enhancing (not replacing) existing informal networks;
- Support recipients and their families to exercise their rights and share responsibility for their programs, regardless of the service delivery method;
- Offer access to services on a short-term basis that would protect the health and welfare of recipients if their families or caregivers are unable to continue to provide care and supervision; and
- Increase high school to community transition resources by offering supports and services to those 18 years and older.

The SW includes the following services: Supported Employment, Day Habilitation, Prevocational, Habilitation, Respite, Personal Emergency Response System, and Support Coordination. These services are further defined in this chapter. Recipients have a choice of available Support Coordination (SC) agencies and provider agencies and are able to select enrolled qualified agencies through the Freedom of Choice (FOC) process. The Plan of Care (POC) is developed using a person-centered planning process and identifies all of a recipient's needs, both non-funded and funded.

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All natural supports, available community resources, and applicable Medicaid State Plan services must be exhausted prior to utilization of waiver funding. Also, the recipient must apply for, and exhaust any similar services available through Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) if the recipient meets the criteria for the programs.

Providers are required to follow the regulations and requirements as specified in this chapter, the Supports Waiver Rule (Louisiana Register, Volume 32, Number 09), the Standards for Participation Rule for home and community-based waiver providers (Louisiana Register, Volume 29 Number 09) and all applicable licensure and/or certification requirements.