The Missouri Department of Mental Health supports residents of the state who have mental disorders, developmental or intellectual disabilities, and substance abuse. The responsibility of the department’s Division of Developmental Disabilities is to assist individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to improve their lives through enhancing self-determination.

A developmental disability is a disability that is attributed to cerebral palsy, epilepsy, an intellectual disability, head injury, autism or a brain dysfunction. The physical or cognitive limitations that exist due to the disability, interferes with the individual’s ability to function in life activities such as self-care, communication, learning, self-direction, mobility, and capacity for independent living.

Eligibility for the division’s services is determined through its 5 regional offices and 6 satellite offices, located throughout Missouri. Individuals found eligible for DD services are entitled to an evaluation and support coordination. Once a support coordinator is assigned, planning occurs to determine the individual’s support needs of the individual and/or the services within available resources to improve their lives through enhancing self-determination.

Who Is Eligible to Receive Division Services? Eligibility is determined by review of records to locate evidence of a mental or physical impairment (related to an intellectual or developmental disability), that occurred prior to age 22, is going to be life long, requires habilitation services, and substantially impacts the individual’s life in at least two of six basic life activities. The impact on the individual’s life is measured by a functional assessment as opposed to linking eligibility to a specific diagnosis.

Evaluation – Each individual is evaluated to provide information about the individual’s functioning, strengths, and needs related to his or her disability.

Service Coordination – Each eligible individual is assigned a support coordinator who helps put together an individual plan and then monitors the individual’s supports and progress towards goals to assure that the individual’s needs are met.

Once eligibility has been determined, the Division’s mission for each individual is to enhance their lives and enable them to be independent and productive members of their community:

Support Plan – Person centered planning and thinking are crucial elements in supporting individuals to have access to opportunities to increase independence, integration, inclusion, productivity and self-determination. The plan includes an outline of the individual’s needs and their desired outcomes.

Self-Determination - Individuals are the primary decision maker in their lives, determining what is important to them and how to have a meaningful role in the community.

Employment First - All individuals who want to work can work and contribute to their community when given opportunity, training, and supports that build upon their unique talents, skills and abilities.

Self-Directed Supports (SDS) - An option of service delivery for individuals who wish to exercise more choice, control and authority over their supports. Under this option, individuals have employment and budget authority.

Natural Supports – Supports that include people and places in an individual’s community that are available for all people and are necessary for individuals with disabilities to truly be a part of their community.

Community Living and Accessible Housing – Planning/developing of quality, affordable, accessible housing for people with disabilities in safe locations where they can access support services, transportation, employment, and recreation throughout their lifespan.

How and Where to Apply for Services? You may apply for services or refer someone for services by calling, writing, or going to the regional or satellite office that serves your county. The addresses, telephone numbers, and counties served by each regional office are listed in this brochure.

What Is the Cost of Services? The cost to the person receiving services is determined by ability to pay. When a person applies for services, regional office staff will send a questionnaire that requires details about the individual or family income and the financial resources. More detailed information is available from your regional office.

What If Services Are Denied? Persons determined ineligible for services have the right to appeal. Once the person decides to appeal, they will contact the appropriate Regional Office and set up a meeting. During the appeal meeting, the individual will have the opportunity to present additional information and discuss the ineligibility determination that was completed by Regional Office staff. More detailed information about appeals is provided in a brochure, “Your Right to Appeal”, which is available from your local regional office.

Personnel at Missouri Protection and Advocacy Services, which maintains a toll-free telephone number (1-800-392-8667), also are available to assist in appealing decisions on eligibility or in securing services from other agencies.

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