

# FACT SHEET



GEORGIA DEPARTMENT  
OF COMMUNITY HEALTH

## New Options Waiver Program (NOW) and Comprehensive Supports Waiver Program (COMP)

### Overview

The New Options Waiver (NOW) and the Comprehensive Supports Waiver Program (COMP) offer home- and community-based services for people with intellectual disabilities (ID) or developmental disabilities (DD) through the Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH) Division of Medical Assistance Plans. A diagnosis of developmental disability includes intellectual disability or other closely related conditions, such as cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism or neurological problems. These disabilities require a level of care provided in an intermediate-care facility (ICF) for people diagnosed with ID/DD. There are more than 12,000 people with developmental disabilities who are served by the NOW/COMP programs in Georgia.

### Purpose

The NOW waiver program offers services and supports to individuals to enable them to remain living in their own or family home and participate or live independently in the community.

Goals for participants in the NOW program, which serves individuals with less intensive needs than those in the COMP program, include:

- Avoiding the need for more intensive services.
- Increasing independence and quality of life of individuals with ID/DD.
- Increasing the flexibility of service planning and delivery to meet exact individual needs.
- Providing the opportunity for all participants to elect to direct their services to the extent that they choose.
- Ensuring the health, safety and welfare of NOW participants.



### NOW/COMP Waiver Program Services

- Adult Occupational Therapy Services
- Adult Physical Therapy Services
- Adult Speech and Language Therapy Services
- Behavioral Supports Consultation Services
- Community Access Services
- Community Guide Services
- Community Living Support Services
- Community Residential Alternative Services (COMP only)
- Environmental Accessibility Adaptation Services
- Financial Support Services
- Individual Directed Goods and Services
- Natural Support Training Services
- Pre-vocational Services
- Respite Services
- Specialized Medical Equipment
- Specialized Medical Supplies
- Support Coordination Services
- Supported Employment Services
- Transportation Services
- Vehicle Adaption Services

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## An Overview of New Options Waiver Program (NOW) and Comprehensive Supports Waiver Program (COMP)

The COMP waiver program, which serves individuals with more intensive needs, primarily provides residential care for individuals with ID/DD. These individuals require comprehensive and intensive services and need out-of-home residential support and supervision or intensive levels of in-home services to remain in the community.

Goals for participants in the COMP program include:

- Avoiding the need for institutional placement.
- Increasing independence and quality of life of individuals with ID/DD who have intensive or comprehensive support needs.
- Facilitating the transition of institutionalized individuals to community living.
- Offering opportunities statewide for participant direction by waiver participants who have intensive or comprehensive support needs.
- Ensuring the health, safety and welfare of COMP program participants.

### Eligibility

Individuals who meet the level of care that would be required in an intermediate-care facility for people with intellectual disabilities (ICF-ID) may be eligible for home- and community-based services as an alternative through Georgia's Medicaid NOW and COMP waiver programs.

To qualify for these waiver programs and be offered the choice of community-based services instead of institutional care, the individual must first meet the criteria for Medicaid payment in an institution and certain other criteria.

Specific qualifications:

- Are categorically eligible Medicaid recipients; and
- Have a diagnosis of an intellectual disability and/or a closely related condition; and
- Are currently receiving the level of care provided in an ICF-ID that is reimbursable under the State Plan, and for whom home- and community-based services are determined to be an appropriate alternative; or,
- Are likely to require the level of care provided in an ICF-ID that would be reimbursable under the State Plan in the absence of home- and community-based services that are determined to be an appropriate alternative.

### For More Information

Visit the DCH website at [www.dch.georgia.gov/aging-special-populations](http://www.dch.georgia.gov/aging-special-populations).